

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

New Jersey

A comprehensive guide to the cottage food statute, sales rules, and county-level zoning and health-department overlays for home bakers operating under N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq..

STATUTE	TIER	IJ GRADE	COUNTIES COVERED	LAST VERIFIED
N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq.	Poor	D	21	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 New Jersey 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 21 New Jersey counties included in this dataset.

ANNUAL SALES CAP

50000

FOOD HANDLER CERTIFICATION

yes

DIRECT SALES ONLY

yes

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

yes

KITCHEN INSPECTION

no

INDIRECT SALES (RETAIL/ONLINE/WHOLESALE)

no — Cottage food products may only be delivered or relinquished at: the operator's home (not for onsite consumption), the consumer's NJ home, a NJ farmers market or other permitted NJ location. Products cannot be sold to wholesale establishments, retail food establishments, or shipped out of state. Online and phone order-taking is allowed as an ancillary activity, but physical delivery must occur in New Jersey person-to-person or at permitted locations. Charitable bake sales remain exempt under separate provisions.

RESEARCH NOTES

New Jersey was effectively the last state to legalize cottage food. The cottage food program was created by N.J.A.C. 8:24-11, adopted July 16, 2021 (effective October 4, 2021) by the NJ Department of Health following an Institute for Justice lawsuit (IJ case: 'New Jersey Bake Sale'). Regulations were further updated in January 2022. Requirements include: (1) local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted; (2) Food Protection Manager Certification (not just a food handler card); (3) proof of water potability (well water test or utility bill); and (4) a \$100 permit fee valid for 2 years. The application review takes 12-16 weeks. Home kitchens are not routinely inspected but the health authority may enter if there is a complaint or suspected foodborne illness. Annual sales cap is \$50,000 per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11.3(b). The cottage food program covers NJ residents only. The original statute_url in the input pointed to the full N.J.A.C. 8:24 PDF; the subchapter 11 rules page is the more direct reference.

New Jersey Administrative Code Title 8, Chapter 24, Subchapter 11 – Cottage Food Operator Permit (Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments, Food and Beverage Vending Machines and Cottage Food Operations)

CITATION

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq.

ENACTED

2021

LAST AMENDED

2022

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

Allowed foods

Non-TCS (non-time/temperature-control-for-safety) foods prepared in the operator's private home kitchen are allowed, including: baked goods (bread, cakes, cupcakes, cookies), candy and brittle, chocolate-covered nuts and dried fruit, dried fruit, dried herbs and seasonings, dried pasta, dry baking mixes, fruit jams/jellies/preserves, fruit pies and empanadas (excluding pumpkin), fudge, granola/cereal/trail mix, honey and sweet sorghum syrup, nuts and nut mixtures, nut butters, popcorn and caramel corn, roasted coffee and dried tea, vinegar and mustard, waffle cones and pizzelles, and other non-TCS foods upon written application.

Prohibited foods

All TCS (time/temperature-control-for-safety) foods are prohibited, including items requiring refrigeration. Cottage food products may not be sold to wholesale food establishments or retail food establishments for resale. Dog treats and pet food are excluded. Gross annual sales may not exceed \$50,000.

Labeling requirements

Each package must be labeled with: common product name; ingredients in descending order by weight; allergen statement ('Contains' plus listed allergens); operator's name and business name; permit number; town/municipality and 'NJ'; and the required disclosure: 'this food is prepared pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 in a home kitchen that has not been inspected by the Department of Health.' At point-of-sale locations other than operator's or consumer's home, a placard must also be displayed.

Statutory text — verbatim excerpt

Statute excerpt — verbatim

§ 8:24-11.1 Requirement and procedure to obtain a Cottage Food Operator Permit (a) A person or entity that engages in the production, distribution, and/or sale of food to consumers shall: 1. Have a Cottage Food Operator Permit; or 2. Comply with applicable laws to retail food establishments. § 8:24-11.2 Authorized cottage food operator activity (a) A Cottage Food Operator Permit authorizes a holder thereof: 1. To produce cottage food products in the private kitchen of the operator's residence and at no other location; and 2. Subject to N.J.A.C. 8:24-11.5, to distribute cottage food products to consumers thereof without being subject to initial or periodic inspection by a health authority and other requirements applicable to retail food establishments pursuant to this chapter. § 8:24-11.3 Prohibited cottage food operator activity (b) The gross annual sales (that is, before deductions of taxes and operating expenses) that a cottage food operator generates from the sale of cottage food products shall not exceed \$ 50,000. § 8:24-11.6 Application fees; permit duration; permit renewal (a) The fee to apply for a Cottage Food Operator Permit is \$ 100.00. (b) A Cottage Food Operator Permit is valid for two years from date of issuance. (c) The fee to apply for renewal of a Cottage Food Operator Permit is \$ 100.00. § 8:24-11.4 Cottage food point-of-sale notice, packaging, and labeling (c) A cottage food operator shall affix one or more labels or tags on cottage food that collectively state at least: the common name of the cottage food product; list of ingredients in descending order of predominance by weight; allergens statement; Cottage Food Operator's name and business name; Cottage Food Operator's Permit number; town or municipality and 'NJ'; and the statement: 'this food is prepared pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 in a home kitchen that has not been inspected by the Department of Health.'

