

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Maine

A comprehensive guide to the cottage food statute, sales rules, and county-level zoning and health-department overlays for home bakers operating under 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act).

STATUTE

7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act)

TIER

Freedom

IJ GRADE

B+

COUNTIES COVERED

16

LAST VERIFIED

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.

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Executive summary

This report covers the Maine cottage food framework — the state statute, the regulatory body administering it, what producers can and cannot sell, and county-level rules layered on top of state law for the 16 Maine counties included in this dataset.

ANNUAL SALES CAP

none

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

yes

FOOD HANDLER CERTIFICATION

no

KITCHEN INSPECTION

yes

DIRECT SALES ONLY

no

INDIRECT SALES (RETAIL/ONLINE/WHOLESALE)

yes — Under the statewide Home Food Processor License, producers may sell at any venue including restaurants, retail stores, farmers markets, and online, with no sales limit; indirect wholesale and retail channels are allowed once licensed and kitchen-inspected.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine's food sovereignty framework has two distinct pathways. (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License (dating to 1980s): Requires a license (\$unknown fee), kitchen inspection by DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations, and well/septic testing if not on public systems. Most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed; some acidified foods and low-sugar jams need University of Maine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). Sellers at farmers markets also need a Mobile Food Vendor license. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances: First adopted by Sedgwick in 2009; by 2025 over 80+ municipalities have adopted ordinances. Under §284, these municipal ordinances override state food law for direct producer-to-consumer transactions. The Food Sovereignty Act (PL 2017, c. 314) codified this at the state level. PL 2025, c. 309 (enacted in 2025) made significant amendments adding new definitions (consumer, food producer, food sovereignty, traditional foodways) and expanding the food producer definition to include those who acquire food from another source and process/prepare it in a kitchen. Maine's Constitution Article I, Section 25 (Right to Food, adopted 2021) provides additional legal foundation. 'Uncontrolled children' are prohibited in the kitchen during production under the statewide license rules.

Maine Revised Statutes Title 7, Chapter 8-F — Direct Producer-to-Consumer Transactions (Food Sovereignty Act), Sections 282–285; originally enacted PL 2017, c. 314, last amended PL 2025, c. 309

CITATION	ENACTED
7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act)	2017
LAST AMENDED	CONFIDENCE
2025	HIGH

Allowed foods

Under the Food Sovereignty Act, in municipalities with local food sovereignty ordinances, almost any food produced and sold in a direct producer-to-consumer transaction is allowed, including vegetables, fruits, eggs, dairy, meat, poultry, fish, seafood, cider, juice, acidified foods, canned fruits/vegetables, honey, nuts, maple products, baked goods, sandwiches, and other meals. Under the statewide home food processor license (separate from the Food Sovereignty Act), most shelf-stable non-TCS foods are allowed after kitchen inspection.

Prohibited foods

Under the statewide home food processor license pathway, perishable baked goods are prohibited and low-acid pressure-canned foods made at home may not be sold. Acidified foods (salsas, pickles, certain dressings, chocolate sauces) require prior approval from the University of Maine's School of Food and Agriculture. The Food Sovereignty Act's municipal ordinance pathway has fewer prohibitions but is limited to participating municipalities.

Labeling requirements

Under the statewide license, label requirements apply for packaged products sold away from the home; however, no label is required for products sold directly from the producer's home. Labels for retail/market sales must include standard food labeling information. The Food Sovereignty Act municipal ordinance pathway may have different local requirements.

Statutory text — verbatim excerpt

Statute excerpt — verbatim

§282. Definitions As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings. [PL 2017, c. 314, §1 (NEW).] 1. Direct producer-to-consumer transaction. "Direct producer-to-consumer transaction" means an exchange of food or food products directly between a food producer and a consumer by barter, trade or purchase on the property or premises owned, leased or rented by the food producer; at roadside stands, fundraisers, farmers' markets and community social events; or through buying clubs, deliveries or community-supported agriculture programs, herd-share agreements and other private arrangements. [PL 2023, c. 420, §1 (AMD).] 2. Food or food products. "Food or food products" means food or food products that are grown, produced, processed or prepared for human consumption, including, but not limited to, vegetables, fruit, eggs, grain or grain products, herbs, seasonings or spices, milk or milk products, meat or meat products, poultry or poultry products, fish or fish products, seafood or seafood products, cider or juice, acidified foods, canned fruits or vegetables, honey, nuts, maple products or condiments or any combination of those items, such as baked goods, sandwiches or other meals, and that are provided in a direct producer-to-consumer transaction. [PL 2025, c. 309, §5 (AMD).] 2-B. Food sovereignty. "Food sovereignty" means the right of persons to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and the right of persons to define their own food and agriculture systems. §284. Authority Notwithstanding any provision of law regulating food in this Title or Title 22 to the contrary, except as contained in section 285, a municipality or plantation may adopt ordinances regarding traditional foodways and direct producer-to-consumer transactions, and the State shall recognize such ordinances by not enforcing those laws or implementing rules with respect to those traditional foodways or direct producer-to-consumer transactions that are governed by the ordinance.

