

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

DeKalb County

Tennessee · Smithville · FIPS 47041 · Population 21,747 ·
Crosodo Index #1081*

STATE BASELINE

Tenn. Code §53-1-125 (Food Freedom Act)

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

CONFIDENCE

MEDIUM

LAST VERIFIED

2026-05-06

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

DeKalb County, Tennessee — 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

No

PETS

No specific pet restriction in state law; standard food safety hygiene practices apply.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Tennessee label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

TENNESSEE: DEKALB COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1081* · FIPS 47041 · Smithville

DeKalb County

Population 21,747 · State baseline: Tenn. Code §53-1-125 (Food Freedom Act) · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Tennessee Food Freedom Act (Tenn. Code §53-1-125, effective July 1, 2022) broadly allows any non-TCS homemade food from a private residence. No license, permit, inspection, or registration required. No sales cap. No labeling requirements beyond a disclosure statement.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific pet restriction in state law; standard food safety hygiene practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (DeKalb County zoning regulations may require a home occupation permit for commercial activities at a residence. Operators should check with DeKalb County offices in Smithville.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (DOH may investigate only in connection with a foodborne illness investigation; no routine or complaint-only inspection authority for cottage food.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Tennessee Food Freedom Act (Tenn. Code §53-1-125, effective July 1, 2022) broadly allows any non-TCS homemade food from a private residence. No license, permit, inspection, or registration required. No sales cap. No labeling requirements beyond a disclosure statement.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific pet restriction in state law; standard food safety hygiene practices apply.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific state cottage food water supply requirement.
HANDWASHING	No specific state cottage food handwashing mandate; standard hygiene practices recommended.
FOOD STORAGE	No specific state cottage food storage requirement; non-TCS foods must be stored appropriately.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — DOH may investigate only in connection with a foodborne illness investigation; no routine or complaint-only inspection authority for cottage food.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — DeKalb County zoning regulations may require a home occupation permit for commercial activities at a residence. Operators should check with DeKalb County offices in Smithville.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Broad — direct and indirect sales permitted. Online, in-person, delivery, farmers markets, retail stores all allowed under Tennessee Food Freedom Act.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law.

Relevant county code

DeKalb County Zoning Code (home occupation provisions); no specific cottage food county code identified.

RESEARCH NOTES

No county-specific cottage food ordinance found for DeKalb County, TN. Applied Tennessee Food Freedom Act state baseline (Tenn. Code §53-1-125, eff. July 1, 2022). DeKalb County is in middle TN (seat: Smithville). County zoning for home occupation should be verified locally.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.dekalbcounty.gov>

<https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/businesses/food/food-manufacturing/domestic-kitchen.html>

<https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/acts/112/pub/pc0862.pdf>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	DeKalb County	Cannon County	Smith County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	—
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	—
PETS ALLOWED	No specific pet restriction in state law; standard food safety hygiene practices apply.	No specific pet restriction in state law; standard food safety hygiene practices apply.	—
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	No	—
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	—
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	—
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Broad — direct and indirect sales permitted. Online, in-person, delivery, farmers markets, retail stores all allowed under Tennessee Food F...	Broad — direct and indirect sales permitted. Online, in-person, delivery, farmers markets, retail stores all allowed under Tennessee Food F...	—
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	—
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	—
RESTRICTIONS	Tennessee Food Freedom Act (Tenn. Code §53-1-125, effective July 1, 2022) broadly allows any non-TCS homemade food from a private residence...	Tennessee Food Freedom Act (Tenn. Code §53-1-125, effective July 1, 2022) broadly allows any non-TCS homemade food from a private residence...	—
FOOD STORAGE	No specific state cottage food storage requirement; non-TCS foods must be stored appropriately.	No specific state cottage food storage requirement; non-TCS foods must be stored appropriately.	—
POPULATION	20,209	14,481	20,034

State context — Tennessee cottage food law

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

STATUTE

Tenn. Code §53-1-125 (Food Freedom Act)

ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

No

FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

KITCHEN INSPECTION

No

DIRECT SALES ONLY

No

INDIRECT SALES

Yes — The Tennessee Food Freedom Act (Public Chapter 862, effective July 1, 2022) broadly exempts production and sale of non-TCS homemade food items from all licensing, permitting, inspecting, packaging, and labeling laws. Sales may be direct to consumer in person or remotely. Local government ordinances restricting homemade food sales are preempted. Note: Prior to the 2022 Food Freedom Act, the older domestic kitchen regulations (TDA Chapter 0080-4-11) required a permit, inspection, and food safety certification, and limited sales to 100 units/week; the Food Freedom Act supersedes these requirements for qualifying non-TCS homemade foods.

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/2021/title-53/chapter-8/>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/businesses/food/food-manufacturing/domestic-kitchen.html>

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

Questions about DeKalb 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/tennessee/dekalb-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 DeKalb County, Tennessee. 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/tennessee/dekalb-county-discuss

Free ad space available

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