Source: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/rules/>

Official sources

Statute https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/phfpp/njac8_24.pdf

State dept page <https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

Registration <https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/apply-renew>

Extension service <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/cottage-food/>

Forrager.com <https://forrager.com/law/new-jersey/>

State dept of agriculture / health: [New Jersey Department of Health](#)

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 21 New Jersey counties below are sorted by population (largest first).

RANK 55 · FIPS 34003 · Hackensack

Bergen County

Population 953,243 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. (adopted Oct. 4, 2021); annual cap \$50,000 · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must be operator's private home kitchen. Production must not occur in a rented or commercial kitchen. State permit (\$100, 2-year) required before selling.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state rules; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of potable water required: water bill for municipal supply, or well test results for private well
HANDWASHING	Standard sanitation required; Food Protection Manager certification implies knowledge of proper handwashing
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage practices per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No home kitchen inspection required. Health authority may inspect upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness.
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HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — NJ state law requires local zoning board approval confirming that the residential use for a cottage food operation is permitted before the state permit application is submitted. Each municipality in Bergen County has its own zoning board (Bergen County has 70 municipalities). Contact the applicable municipal zoning board for approval. State permit: \$100 via NJ Dept. of Health, valid 2 years. Local ordinances are not preempted under NJ law.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only. Online orders allowed but delivery must be in-person (no mail or third-party carrier). Sales may occur at home, farmers markets, farm stands, and direct-to-consumer events. No wholesale to restaurants or grocery stores. \$50,000 annual cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	unknown

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11; municipal zoning ordinances vary by municipality

RESEARCH NOTES

NJ cottage food law requires local zoning board approval as a prerequisite to the state permit application. Bergen County has 70 separate municipalities each with their own zoning boards — rules vary significantly. No specific Bergen County-level ordinance was found superseding or modifying the state framework. The state permit is \$100 for 2 years, requires Food Protection Manager certification (not just a food handler card), proof of potable water, and approved foods from the NJ approved list. Local ordinances are not preempted. New Jersey was the last state to legalize cottage food (2021). Applications take 12-16 weeks for review.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.co.bergen.nj.us>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food-seller/new-jersey/>

Middlesex County

Population 860,147 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. (Oct. 4, 2021); annual cap \$50,000 ·

MEDIUM

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must be operator's private home kitchen. State permit required (\$100, 2-year). Food Protection Manager certification required. Local zoning board approval required before state permit application.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Water bill (municipal) or well test results (private well) required as part of permit application
HANDWASHING	Food Protection Manager certification (CFPM-level) required
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No routine inspection. Health authority may inspect upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted is required before the state permit application. Middlesex County has 25 municipalities each with their own zoning codes. Contact the applicable municipal zoning board. No county-level override of state framework found.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer only. Online orders allowed but delivery must be in-person (no mail/carrier). Sales at home, farmers markets, events. No wholesale. \$50,000 annual cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	unknown

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11; municipal zoning codes vary

RESEARCH NOTES

Middlesex County follows NJ state baseline. No Middlesex County-specific modification of state cottage food rules found. The requirement for local zoning board approval means individual municipal rules within the county are critical. Middlesex County includes diverse municipalities including New Brunswick, Edison, Piscataway, and others.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.middlesexcountynj.gov>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food-seller/new-jersey/>

RANK 69 · FIPS 34013 · Newark

Essex County

Population 853,374 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. (Oct. 4, 2021); annual cap \$50,000 ·

MEDIUM

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must be operator's private home kitchen. State permit required (\$100, 2-year). Food Protection Manager certification required. Local zoning board approval required before state permit application.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Water bill (municipal) or well test results (private well) required
HANDWASHING	Food Protection Manager certification required
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED no — No routine inspection. Health authority may inspect upon complaint.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT yes — Local zoning board approval required before state permit application. Essex County has 22 municipalities including Newark, Montclair, Bloomfield, and others — each with its own zoning code. Contact the applicable municipal zoning board. Newark and other densely urbanized municipalities may have specific home occupation restrictions.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct-to-consumer only. Online orders allowed with in-person delivery. No mail/carrier delivery. No wholesale. \$50,000 annual cap.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME unknown