Source: <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

Official sources

Statute <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

State dept page https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

Extension service <https://extension.umaine.edu/food-health/food-preservation/>

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

State dept of agriculture / health: **Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry**

County-level rules

The state statute above sets the floor. Each county may add a home-occupation permit, business license, or zoning rule on top of state law. The 16 Maine counties below are sorted by population (largest first).

RANK 228 · FIPS 23005 · Portland

Cumberland County

Population 303,357 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); in municipalities with local food sovereignty ordinances, broad direct sales allowed without state license; outside those ordinances, standard ME home food processor program applies (registration and kitchen inspection required) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — If municipality has adopted local food sovereignty ordinance: most foods allowed, direct producer-to-consumer sales, no state license needed. Otherwise: registration and kitchen inspection required from ME Dept of Agriculture
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Standard sanitation; no specific state restriction
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing practices
FOOD STORAGE	Appropriate storage per food type

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required before operating under standard ME home food processor program; complaint-based under food sovereignty ordinances
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Varies by municipality within Cumberland County. Portland and other cities may have home occupation zoning permits. Food sovereignty ordinance municipalities may have additional local requirements. Operator should check with local town/city planning

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Under food sovereignty ordinance: direct producer-to-consumer sales broadly allowed. Under standard program: direct and indirect sales permitted

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified

Relevant county code

Varies by municipality; food sovereignty ordinances at town/city level

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine's Food Sovereignty Act creates a complex patchwork depending on whether individual municipalities have adopted local ordinances. Cumberland County contains Portland (largest city in ME). County government URL appears to be the health dept (per batch input data formatting irregularity). No county-wide overlay found.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.cumberlandcounty.org>

<https://www.cumberlandcounty.org>

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

RANK 318 · FIPS 23031 · Alfred

York County

Population 212,691 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); Maine Home Food Processor License · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License: requires kitchen inspection by Maine DACF, well/septic testing if not on public systems, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed; some acidified foods require University of Maine lab approval. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinance (for participating municipalities): in towns with a food sovereignty ordinance, almost any food can be sold direct producer-to-consumer with minimal restrictions. York County has many municipalities; check individual town ordinances for food sovereignty participation.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Maine statewide Home Food Processor License rules prohibit 'uncontrolled children' in the kitchen during production. Pet restrictions apply under GMP standards; pets may be considered a contamination risk during inspection.
WATER SUPPLY	If not on public water/sewer systems: well water and septic testing required for the statewide Home Food Processor License pathway.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required; verified during kitchen inspection under the statewide license pathway.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods under the statewide license. Acidified foods (salsas, pickles, certain dressings) require prior University of Maine School of Food and Agriculture approval (~\$26-39/product). Low-acid pressure-canned foods may not be sold.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Statewide Home Food Processor License requires initial kitchen inspection by DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations before license is issued. Local Food Sovereignty Ordinance path: no routine inspection required.
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HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT conditional — York County municipalities vary. Under the statewide license pathway, local zoning may require a home occupation permit. Under the Food Sovereignty Act, local municipal ordinances govern; some municipalities have adopted food sovereignty ordinances (over 80+ in Maine as of 2025). York County municipalities like Kittery, York, Wells, Kennebunk, Biddeford, and Saco each have their own zoning rules. Contact individual town/city offices for home occupation permit requirements.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Statewide license pathway: most sales channels permitted; farmers market vendors need additional Mobile Food Vendor license. Food Sovereignty Act pathway: direct producer-to-consumer transactions; sales must be in-state and directly to the end consumer.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME No explicit employee cap in Maine cottage food programs; home occupation zoning may restrict non-resident employees.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); Maine DACF Home Food Processor License regulations; individual York County municipality zoning ordinances

