

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

New Hanover County

North Carolina · Wilmington · FIPS 37129 · Population 228,134 · Crosodo Index #2859*

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

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

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Conditional

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION

Yes

PETS

**No pets allowed in home at any time —
presence of any pet disqualifies
applicant**

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: NEW HANOVER COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2859* · FIPS 37129 · Wilmington

New Hanover County

Population 228,134 · State baseline: 02 NCAC 9C.0307 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Conditional (Annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. Pets in home at any time disqualify applicant. Kitchen must be in the dwelling. Shelf-stable low-risk foods only. Must check with New Hanover County Planning for home occupation permit.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No pets allowed in home at any time — presence of any pet disqualifies applicant

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes (New Hanover County and City of Wilmington may require home occupation permits under local zoning. NC home processor application step 4 requires checking with local planning/zoning. Check with New Hanover County Planning & Land Use.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Annual inspection by NCDA&CS required)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Conditional — Annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. Pets in home at any time disqualify applicant. Kitchen must be in the dwelling. Shelf-stable low-risk foods only. Must check with New Hanover County Planning for home occupation permit.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No pets allowed in home at any time — presence of any pet disqualifies applicant
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required; private well may require testing
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing; sanitary kitchen per GMP inspection
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods only; no refrigerated or frozen products

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — Annual inspection by NCDA&CS required
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes — New Hanover County and City of Wilmington may require home occupation permits under local zoning. NC home processor application step 4 requires checking with local planning/zoning. Check with New Hanover County Planning & Land Use.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Conditional

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct and indirect sales allowed (retail, restaurants, markets) after annual inspection. Wilmington city limits have municipal zoning.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; home occupation restrictions may limit

Relevant county code

02 NCAC 9C.0307; New Hanover County Unified Development Ordinance

RESEARCH NOTES

New Hanover County NC follows NC state baseline. Annual inspection and pet prohibition apply. County .gov URL (nhcgov.com) confirmed from input. No county-specific cottage food ordinance text retrieved. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nhcgov.com>

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

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

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	New Hanover County	Brunswick County	Pender County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Conditional	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No pets allowed in home at any time — presence of any pet disqualifies applicant	No pets allowed in the home — any pets disqualify the applicant from the NC home processor program.	No pets allowed in the home at all — presence of pet animals in the home disqualifies the applicant under GMP requirements (21 CFR 117 Subp...
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional	Yes	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct and indirect sales allowed (retail, restaurants, markets) after annual inspection. Wilmington city limits have municipal zoning.	Direct and indirect sales permitted within NC. Sales from home, farmers markets, roadside stands, restaurants, and retail stores allowed.	Sales permitted at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, craft fairs, home delivery, and online (within NC). Indirect sales to stores permit...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Conditional	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. Pets in home at any time disqualify applicant. Kitchen must be in the dwelling. Shelf-s...	Annual inspection by NCDA&CS required. Pets in the home disqualify the applicant entirely. Products must be shelf-stable; no refrigerated o...	NC state law requires annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS. Pets in the home disqualify the applicant entirely. Shelf-stable, low-risk...
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods only; no refrigerated or frozen products	Shelf-stable only; products stored per good manufacturing practices.	Shelf-stable storage required; products must be non-refrigerated.
POPULATION	228,134	139,721	61,592

State context — North Carolina cottage food law

New Hanover 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 02 NCAC 9C.0307	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT No
KITCHEN INSPECTION Yes	DIRECT SALES ONLY 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 New Hanover 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/new-hanover-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 New Hanover 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/new-hanover-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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