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11; municipal zoning codes vary significantly

RESEARCH NOTES

Essex County follows NJ state baseline. The county includes Newark (NJ's largest city) and other dense urban municipalities. Local zoning board approval is required for each application — this is particularly important in Essex County given the diverse urban and suburban municipalities. No Essex County-specific modification of the state cottage food framework found.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.essexcountynj.org>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food-seller/new-jersey/>

RANK 92 · FIPS 34017 · Jersey City

Hudson County

Population 712,029 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. (Oct. 4, 2021); annual cap \$50,000 ·

MEDIUM

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must be operator's private home kitchen. State permit required (\$100, 2-year). Food Protection Manager certification required. Local zoning board approval required before state permit application.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Water bill (municipal) or well test results required
HANDWASHING	Food Protection Manager certification required
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No routine inspection. Health authority may inspect upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Local zoning board approval required before state permit application. Hudson County is NJ's most densely populated county with 12 municipalities (Jersey City, Hoboken, Bayonne, Union City, North Bergen, etc.). Each municipality has its own zoning board. Dense urban municipalities may have specific home occupation restrictions for cottage food. Contact applicable municipal zoning board.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer only. Online orders with in-person delivery. No mail/cARRIER. No wholesale. \$50,000 annual cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	unknown

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11; municipal zoning codes vary significantly in dense urban county

RESEARCH NOTES

Hudson County is the most densely populated county in NJ and one of the densest in the US. The local zoning board approval requirement is especially critical here given the dense urban character of municipalities. Jersey City, Hoboken, and others have distinct zoning regimes. No Hudson County-specific modification of state cottage food framework found. The 12-16 week application review time applies statewide.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.hcnj.us>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

RANK 105 · FIPS 34025 · Freehold

Monmouth County

Population 643,064 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must produce only non-TCS (non-time/temperature control for safety) foods on the approved list. Must obtain local zoning board approval as part of permit application. \$100 permit fee. Food protection manager certificate required.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction specified
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of safe water required (water bill or well test) as part of state permit application
HANDWASHING	Implied by food safety requirements; food protection manager certification required
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; standard kitchen storage

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No kitchen inspection required under NJ cottage food law; state permit is issued without pre-operational inspection
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HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval as a prerequisite step in the state Cottage Food Operator Permit application. Applicants must obtain this before applying to NJDOH. Each of Monmouth County's 53 municipalities has its own zoning board and home occupation provisions. Contact local municipal zoning office for specific requirements.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct sales to consumers only. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Allowed foods are on state-approved list only. Online sales and delivery permitted within NJ. No wholesale to stores or restaurants.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified in state law

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Local zoning varies by municipality in Monmouth County.

RESEARCH NOTES

New Jersey enacted its cottage food program via N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 (effective October 2021). State tier is Poor. Key requirements: \$100 permit, food protection manager certification (not just food handler — CFPM level), local zoning board approval, proof of safe water, approved foods list only, \$50,000 annual cap, direct consumer sales only. State does NOT preempt local ordinances. Each of Monmouth County's 53 municipalities has independent zoning. Confidence medium: state requirements confirmed from official NJ.gov source; Monmouth County-specific zoning rules not retrieved.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.visitmonmouth.com>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food-seller/rhode-island/>

RANK 106 · FIPS 34029 · Toms River

Ocean County

Population 638,691 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must produce only non-TCS foods on the state-approved list. Local zoning board approval required. \$100 permit fee. Food protection manager certificate required.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction specified
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of safe water required (water bill or well test) as part of state permit application
HANDWASHING	Implied by food safety requirements; food protection manager certification required
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; standard kitchen storage

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No kitchen inspection required under NJ cottage food law
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval as a prerequisite step in the state permit application. Each of Ocean County's 33 municipalities has its own zoning board and home occupation provisions. Contact local municipal zoning office for specific requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers only. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Allowed foods are on state-approved list only. Online sales and delivery permitted within NJ. No wholesale to stores or restaurants.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Local zoning varies by municipality in Ocean County.