RESEARCH NOTES

Input JSON had malformed fields (county_seat was 'Freedom', notes was 'verified-large'). York County seat is Alfred (confirmed from general knowledge; York County is a coastal county in southern Maine). The input fields for county_govt_url, county_health_url, county_planning_url, and county_code_municode appear to have been shifted/corrupted in the source data — I used the yorkcountymaine.gov and yorkcounty.gov/planning values that appeared in shifted positions. Maine's dual pathway (statewide license vs. food sovereignty) makes York County complex as municipalities vary widely. Over 80 Maine municipalities have food sovereignty ordinances as of 2025. PL 2025 c. 309 made significant amendments to the Food Sovereignty Act in 2025.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.yorkcountymaine.gov>

<https://www.yorkcounty.gov/planning>

<https://www.yorkcountymaine.gov>

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

RANK 439 · FIPS 23019 · Bangor

Penobscot County

Population 152,640 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	conditional — Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License — requires license, kitchen inspection by DACF, and well/septic testing if not on public systems. Most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed; some acidified foods need University of Maine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — if the municipality has adopted an ordinance, direct producer-to-consumer transactions are exempt from state food law (almost any food allowed). Bangor and other Penobscot County municipalities may or may not have adopted food sovereignty ordinances.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production; no specific pet restriction listed but good practices required.
WATER SUPPLY	Well water testing required for statewide Home Food Processor License if not on public water system.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing required per DACF inspection for statewide license.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods for statewide license. Acidified foods need lab approval. Almost anything allowed under food sovereignty ordinance.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection by DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations. Food sovereignty ordinance pathway requires no inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Penobscot County municipalities may have home occupation permit requirements. Bangor and other cities each have their own zoning rules. Farmers market vendors also need a Mobile Food Vendor license at the state level.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Statewide license: sales from home, at farmers markets (with Mobile Food Vendor license), online, direct-to-consumer, and some retail. Food sovereignty ordinance: direct producer-to-consumer transactions exempt from most regulations.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified by state law; local home occupation rules may apply.

Relevant county code

Penobscot County municipalities' zoning ordinances; 7 M.R.S.A. §282; 7 M.R.S.A. §284

RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county. Maine has two-track system. Food sovereignty ordinances available if municipality has adopted. Bangor status as food sovereignty municipality not confirmed. Statewide Home Food Processor License pathway requires initial inspection. Input data had malformed JSON (county_govt_url set to 'Freedom'). No Penobscot County-specific cottage food code identified.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

Kennebec County

Population 124,003 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); statewide Home Food Processor License pathway; kitchen inspection required for statewide license; no sales cap; Freedom tier · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License (requires kitchen inspection by DACF, well/septic testing if applicable); (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances (available in 80+ municipalities, broader foods allowed including potentially hazardous, no state inspection). Kennebec County municipalities may have adopted local food sovereignty ordinances.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license pathway: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production; pets prohibited per GMP standards during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Private well or septic users must submit water testing under statewide license pathway. Public water system users face no additional testing.
HANDWASHING	Standard food safety handwashing practices; no mandatory certification for most products.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable non-TCS products stored per food safety standards. Acidified foods and low-acid pressure-canned foods require prior University of Maine approval for statewide license pathway.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection by Maine DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations before license issued. Food Sovereignty Ordinance pathway does not require state inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Maine is a Freedom tier state. Under Food Sovereignty Ordinances, municipal-level rules govern. Municipalities adopting ordinances may or may not require additional local permits. Under statewide license pathway, no separate home occupation permit required beyond DACF license. Kennebec County does not have unincorporated areas (Maine is organized as towns/cities). Each municipality has its own zoning.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Maine allows direct sales (farmers markets, home, events) under statewide license. Farmers market sales also require a Mobile Food Vendor license. Food Sovereignty Ordinance allows direct producer-to-consumer transactions with minimal restrictions within participating municipalities.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No specific state limit for cottage food; local municipality rules may apply.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); 7 M.R.S.A. §284 (local ordinances); Maine Constitution Article I, Section 25

RESEARCH NOTES

Note: Input data for this record has parsing issues (state_tier and county_govt_url fields appear swapped; county_seat is blank; verification_status is blank; notes field contains 'verified-large'). State is ME, tier is Freedom, county_seat for Kennebec County is Augusta. Maine's Freedom tier means broad allowances but inspection required under statewide license pathway. Kennebec County includes Augusta (state capital). Over 80 municipalities in Maine have adopted Food Sovereignty Ordinances; Augusta and others in Kennebec County may have local ordinances. No county-specific cottage food overlay applies as Maine has no county government equivalent. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

