

## COTTAGE BAKERY FROM HOME

# Can I sell from my kitchen in Howard County, Iowa?

Home kitchen sales. Not a shop or rented commercial kitchen. Last verified 2026-05-06.

STATE FOOD PERMIT

**No**

HOME OCCUPATION

**Conditional**

BUSINESS LICENSE

**No**

SALES CAP

**—**

IOWA RULES. OPEN THESE FIRST.

[Iowa permits PDF](#)[Iowa cottage food law page](#)[Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals cottage food program](#)[Statute: Iowa Code §137F.1 / §137F.20](#)**NOT LEGAL ADVICE**

This is what it takes to sell from a home kitchen in Howard County. Confirm each step with Planning, Health, and the license office before you sell.

## What you need

Howard County, Iowa. File every Yes. Confirm every Check or Ask. Stay under the sales cap.

STATE FOOD PERMIT

**No**

ANNUAL SALES CAP

**—**

HOME OCCUPATION / ZONING

**Conditional**

LOCAL HEALTH

**No**

BUSINESS LICENSE

**No**

PICKUP AT THE HOUSE

**Yes**

### HOME KITCHEN ONLY

If you want a shop or a rented commercial kitchen, these rows do not apply.

### CONTINUE ONLINE

**Iowa permits PDF →**

<https://crosodo.com/reports/pdf/permits/iowa.pdf>

**Iowa cottage food law page →**

<https://crosodo.com/states/iowa>

**Permit page for this place →**

<https://crosodo.com/what-permits/iowa/howard-county>

**Howard County cottage food law page →**

<https://crosodo.com/states/iowa/howard-county>

Not legal advice. Rules change. Confirm with the office before you file.

## Where to file

### State

Iowa registration: No. Routine kitchen inspection: No. Cottage food direct-to-consumer sales only; however, a separate Home Food Processing Establishment (HFPE) license allows indirect retail and wholesale sales of almost any food including perishables.

Iowa permits PDF: [crosodo.com/reports/pdf/permits/iowa.pdf](https://crosodo.com/reports/pdf/permits/iowa.pdf)

State law page: [crosodo.com/states/iowa](https://crosodo.com/states/iowa)

Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals: <https://dia.iowa.gov/food-safety/home-food-establishment>

Statute: [Iowa Code §137F.1](#) / [§137F.20](#)

### Zoning / home occupation

Conditional. Iowa rural county zoning ordinances typically require a home occupation permit or conditional use approval for home-based businesses in unincorporated areas. Business must be incidental to residential use with no exterior evidence of commercial activity and limited customer traffic. Iowa Code §137F.20(1) preempts food-specific restrictions; Iowa Code §414.33 preempts city-level home business restrictions. County zoning governs unincorporated areas.

### Health

No. No routine inspection. Iowa DIAL (Dept. of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing) may investigate upon complaint of foodborne illness.

### Business license

No

### Pickup / delivery

Direct-to-consumer sales only under the cottage food exemption. Customers may pick up at home, or operator may sell at farmers markets, roadside stands, or events. No wholesale or retail indirect sales under the cottage food exemption (separate HFPE license required for indirect sales).

### If you rent a commissary kitchen

**DIA licenses food establishments.** Iowa cottage food is an exemption. A commissary or food establishment is licensed by the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (or the local board of health where they inspect).

Official source: [Iowa DIAL food establishments](#)

Local health office we have on file: <https://www.howardcountyiowa.gov>

This file is the home-kitchen path. A rented kitchen uses a different permit. Ask the kitchen manager which license they expect, then call the local health office.

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## SOURCES

<https://www.howardcountyiowa.gov>

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/137F.pdf>

## Howard County and nearby places

| Regulation                 | Howard County                                                                                                                                  | Mitchell County                                                                                                                                | Chickasaw County                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED       | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             |
| PETS ALLOWED               | No state or county-specific rule found; good practice is to exclude pets from food prep areas.                                                 | No specific pet restriction in Iowa cottage food law.                                                                                          | No state or county-specific rule found; good practice is to exclude pets from food prep areas.                                                 |
| INSPECTION REQUIRED        | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             |
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP    | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE            | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Conditional                                                                                                                                    |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP          | Direct-to-consumer sales only under the cottage food exemption. Customers may pick up at home, or operator may sell at farmers markets, roa... | Direct sales only under cottage food exemption. Allowed venues: home, farmers markets, roadside stands, special events, online (direct to c... | Direct-to-consumer sales only under the cottage food exemption. Customers may pick up at home, or operator may sell at farmers markets, roa... |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT     | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | No                                                                                                                                             | Conditional                                                                                                                                    |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE     | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             |
| RESTRICTIONS               | No license, registration, or inspection required under Iowa cottage food exemption (Iowa Code §137F.20). Allowed non-TCS foods include bake... | Iowa cottage food law (§137F.20, amended 2022 by HF 2431) allows sale of non-TCS shelf-stable foods directly to consumers from a private re... | No license, registration, or inspection required under Iowa cottage food exemption (Iowa Code §137F.20). Allowed non-TCS foods include bake... |
| FOOD STORAGE               | Cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; TCS foods not permitted under the cottage food exemption.                       | Non-TCS (non-time/temperature control for safety) shelf-stable foods only. Acidified foods (pickles, salsas) allowed if each batch is pH-te... | Cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; TCS foods not permitted under the cottage food exemption.                       |
| POPULATION                 | 9,332                                                                                                                                          | 10,537                                                                                                                                         | 11,933                                                                                                                                         |

## More pages for this place

These Crosodo pages cover the same home cottage-food path:

Iowa permits PDF: [crosodo.com/reports/pdf/permits/iowa.pdf](https://crosodo.com/reports/pdf/permits/iowa.pdf)

Iowa cottage food law: [crosodo.com/states/iowa](https://crosodo.com/states/iowa)

Howard County cottage food law: [crosodo.com/states/iowa/howard-county](https://crosodo.com/states/iowa/howard-county)