RESEARCH NOTES

Same state baseline as Monmouth County (NJ). Ocean County has 33 municipalities. State requirements: CFPM certification, local zoning board approval, approved foods list only, \$50,000 cap, \$100 fee, no pre-operational inspection. State does not preempt local ordinances. No county-specific cottage food pages found for Ocean County. Confidence medium: state law confirmed; Ocean County municipality-level zoning details not retrieved.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.co.ocean.nj.us>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 118 · FIPS 34039 · Elizabeth

Union County

Population 572,079 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must produce only non-TCS foods on state-approved list. Local zoning board approval required as prerequisite. \$100 permit fee. Food protection manager certificate required.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction specified
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of safe water required (water bill or well test)
HANDWASHING	Implied by food protection manager certification requirement
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; standard kitchen storage

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED no — No kitchen inspection required under NJ cottage food law

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval as prerequisite to state permit. Union County has 21 municipalities, each with its own zoning board. Contact local municipal zoning office.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct sales to consumers only. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Approved foods list only. Online sales and delivery within NJ. No wholesale.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified in state law

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Local zoning varies by municipality in Union County.

RESEARCH NOTES

Same NJ state baseline as Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Union County is densely populated suburban county adjacent to NYC. 21 municipalities. State: CFPM certification, local zoning board approval, \$100 fee, \$50,000 cap, no pre-operational inspection, approved foods list. State does not preempt local zoning. Confidence medium: state law confirmed; Union County municipality-level zoning not retrieved.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://ucnj.org>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 134 · FIPS 34007 · Camden

Camden County

Population 522,581 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must produce only non-TCS foods on state-approved list. Local zoning board approval required. \$100 permit fee. Food protection manager certificate required.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction specified
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of safe water required (water bill or well test)
HANDWASHING	Implied by food protection manager certification requirement
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; standard kitchen storage

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No kitchen inspection required under NJ cottage food law
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval as prerequisite to state permit. Camden County has 37 municipalities, each with its own zoning board. Contact local municipal zoning office.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers only. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Approved foods list only. Online sales and delivery within NJ. No wholesale.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Local zoning varies by municipality in Camden County.

RESEARCH NOTES

Same NJ state baseline. Camden County is densely populated suburban county adjacent to Philadelphia. 37 municipalities. State: CFPM certification, local zoning board approval, \$100 fee, \$50,000 cap, no pre-operational inspection. State does not preempt local zoning. No county government website URL provided in input; Camden County official site is camdencounty.com. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 136 · FIPS 34031 · Paterson

Passaic County

Population 519,986 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must produce only non-TCS foods on state-approved list. Local zoning board approval required. \$100 permit fee. Food protection manager certificate required.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction specified
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of safe water required (water bill or well test)
HANDWASHING	Implied by food protection manager certification requirement
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; standard kitchen storage

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No kitchen inspection required under NJ cottage food law
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval as prerequisite to state permit. Passaic County has 16 municipalities, each with its own zoning board. Passaic County is densely urban (Paterson, Clifton, etc.). Contact local municipal zoning office.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers only. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Approved foods list only. Online sales and delivery within NJ. No wholesale.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Local zoning varies by municipality in Passaic County.

RESEARCH NOTES

Same NJ state baseline. Passaic County is a densely populated county near New York City. 16 municipalities. State: CFPM certification, local zoning board approval, \$100 fee, \$50,000 cap, no pre-operational inspection. State does not preempt local zoning. No county URL provided in input. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 138 · FIPS 34027 · Morristown

Morris County

Population 508,816 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must produce only non-TCS foods on state-approved list. Local zoning board approval required. \$100 permit fee. Food protection manager certificate required.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction specified
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of safe water required (water bill or well test)
HANDWASHING	Implied by food protection manager certification requirement

FOOD STORAGE Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; standard kitchen storage

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED no — No kitchen inspection required under NJ cottage food law

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval as prerequisite to state permit. Morris County has 39 municipalities, each with its own zoning board. Contact local municipal zoning office.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct sales to consumers only. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Approved foods list only. Online sales and delivery within NJ. No wholesale.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified in state law

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Local zoning varies by municipality in Morris County.

