

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Mecklenburg County

North Carolina · Charlotte · FIPS 37119 · Population 1,115,403
· Crosodo Index #1693*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
02 NCAC 9C.0307	Good	—	MEDIUM	2026-05-05

IMPORTANT — NOT LEGAL ADVICE

This report compiles publicly-available statutes, regulations, and county zoning rules into a research reference. It is **not legal advice** and is provided **without warranty** as to accuracy, completeness, or current applicability.

Cottage food law changes frequently. Counties may amend zoning, health departments may issue new permits, and state legislatures may update statutes after the publication date shown above.

Always verify rules directly with your state department of health/agriculture and your county health and planning offices before relying on them for any business or regulatory decision. Consult a licensed attorney for advice specific to your situation.

How to start — 60-second path

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Yes

PETS

No pets in the home at any time (state/federal GMP rule disqualifying condition).

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under North Carolina cottage food rules (county cannot expand a state ban).
- ☐ **2. Pickup & zoning** — Home occupation and porch pickup cells above; HOA/lease may still block customer traffic.
- ☐ **3. Local tax / license** — Business license or sales tax certificate if your city/parish requires it (common even with no state food permit).
- ☐ **4. Training** — Food handler or state registration before market day.
- ☐ **5. Labels** — Disclaimer, allergens, ingredients, net quantity, producer info.
- ☐ **6. Call if unclear** — County health and planning for your exact address.

LABEL FIELDS TO INCLUDE

- ☐ Product name · producer name · address (or allowed alternative)
- ☐ Ingredients by weight · major allergens · net weight/quantity
- ☐ North Carolina home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[North Carolina label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

Planning path only — not legal advice. Rules change. Always verify with state and local offices before selling.

NORTH CAROLINA: MECKLENBURG COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1693* · FIPS 37119 · Charlotte

Mecklenburg County

Population 1,115,403 · State baseline: 02 NCAC 9C.0307 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Mecklenburg County follows NC state baseline: home processors regulated by NCDA&CS, requiring annual kitchen inspection. Mecklenburg County Health Department regulates TCS food establishments (commercial). Low-risk non-TCS foods allowed in home kitchens under NCDA&CS oversight. Pets in the home disqualify applicants.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No pets in the home at any time (state/federal GMP rule disqualifying condition).

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (NCDA&CS guidance requires operators to check local zoning and licensing requirements. Charlotte and other Mecklenburg municipalities have their own home occupation codes. No specific Mecklenburg County-level permit found for cottage food.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (NCDA&CS annual home kitchen inspection required. Mecklenburg County Health Department does not separately regulate low-risk home processed foods.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Mecklenburg County follows NC state baseline: home processors regulated by NCDA&CS, requiring annual kitchen inspection. Mecklenburg County Health Department regulates TCS food establishments (commercial). Low-risk non-TCS foods allowed in home kitchens under NCDA&CS oversight. Pets in the home disqualify applicants.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No pets in the home at any time (state/federal GMP rule disqualifying condition).
WATER SUPPLY	Copy of recent water bill (municipal) or well water coliform bacteria test required with application.
HANDWASHING	Easily accessible restroom and hand-washing facilities with hot and cold running water required.
FOOD STORAGE	State baseline applies

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — NCDA&CS annual home kitchen inspection required. Mecklenburg County Health Department does not separately regulate low-risk home processed foods.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — NCDA&CS guidance requires operators to check local zoning and licensing requirements. Charlotte and other Mecklenburg municipalities have their own home occupation codes. No specific Mecklenburg County-level permit found for cottage food.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies by city

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Indirect sales to retail stores and restaurants allowed within NC. No sales cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	State baseline applies

Relevant county code

02 NCAC 09C .0307; 21 CFR 117 Subpart B

RESEARCH NOTES

Mecklenburg County (Charlotte) follows NC state baseline. Same no-pets rule applies. NCDA&CS handles home processor program statewide; county health departments (including Mecklenburg) handle commercial TCS food establishments. No Mecklenburg-specific overlay found. NC's no-cap policy with annual inspection requirement makes it distinctive among southeastern states.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.mecknc.gov/HealthDepartment>

<https://www.mecknc.gov>

<https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/food-drug-protection/food-program/fdpd-food-program-home-processor>

Questions about this county? Local notes and a place to leave a question: crosodo.com/nb/north-carolina/mecklenburg-county-discuss

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Mecklenburg County	Union County	Gaston County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Conditional	Conditional
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No pets in the home at any time (state/federal GMP rule disqualifying condition).	No pets allowed in home at any time — presence of any pet disqualifies applicant	No pets allowed in home at any time — presence of any pet disqualifies applicant
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Conditional	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Indirect sales to retail stores and restaurants allowed within NC. No sales cap.	Direct and indirect sales allowed (retail, restaurants, markets) after inspection. City of Monroe has municipal zoning.	Direct and indirect sales allowed after annual inspection. Gastonia city limits have municipal zoning.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Yes	Yes
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies by city	Conditional	Conditional
RESTRICTIONS	Mecklenburg County follows NC state baseline: home processors regulated by NCDA&CS, requiring annual kitchen inspection. Mecklenburg County...	Annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. Pets in home at any time disqualify applicant entirely. Kitchen must be in the dwelling...	Annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. Pets in home at any time disqualify applicant entirely. Kitchen must be in the dwelling...
FOOD STORAGE	State baseline applies	Shelf-stable foods only; no refrigerated or frozen products	Shelf-stable foods only; no refrigerated or frozen products
POPULATION	1,115,403	240,109	228,972

State context — North Carolina cottage food law

Mecklenburg County's rules sit on top of North Carolina's state cottage food framework. The state law sets the floor — counties can add but cannot remove protections.

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
02 NCAC 9C.0307	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
Yes	No
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
Yes	No
INDIRECT SALES	

Yes — Home processors may sell to retail stores, restaurants, and directly to consumers. Sales at farmers markets are permitted. Labels are required for wholesale and packaged self-service retail; direct hand-to-consumer sales (e.g., from home or at events) may be exempt from affixed labels if ingredient info is available on request. NC requires annual home kitchen inspection, which is unusual among no-cap states.

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the **North Carolina cottage food law report** on Crosodo, or open the live guide: crosodo.com/states/north-carolina.

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2002%20-%20agriculture%20and%20consumer%20services/chapter%2009%20-%20food%20and%20drug%20protection/subchapter%20c/02%20ncac%2009c%20.0307.pdf>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/food-drug-protection/food-program/fdpd-food-program-home-processor>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/north-carolina/>

Questions about Mecklenburg County? Local notes and a place to leave a question are on Crosodo. We monitor new threads — start with zoning, permits, or porch pickup.

crosodo.com/nb/north-carolina/mecklenburg-county-discuss

Classifieds

Resources for cottage food & home bakers · crosodo.com/advertise

NATIONAL

SUPPLIES

Advertise here — Supplies

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

COURSES

Advertise here — Courses

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

INSURANCE

Advertise here — Insurance

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

LOCAL

Advertise here

Reach home bakers in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Supply stores, farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and bakery services welcome.

crosodo.com/advertise

Your business here

Local cottage food listings, kitchen rentals, co-packer referrals, and community events — post yours on Crosodo.

crosodo.com/nb/north-carolina/mecklenburg-county-discuss

Free ad space available

Let us know if you're a non-profit or community organization. Farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and cottage food events near you welcome.

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