

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Mercer County

Pennsylvania · Mercer · FIPS 42085 · Population 110,600 ·
Crosodo Index #2434*

STATE BASELINE

3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737 (Limited Food Establishment); no sales cap; registration required (\$35/2-year); initial inspection required; limited indirect sales; not available in Philadelphia County

STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
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

Mercer County, Pennsylvania — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Yes

PETS

Standard food safety GMP practices apply; inspection will assess kitchen cleanliness.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under Pennsylvania 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
- ☐ Pennsylvania home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Pennsylvania label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

PENNSYLVANIA: MERCER COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2434* · FIPS 42085 · Mercer

Mercer County

Population 110,600 · State baseline: 3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737 (Limited Food Establishment); no sales cap; registration required (\$35/2-year); initial inspection required; limited indirect sales; not available in Philadelphia County · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment registration with PA Department of Agriculture. Mercer County is outside Philadelphia County, so LFE program applies. Initial on-site kitchen inspection required before registration.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Standard food safety GMP practices apply; inspection will assess kitchen cleanliness.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Mercer County and city of Mercer may have home occupation zoning requirements. No specific county overlay found. State LFE registration is primary regulatory requirement.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Initial on-site inspection required before registration. Subsequent routine inspections apply. Submit application at least 60 days before operating.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment registration with PA Department of Agriculture. Mercer County is outside Philadelphia County, so LFE program applies. Initial on-site kitchen inspection required before registration.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Standard food safety GMP practices apply; inspection will assess kitchen cleanliness.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required; well water testing may be required if not on public system.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required and assessed at inspection.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable products. Acidified/fermented foods have specific testing requirements.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — Initial on-site inspection required before registration. Subsequent routine inspections apply. Submit application at least 60 days before operating.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Mercer County and city of Mercer may have home occupation zoning requirements. No specific county overlay found. State LFE registration is primary regulatory requirement.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Pennsylvania allows direct sales and limited indirect sales. Online sales permitted with in-state delivery.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No specific state limit; local zoning may apply.

Relevant county code

3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737

RESEARCH NOTES

State baseline applied (PA tier Good). Mercer County is in western Pennsylvania near the Ohio border. No county-specific URLs provided. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.mercercounty.gov>

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/food/limited-food-establishment.html>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Mercer County	Lawrence County	Crawford County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Standard food safety GMP practices apply; inspection will assess kitchen cleanliness.	Not specifically stated in state law; kitchen inspection evaluates overall conditions.	Kitchen inspection evaluates overall conditions.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Pennsylvania allows direct sales and limited indirect sales. Online sales permitted with in-state delivery.	Pennsylvania LFE allows direct and limited indirect sales (farmers markets, events, online with in-state delivery, retail stores). Some TCS...	Pennsylvania LFE allows direct and limited indirect sales within Pennsylvania framework.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment registration with PA Department of Agriculture. Mercer County is outside Philadelphia Co...	Pennsylvania Limited Food Establishment (LFE) registration required (\$35 for 2-year registration). Initial on-site kitchen inspection requi...	Same as all PA counties (except Philadelphia): Limited Food Establishment registration (\$35, 2-year), initial kitchen inspection required, ...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable products. Acidified/fermented foods have specific testing requirements.	No specific statutory storage requirement beyond general food safety.	No specific statutory storage requirements beyond general food safety.
POPULATION	110,600	85,907	83,876

State context — Pennsylvania cottage food law

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

STATUTE

3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737

ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Yes

FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

KITCHEN INSPECTION

Yes

DIRECT SALES ONLY

No

INDIRECT SALES

Limited (see notes) — Registration includes sales direct from the production site including internet sales. However, a separate Retail Food Facility License may be required for sales at events or Farmers Markets. Businesses aiming to sell across state lines might also need FDA registration. The registration covers home-based operations in residential kitchens as well as residential-style kitchens in alternate locations such as churches, fire halls, or remodeled garages. Not available in Philadelphia County.

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Pennsylvania cottage food law report](#) on Crosodo, or open the live guide: crosodo.com/states/pennsylvania.

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/consCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&ttl=03&div=0&chpt=57>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/food/limited-food-establishment.html>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/pennsylvania/>

Questions about Mercer 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/pennsylvania/mercercounty-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 Mercer County, Pennsylvania. 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/pennsylvania/mercer-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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