RESEARCH NOTES

Same NJ state baseline. Morris County is an affluent suburban county in northern NJ. 39 municipalities. State: CFPM certification, local zoning board approval, \$100 fee, \$50,000 cap, no pre-operational inspection. State does not preempt local zoning. No county URL provided in input. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 152 · FIPS 34005 · Mount Holly

Burlington County

Population 461,853 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	conditional — New Jersey requires a state Cottage Food Operator Permit (\$100 fee, valid 2 years) from NJ Department of Health. Applicant must: (1) first verify local zoning allows cottage food business; (2) obtain Food Protection Manager Certification (not just food handler); (3) provide proof of water potability; (4) submit product questionnaire for each item. Home kitchen not inspected unless complaint or suspected illness. Annual gross sales cap \$50,000. Burlington County operators must additionally comply with applicable local municipal laws.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state rule; standard food safety GMP applies.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required with application: microbiological coliform analysis (within 60 days) if private well; copy of recent water bill if public water.
HANDWASHING	Handwashing facilities required per food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable food storage only. No TCS (refrigerated) foods permitted.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Health authority may inspect upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness; no routine inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — NJ requires applicant to confirm local zoning allows cottage food before state permit is issued. Burlington County municipalities have their own zoning ordinances; applicant must contact local zoning board to confirm cottage food operation is permitted in residential zone. If local zoning prohibits, state permit will not be issued.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
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ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Sales allowed from home, at farmers markets, and NJ events. Local health department approvals required for market/event sales. No sales outside NJ. No wholesale to retail/wholesale food establishments.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; production must occur in private residential kitchen only.

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 (state Cottage Food Operator rules); local Burlington County municipal zoning ordinances vary by township.

RESEARCH NOTES

NJ state cottage food rules are well-documented with .gov sources. Burlington County has no county-level cottage food program; state permit administered by NJ DOH, local zoning approval required first. NJ is a 'Poor' tier state: restrictive list of non-TCS foods, Food Manager Certification required (not just food handler), \$50,000 cap, direct sales only. Local Burlington County municipal zoning (Mount Holly Township, Evesham, etc.) varies; applicant must verify with local zoning board before applying to state.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/rules>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/apply-renew>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/faq/>

RANK 185 · FIPS 34021 · Trenton

Mercer County

Population 383,732 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	conditional — New Jersey requires a state Cottage Food Operator Permit (\$100 fee, valid 2 years) from NJ Department of Health. Requirements: (1) local zoning must allow cottage food business; (2) Food Protection Manager Certification; (3) proof of water potability; (4) product questionnaire for each item. Annual gross sales cap \$50,000. Home kitchen not inspected routinely. Only non-TCS foods permitted from approved list. Direct sales only within New Jersey.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no

PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state rule; standard food safety GMP applies.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required: microbiological coliform analysis if private well; recent water bill if public water.
HANDWASHING	Standard food safety practices required.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable food storage only.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Health authority may inspect upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness; no routine inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — NJ state permit process requires applicant to first confirm local zoning allows cottage food business. Mercer County municipalities (Trenton, Princeton, Hamilton Township, etc.) have their own zoning ordinances. Contact local zoning board before applying to state.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Sales from home, at NJ farmers markets and events (with local health dept approvals). No wholesale. No sales outside NJ.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Production must occur in private residential kitchen only.

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 (state Cottage Food Operator rules); local Mercer County municipal zoning codes vary.

RESEARCH NOTES

NJ state cottage food rules well-documented from .gov sources. Mercer County (Trenton) follows state NJ framework with no county-level cottage food program. Local municipal zoning approval required first. Food Manager Certification (not just food handler) required. Confidence medium: state law high-confidence; Mercer County municipal zoning rules not individually researched.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.mercercounty.org>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/rules>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/apply-renew>

RANK 207 · FIPS 34035 · Somerville

Somerset County

Population 344,978 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq.; cottage food operator registration required; \$50,000 annual sales cap; food handler certificate required; direct sales only · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Registration with NJ Dept of Health required; \$50,000 annual sales cap; food handler certificate required; direct to consumer only (no retail/wholesale); non-TCS foods only
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets excluded from production area during food preparation
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required
HANDWASHING	Proper handwashing facilities required
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods stored appropriately

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No routine inspection; complaint-based investigation possible
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — NJ cottage food law does not preempt local ordinances. Somerset County municipalities (Somerville, Bridgewater, etc.) may have home occupation permit requirements under local zoning; operator should verify with local municipality
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct to consumer only; no sales to retailers or restaurants; farmers markets and events allowed
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

Relevant county code

Not identified

RESEARCH NOTES

NJ rated 'Poor' — restrictive state law with \$50,000 cap and direct sales only. No Somerset County-specific ordinance found. County has no dedicated cottage food page. Pattern-status county.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 229 · FIPS 34015 · Woodbury

Gloucester County

Population 302,621 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq.; cottage food operator registration required; \$50,000 annual sales cap; food handler certificate required; direct sales only · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Registration with NJ Dept of Health required; \$50,000 annual cap; food handler cert required; direct to consumer only; non-TCS foods only
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets excluded from production area
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required
HANDWASHING	Proper handwashing facility required
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods stored appropriately