Freedom

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

RANK 542 · FIPS 23001 · Auburn

Androscoggin County

Population 111,532 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); statewide Home Food Processor License pathway; kitchen inspection required for statewide license; no sales cap; Freedom tier · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License (requires kitchen inspection by DACF); (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances (available in 80+ municipalities, broader foods allowed, no state inspection). Androscoggin County municipalities may have adopted local food sovereignty ordinances.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production; pets prohibited per GMP standards during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Private well or septic users must submit water testing under statewide license pathway.
HANDWASHING	Standard food safety practices; no mandatory certification for most products.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable non-TCS products for statewide license. Acidified foods and low-acid pressure-canned foods require prior University of Maine approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection before license issued. Food Sovereignty Ordinance pathway does not require state inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Maine has no county government equivalent. Each municipality in Androscoggin County (Auburn, Lewiston, etc.) has its own zoning. Under Food Sovereignty Ordinances, municipal rules govern. Contact individual town/city in Androscoggin County for local permit requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
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ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Maine allows direct sales under statewide license. Farmers market sales also require a Mobile Food Vendor license. Food Sovereignty Ordinance allows direct producer-to-consumer within participating municipalities.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No specific state limit; local municipality rules may apply.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); 7 M.R.S.A. §284

RESEARCH NOTES

Note: Input data has parsing issues (county_govt_url shows 'Freedom' which is a data entry error; actual ME tier is Freedom). Androscoggin County includes Lewiston and Auburn (the twin cities, pop combined ~80K). Maine's Freedom tier means broad allowances but the statewide license pathway requires kitchen inspection. Maine has no county government equivalent; each municipality has separate rules. PL 2025, c. 309 made significant amendments to the Food Sovereignty Act. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

Freedom

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

RANK 788 · FIPS 23003 · Houlton

Aroostook County

Population 67,237 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Kitchen inspection required for home food processor license. Registration required. Direct-to-consumer and indirect sales allowed. Perishable baked goods prohibited under statewide pathway. Acidified foods (salsas, pickles) require prior USDA/UMaine approval. Low-acid pressure-canned foods may not be sold. Food Sovereignty Act pathway available in participating municipalities with fewer restrictions.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state law

WATER SUPPLY	Standard residential water supply
HANDWASHING	Good sanitation practices required
FOOD STORAGE	Appropriate storage; no perishable items under home processor pathway

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Initial inspection required for home food processor license; complaint-based follow-up
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Maine home food processors must register with the Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Municipalities participating in the Food Sovereignty Act may have their own ordinances. Aroostook County (largest county by area in eastern US) is very rural; most towns may or may not participate in Food Sovereignty Act.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct and indirect sales allowed; no out-of-state sales
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

Relevant county code

Not identified at county level

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine Freedom-tier state. Aroostook County is the largest county by area east of the Mississippi River - very rural, agricultural region. Note: batch input had data corruption (county_govt_url showing 'Freedom' text). Kitchen inspection required for statewide license. Food Sovereignty Act offers municipality-level alternative. No county-specific sources available. Pattern county.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

Oxford County

Population 58,276 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); Maine Home Food Processor License · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License — requires license, kitchen inspection by DACF, and well/septic testing if applicable. Most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinance (Food Sovereignty Act) — in municipalities that have adopted an ordinance, almost any food can be sold direct to consumers without state licensing. Oxford County municipalities must be checked individually.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under the statewide license, 'uncontrolled children' are prohibited in the kitchen during production; pets likely subject to similar restrictions per GMP.
WATER SUPPLY	Private well or septic requires testing under the statewide Home Food Processor License pathway.
HANDWASHING	Required as part of kitchen inspection under the statewide license pathway.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-TCS products required under statewide license; Food Sovereignty Act pathway has fewer restrictions.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Initial kitchen inspection required for the statewide Home Food Processor License by DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations. Complaint-based inspection possible.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Oxford County municipalities vary. Under the Food Sovereignty Act pathway, municipalities with adopted ordinances allow direct producer-to-consumer sales. Operators should check with their specific town in Oxford County.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
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ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: farmers markets, home sales, events. Under Food Sovereignty Act: direct-to-consumer including home sales, farmers markets, and other venues. Farmers market sellers also need a Mobile Food Vendor license under the statewide pathway.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; household members may assist.

Relevant county code

Check individual Oxford County municipalities for Food Sovereignty Ordinances (over 80 Maine municipalities have adopted them as of 2025).

