



Image Credit: Fimb

## How are Cottage Foods regulated?

Cottage foods are regulated under the Retail Foods Law (50-50-116 MCA). Cottage food operators are not required to have a food license and are not subject to inspection unless there is a complaint. However, operators are required to register their products and expected to maintain a clean kitchen and work space and practice safe food handling techniques. Registration is not required if non-potentially hazardous foods are being sold at farmers' markets only.

## How do you get registered?

Cottage food operators can obtain registration forms online. Applications are available on the Food and Consumer Safety website. Completed applications should be sent to your local county sanitarian. County sanitarian addresses and cottage food applications can be found at [fcss.mt.gov](http://fcss.mt.gov).

## Have more questions?

Contact your local health department's sanitarians for further information on cottage foods, or visit [fcss.mt.gov](http://fcss.mt.gov).



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Image Credit: Beckmann's Bakery

# COTTAGE FOODS IN MONTANA

*Information on cottage foods*



Image Credit: Migne

## What is cottage food?

Cottage foods are food items that are produced in a home kitchen and sold by the producer directly to the customer face-to-face. Not all foods can be sold as cottage foods. Cottage foods must qualify as non-potentially hazardous foods that do not allow for microbial growth. Also, cottage foods must be sold in-state only.

## What are non-potentially hazardous foods?

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Non-potentially hazardous foods are foods that do not require refrigeration or other controls to prevent foodborne illness.

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## What are some examples of non-potentially hazardous foods?

Foods such as dry baked goods including cookies, bars, cakes, pastries, breads, pies that do not require refrigeration, granola, cereal, trail mix, dried fruits, dried herbs, teas, coffee, dry soup mix, jams, jellies, honey, candies, and chocolates.



Image Credit: Clyde Robinson

## What are some foods that do not qualify as non-potentially hazardous foods?

Foods such as cooked or raw animal products including fish, poultry, eggs, and meat, cooked fruits and vegetables, dairy products, custard pies, salsas, pickled food items, and canned food items do not qualify as non-potentially hazardous.

## Why are cottage foods important?

Cottage foods benefit local communities by providing the residents with access to locally produced foods as well as expanding business opportunities. This can also benefit the local economy in these communities.