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — Complaint-based possible
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — NJ does not preempt local ordinances. Gloucester County municipalities may have home occupation permit requirements. Operator should verify with local municipality
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct to consumer only; no retail or wholesale; farmers markets and events allowed
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

Relevant county code

Not identified

RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern-status county. Same NJ 'Poor' tier baseline applies. No Gloucester County-specific overlay found.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 251 · FIPS 34001 · Mays Landing

Atlantic County

Population 274,339 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Must obtain NJ DOH Cottage Food Operator permit (\$100 fee, 2-year validity). Must first obtain local zoning approval confirming home-based business is permitted in residential zone. Requires Food Protection Manager Certification (CFPM-level) and proof of water potability. \$50,000 annual gross sales cap. Atlantic City, Galloway, and Egg Harbor Township may have city-specific rules.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state rules, but home kitchen must be sanitary
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required (well water test report or utility bill)
HANDWASHING	Standard food handler sanitation practices required

FOOD STORAGE Standard non-TCS food storage; products must remain shelf-stable

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED upon-complaint — Complaint or suspected foodborne illness; no routine inspection prior to permit but state reviews application

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT yes — Applicant must contact local municipal zoning board to confirm cottage food business is permitted in residential zone before NJ DOH will approve. Each municipality has its own zoning ordinance. Atlantic County unincorporated areas allow home occupations with conditions (must be secondary to residential use, no excessive traffic).

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct-to-consumer sales allowed; may sell at NJ farmers markets and events (local health dept approval also required); no wholesale to retail/food establishments

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified in state rules

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11; local municipal zoning ordinances vary by municipality

RESEARCH NOTES

NJ has a state-level cottage food permit system under N.J.A.C. 8:24-11. Atlantic County itself does not administer the cottage food permit — it is issued by NJ DOH. However, local municipal zoning approval (within Atlantic County's municipalities) is required before the state will issue the permit. State law requires zoning board sign-off first. The \$50,000 annual sales cap applies statewide. CityRuleLookup confirms Atlantic County unincorporated areas allow home occupations. No county-specific ordinance found that modifies the state baseline. Confidence medium because no direct Atlantic County .gov ordinance text was retrieved.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.atlantic-county.org>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/faq/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/apply-renew>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

RANK 437 · FIPS 34011 · Bridgeton

Cumberland County

Population 153,588 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	conditional — New Jersey cottage food program is restrictive. Requirements include: (1) local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted; (2) Food Protection Manager Certification (CFPM-level); (3) proof of water potability (well water test or utility bill); (4) \$100 permit fee valid for 2 years. Application review takes 12-16 weeks. Annual sales cap \$50,000. Allowed: non-TCS foods including baked goods, candy, dried goods, jams/jellies, nut butters, granola, honey, nuts, vinegar, mustard, and other non-TCS foods upon written application.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets must be excluded from food preparation areas per NJ cottage food permit requirements.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required: well water test or utility bill. Private well water testing required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing required per NJ cottage food permit standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods only. No wholesale sales. Annual gross sales may not exceed \$50,000.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — Home kitchens not routinely inspected; health authority may enter if there is a complaint or suspected foodborne illness.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted as part of the cottage food permit application. Cumberland County municipalities must provide this approval. This is a unique NJ requirement for cottage food operations specifically.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only. No wholesale to food establishments. No out-of-state sales. NJ residents only.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No employees may assist with cottage food production.

Relevant county code

Cumberland County municipal zoning ordinances; N.J.A.C. 8:24-11

RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county. State baseline governs. New Jersey was one of the last states to legalize cottage food (2021). Restrictive requirements include CFPM-level certification, 12-16 week application review, local zoning board approval required. No Cumberland County-specific cottage food code identified.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/phfpp/njac8_24.pdf

RANK 449 · FIPS 34037 · Newton

Sussex County

Population 144,808 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	conditional — New Jersey cottage food program is restrictive. Requirements: (1) local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted; (2) Food Protection Manager Certification (CFPM-level); (3) proof of water potability; (4) \$100 permit fee valid for 2 years. Application review takes 12-16 weeks. Annual sales cap \$50,000. Allowed: non-TCS foods including baked goods, candy, dried goods, jams/jellies, nut butters, granola, honey, nuts, vinegar, mustard, and other non-TCS foods upon written application. NJ residents only.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no

PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets must be excluded from food preparation areas per NJ cottage food permit requirements.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required: well water test or utility bill. Private well water testing required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing required per NJ cottage food permit standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods only. No wholesale sales. Annual gross sales may not exceed \$50,000.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — Home kitchens not routinely inspected; health authority may enter if there is a complaint or suspected foodborne illness.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — New Jersey requires local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted as part of the cottage food permit application. Sussex County municipalities must provide this approval.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only. No wholesale to food establishments. No out-of-state sales. NJ residents only.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No employees may assist with cottage food production.