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine's dual-pathway system is unique. Oxford County is a rural western Maine county. Many Maine towns have adopted Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances allowing broader sales without state licensing. The Food Sovereignty Act was amended by PL 2025, c. 309. Acidified foods under the statewide license require University of Maine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). Maine's Constitution Article I, Section 25 (Right to Food, 2021) provides additional legal foundation.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

- https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml
- <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

RANK 915 · FIPS 23009 · Ellsworth

Hancock County

Population 55,851 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); statewide Home Food Processor License · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection by Dacf, well/septic testing if not on public systems, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed, some acidified foods need UMaine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances: if Hancock County municipality has adopted ordinance, broader direct-to-consumer sales including potentially hazardous foods allowed. Multiple Hancock County municipalities (e.g., Brooklin, Penobscot, Surry, and others) have adopted food sovereignty ordinances.
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SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license pathway: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production. Standard sanitation applies for pets.
WATER SUPPLY	Under statewide license: well water testing required if not on public water supply. Food sovereignty pathway: no such requirement for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.
HANDWASHING	Standard sanitation required under statewide license; no formal requirement under food sovereignty pathway.
FOOD STORAGE	Under statewide license: non-TCS shelf-stable products only. Under food sovereignty: broader including potentially hazardous foods if sold directly.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Statewide license pathway requires pre-operational kitchen inspection by DACF. Food sovereignty pathway is inspection-exempt for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Statewide Home Food Processor License required for sales beyond home municipality or at farmers markets (with additional Mobile Food Vendor license). Food sovereignty municipalities allow direct sales without state license. Hancock County seat is Ellsworth. Check individual municipality for food sovereignty ordinance adoption.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: sales at farm, farm stands, farmers markets (with additional license), and home direct sales. Under food sovereignty: direct producer-to-consumer sales broadly allowed in participating municipalities.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; must be producer's home kitchen.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282-284 (Food Sovereignty Act); Maine Home Food Processor License regulations under DACF

RESEARCH NOTES

Hancock County is in coastal Maine (Acadia National Park area). Maine's food sovereignty movement is particularly active in rural Maine; by 2025 over 80 municipalities have adopted food sovereignty ordinances. Multiple Hancock County municipalities have adopted these ordinances. Input batch had data formatting errors in state_dept_name and state_tier fields. The statewide license (dating to 1980s) requires pre-operational inspection plus well/septic testing if not on public systems. PL 2025, c. 309 made significant amendments expanding the food producer definition.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

RANK 976 · FIPS 23025 · Skowhegan

Somerset County

Population 50,656 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License: requires DCF kitchen inspection, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed; acidified foods require University of Maine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). (2) Food Sovereignty Ordinance municipalities: direct producer-to-consumer transactions exempt from most rules in participating municipalities. Somerset County municipalities with food sovereignty ordinances may allow broader foods.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production. Pets not explicitly mentioned in state rules.
WATER SUPPLY	Under statewide license: well/septic testing required if not on public systems.
HANDWASHING	Required as part of DCF kitchen inspection under statewide license.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable products under statewide license; broader foods may be permitted under Food Sovereignty Ordinances in participating municipalities.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Statewide license requires DACF inspection. Food Sovereignty Ordinance pathway: no inspection required for participating municipality transactions. Some Somerset County municipalities may have Food Sovereignty Ordinances.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Maine governance is town-based. Individual towns in Somerset County govern their own zoning. Recommend verifying with the specific town planning board (e.g., Skowhegan, Pittsfield, Madison, Solon). Some towns may have adopted Food Sovereignty Ordinances.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: sales at farmers markets require additional Mobile Food Vendor license. Under Food Sovereignty Ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer transactions broadly permitted.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; 7 M.R.S.A. §284; Maine DACF Home Food Processor rules; PL 2025 c. 309

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine has a unique dual-track system. Somerset County is a largely rural central Maine county. Some municipalities in Maine have adopted Food Sovereignty Ordinances (80+ statewide as of 2025). PL 2025 c. 309 made significant amendments including new definitions and expanded food producer definition. Maine Constitution Article I, Section 25 (Right to Food, 2021) provides additional foundation. No Somerset County-specific rules found; governance is at town level in Maine.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23007 · Farmington