Relevant county code

Sussex County municipal zoning ordinances; N.J.A.C. 8:24-11

RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county. State baseline governs. New Jersey cottage food restrictions are among the most onerous nationally. No Sussex County-specific cottage food code identified.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/phfpp/njac8_24.pdf

RANK 493 · FIPS 34019 · Flemington

Hunterdon County

Population 129,099 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — One of the most burdensome cottage food programs in the US. Requirements: (1) Local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted; (2) Food Protection Manager Certification (not just a food handler card); (3) proof of water potability (well water test or utility bill); (4) \$100 permit fee valid for 2 years. Annual sales capped at \$50,000. Application review takes 12-16 weeks. Home kitchens not routinely inspected but health authority may enter upon complaint.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not explicitly prohibited; kitchen sanitation required.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required (well water test or utility bill). Private well users must provide water test results.
HANDWASHING	Required per food safety standards; NJ DOH may inspect upon complaint.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods only from approved list. Stored in food-safe containers.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — NJ DOH health authority may enter and inspect upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Local zoning board approval is a required step in the NJ cottage food permit application process. Hunterdon County municipalities (Flemington Borough, municipalities throughout the county) must approve the residential use before the NJ DOH permit can be issued. Hunterdon County is a rural NJ county with many small municipalities.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	yes

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales only. No wholesale to food establishments or retail food establishments for resale. Sales within New Jersey only.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; NJ cottage food program is intended for individual home operators.

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 (NJ Cottage Food Operator permit rules). Local zoning board approval required as part of permit process.

RESEARCH NOTES

State baseline (NJ) confirmed: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11, \$100 biennial permit, \$50,000 cap, Food Protection Manager Certification required, local zoning board approval required, water potability proof required. Hunterdon County is a rural/suburban NJ county. No county-specific URLs in input. County follows state baseline. NJ is one of the last states to legalize cottage food (2021). Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/phfpp/njac8_24.pdf

RANK 551 · FIPS 34041 · Belvidere

Warren County

Population 109,739 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — New Jersey requires a Cottage Food Operator Permit from the NJ Department of Health. Only non-TCS foods are permitted. Annual gross sales cap of \$50,000. Operator must hold Food Protection Manager Certification. Private well water requires potability test. Local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted is required before a permit is issued.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets must be excluded from food preparation areas during production per standard NJ food safety requirements.
WATER SUPPLY	Private well water requires a potability test submitted with the permit application. Public water supply utility bill acceptable.

HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing facilities required per NJ food safety rules.
FOOD STORAGE	All ingredients and finished products must be stored properly to prevent contamination; non-TCS foods only.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Health authority may enter and inspect upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness. No routine pre-operational kitchen inspection required, but the permit application process includes review of zoning approval and water potability.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — NJ requires local zoning board approval confirming that operating a cottage food business from the residence is permitted under local zoning before the state permit is issued. Warren County municipalities each have their own zoning ordinances. Warren County does not have a county-level home occupation permit; operators must check with their specific municipality.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only. No wholesale to food establishments. Online orders and in-state delivery permitted. On-site pickup subject to local zoning.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute; cottage food is a personal residential operation.

Relevant county code

No specific Warren County code section identified for cottage food. State law governs: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11.

RESEARCH NOTES

Warren County has no county URLs in the input and no specific cottage food overrides were found. State baseline governs. NJ is among the last states to legalize cottage food (2021). Key requirements: NJ CFO Permit (\$100, 2-year), Food Protection Manager Certification (not just food handler), local zoning board approval, \$50,000 annual sales cap, non-TCS foods only. Application review takes 12-16 weeks. No county-specific rules found. Confidence medium because local zoning verification requires checking each municipality within Warren County.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/faq/>

RANK 625 · FIPS 34009 · Cape May Court House

Cape May County

Population 95,456 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **HIGH**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — New Jersey cottage food requires a state Cottage Food Operator Permit (N.J.A.C. 8:24-11): \$100 fee, valid 2 years. Must hold a Food Protection Manager Certification (CFPM-level, not just a food handler card). Must provide proof of water potability (well water test or utility bill). Must obtain local zoning board confirmation that cottage food business is allowed in the operator's residential zone BEFORE applying for state permit. \$50,000 annual sales cap. Allowed: non-TCS foods including baked goods, candy, dried fruit, jams/jellies, granola, honey, popcorn, nuts, nut butters, pasta, vinegar, mustard, and other non-TCS foods upon written application.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific restriction stated in N.J.A.C. 8:24-11, but kitchen must meet cleanliness standards.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required at application and renewal: well water microbiological analysis (coliform test within 60 days) or most recent water utility bill.
HANDWASHING	Food Protection Manager Certification covers handwashing and food safety; kitchen must meet basic standards.

FOOD STORAGE Non-TCS (non-temperature-control-for-safety) foods only. Wholesale to food establishments prohibited.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED upon-complaint — Health authority may enter premises if there is a complaint or suspected foodborne illness; no routine inspection (§8:24-11.2).

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT yes — New Jersey law (§8:24-11.1(e)) REQUIRES operators to obtain local zoning board confirmation that cottage food operations are allowed in their residential zone BEFORE applying for state permit. If local zoning board does not allow cottage food businesses, the operator is not eligible for a state permit. Cape May County municipalities vary in their zoning; operators must contact their local (municipal) zoning board first. This is a critical gating requirement unique to New Jersey.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Sales allowed at operator's home (no on-site consumption), consumer's NJ home, NJ farmers markets, NJ farm stands, NJ temporary retail food establishments, and other NJ delivery locations per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11.3. No US mail or common carrier delivery (except certain conditions). No out-of-state sales. Additional local health dept approvals needed for farmers market events.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Only operator in private home kitchen; no other persons may handle cottage food products per N.J.A.C. 8:24-11.2.

Relevant county code

N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq.; local municipal zoning ordinance (varies by municipality in Cape May County)

RESEARCH NOTES

NJ cottage food rules retrieved directly from nj.gov official pages (rules-resources/rules and apply-renew). **CRITICAL FINDING:** NJ requires local municipal zoning board confirmation BEFORE the state will issue a permit. If zoning does not allow cottage food, state permit is unavailable. This is unique among states and makes the effective rules highly municipality-dependent within Cape May County. Cape May County is a major tourism destination (Jersey Shore); most municipalities are residential/tourist. Food Protection Manager Certification (CFPM-level) is required — more burdensome than a basic food handler card. Processing time 12-16 weeks noted in prior research.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.capemaycountynj.gov>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/rules-resources/rules>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cottagefood/apply-renew>

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/phfpp/njac8_24.pdf

RANK 826 · FIPS 34033 · Salem

Salem County

Population 64,840 · State baseline: N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 et seq. · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — NJ cottage food program requires: (1) local zoning board approval confirming residential use permitted; (2) Food Protection Manager Certification (CFPM-level, not just food handler); (3) proof of water potability (well test or utility bill); (4) \$100 permit fee valid 2 years. Application review takes 12-16 weeks. Annual sales cap \$50,000.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific prohibition stated; kitchen inspection may assess condition
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required (well water test or utility bill). Salem County has many rural areas with private wells.
HANDWASHING	Handwashing facilities assessed during permit process
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods only; \$50,000 annual cap applies

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	no — No routine inspection; health authority may enter upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Local zoning board approval confirming residential use is permitted is REQUIRED before obtaining NJ cottage food permit. Salem County municipalities each have zoning boards. Contact Salem County Department of Planning & Community Development at (856) 935-7510 ext. 8491.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	yes

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers only; no wholesale or retail. No internet/mail order outside direct consumer transactions.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No specific limit stated

Relevant county code

Local municipality zoning ordinance for residential use confirmation

RESEARCH NOTES

New Jersey has one of the most burdensome cottage food frameworks: CFPM cert (not just food handler), local zoning board approval required, \$100 biennial permit, 12-16 week review, \$50,000 cap, no wholesale. Salem County is southern NJ agricultural county. Local zoning board approval is a hard prerequisite unique to NJ. No Salem County-specific overrides found beyond statewide requirements. No county URLs in input.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp/cottage-food-operator/>

https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/phfpp/njac8_24.pdf

Generated 2026-05-06 from data/research/state_cottage_food_statutes.csv and data/research/county_cottage_food_zoning.csv. This report is for research purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Cottage food law is in active flux — re-verify all citations and rules against state and county .gov sources before relying on them for regulatory decisions.