Franklin County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions. Franklin County municipalities with food sovereignty ordinances may allow broader foods including perishables.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited during production; animals typically excluded from production areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results (coliforms, nitrates, nitrites) for statewide home food processor license.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maine food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods and low-sugar jams may require University of Maine lab approval. Local food sovereignty ordinances may allow broader storage requirements.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Franklin County municipalities vary in whether they have adopted food sovereignty ordinances (localfoodrules.org confirms Franklin County is listed among counties with food sovereign communities). Individual towns within Franklin County administer their own zoning; consult each town for home occupation permit requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
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ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed, including most food types. Sellers at farmers markets also need a Mobile Food Vendor license.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act); ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied: Food Sovereignty Act (7 M.R.S.A. §282) plus statewide Home Food Processor License pathway. Franklin County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. The two-pathway system means producers should verify which pathway applies in their specific municipality. PL 2025, c. 309 expanded the Food Sovereignty Act definitions in 2025. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

- https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml
- <https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23013 · Rockland

Knox County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no

PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: animals typically excluded from production areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results for statewide home food processor license.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maine food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods may require University of Maine lab approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Knox County municipalities vary; Knox County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities (localfoodrules.org). Individual towns within Knox County administer their own zoning.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed. Sellers at farmers markets need a Mobile Food Vendor license.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied. Knox County confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. Rockland is a coastal city with a farmers market. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23015 · Wiscasset

Lincoln County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: animals typically excluded from production areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results for statewide home food processor license.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maine food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods may require University of Maine lab approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Lincoln County municipalities vary; Lincoln County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities (localfoodrules.org). Individual towns within Lincoln County administer their own zoning.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
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ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed. Sellers at farmers markets need a Mobile Food Vendor license.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied. Lincoln County confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. County includes Boothbay Harbor area with seasonal tourism. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23021 · —

Piscataquis County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions. Piscataquis is Maine's largest and most sparsely populated county.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: animals typically excluded from production areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results for statewide home food processor license.

HANDWASHING	Required per Maine food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods may require University of Maine lab approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Piscataquis County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities (localfoodrules.org). No county seat listed in input data. As Maine's most rural inland county, many areas are unorganized territories not subject to municipal zoning. Individual towns and plantations administer their own rules.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed. Sellers at farmers markets need a Mobile Food Vendor license.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town/plantation ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied. Piscataquis County confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. This is Maine's largest but least populous county; many areas are unorganized territories. No county seat provided in input data. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23023 · Bath

Sagadahoc County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: animals typically excluded from production areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results for statewide home food processor license.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maine food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods may require University of Maine lab approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Sagadahoc County municipalities vary; Sagadahoc County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities (localfoodrules.org). Individual towns within Sagadahoc County (including Bath, Topsham, Brunswick area) administer their own zoning.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed. Sellers at farmers markets need a Mobile Food Vendor license.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied. Sagadahoc County confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. Sagadahoc is a smaller coastal county near Brunswick. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23027 · Belfast

Waldo County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN no

PET RESTRICTIONS Under statewide license: animals typically excluded from production areas during production.

WATER SUPPLY Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results for statewide home food processor license.

HANDWASHING Required per Maine food safety standards.

FOOD STORAGE Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods may require University of Maine lab approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Waldo County municipalities vary; Waldo County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities (localfoodrules.org). Individual towns within Waldo County administer their own zoning.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed. Sellers at farmers markets need a Mobile Food Vendor license.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied. Waldo County confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. Belfast is a mid-coast Maine town with active food culture. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 23029 · Machias

Washington County

Population 0 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License from ME DACF — requires kitchen inspection, well/septic testing if applicable, most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed. (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — in participating municipalities, nearly any food allowed for direct producer-to-consumer transactions. Washington County is Maine's easternmost and most rural county (Downeast Maine).
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Under statewide license: animals typically excluded from production areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users must provide water test results for statewide home food processor license.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maine food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods required under statewide license. Acidified foods may require University of Maine lab approval.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Kitchen inspection required by ME DACF for statewide Home Food Processor License. Local food sovereignty ordinances may not require inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Washington County municipalities vary; Washington County is confirmed as having food sovereign communities (localfoodrules.org). Individual towns within Washington County administer their own zoning. Many areas are unorganized territories.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Under statewide license: direct and indirect sales allowed. Under food sovereignty ordinances: direct producer-to-consumer sales allowed. Sellers at farmers markets need a Mobile Food Vendor license.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specifically restricted under statewide license framework.

Relevant county code

7 M.R.S.A. §282; ME DACF Home Food Processor License requirements; individual town/plantation ordinances.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maine state baseline applied. Washington County confirmed as having food sovereign communities per localfoodrules.org. Washington County is Downeast Maine — large, rural, with significant Native American communities and blueberry farming. Many unorganized territories exist. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml

<https://www.localfoodrules.org/food-sovereignty-by-county/>

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