

Cottage Food Production Operation

Ohio Department of Agriculture | Division of Food Safety



What is a Cottage Food Production Operation?

A “Cottage Food Production Operation” is defined in Chapter 3715 of the Ohio Revised Code to mean, a person who, in the person’s home, produces food items that are not potentially hazardous foods, including bakery products, jams, jellies, candy, fruit butter, and similar products specified in rules. These foods must be labeled properly, or they will be considered misbranded or adulterated.

“Home” means the primary residence occupied by the residence’s owner, on the condition that the residence contains only one stove or oven used for cooking, which may be a double oven, designed for common residence usage and not for a commercial usage, and that the stove or oven be operated in an ordinary kitchen within the residence.

Foods **Permitted** to be Manufactured for Sale or Distribution by a Cottage Food Production Operation:

Permitted foods are not potentially hazardous bakery products (such as cookies, breads, brownies, cakes, fruit pies, etc.); candy (including no-bake cookies, chocolate covered pretzels or similar chocolate covered non-perishable items); jams; jellies; fruit butters; granola (including granola bars and granola bars dipped in candy); popcorn (including flavored popcorn, kettle corn, popcorn balls, caramel corn, but does not include un-popped popping corn); unfilled baked donuts; waffle cones; pizzelles; dry cereal and nut snack mixes with seasonings; roasted coffee (coffee may be whole beans or ground); dry baking mixes (for making items such as breads and cookies); dry herbs and dry herb blends; dry seasoning blends (such as dry barbecue rubs and seafood boils); dry tea blends; flavored honey made by a beekeeper exempt under ORC 3715.021; fruit chutney; maple sugar made by a processor of tree syrup exempt under ORC 3715.021; and dry soup mixes containing commercially dried vegetables, beans grains, and seasoning.

Foods **Not Permitted** to be Manufactured for Sale or Distribution by a Cottage Food Production Operation:

A “Cottage Food Production Operation” is not permitted to process acidified foods; low-acid canned foods; potentially hazardous foods; or not potentially hazardous foods not listed above. Low acid food means any food with a finished equilibrium pH greater than 4.6 and a water activity greater than 0.85. Acidified food means a low acid food to which acids or acid foods are added (Ex. Beans, cucumbers, cabbage, puddings, etc.). Potentially hazardous food means it requires temperature control because it is in a form capable of supporting the rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms (Ex. Raw or cooked animal products, cooked vegetables, garlic in oil, cheesecakes, pumpkin pies, custard pies, cream pies, etc.)

What are the Requirements for the Labeling of Cottage Food Products?

A “Cottage Food Production Operation” is required to label all food products properly, which include the following information on the label of each unit of food product offered or distributed for sale:

1. Statement of Identity - the name of the food product;
2. Net Quantity of Contents - the net weight, in both U.S. Customary System and International System
3. Ingredient List - ingredients of the food product, listed in descending order of predominance by weight;
4. Statement of Responsibility - the name and address of the business;
5. The following statement in ten-point type: “This Product is Home Produced.”

An ingredient that is or contains protein from a "major food allergen " must have the presence of the allergen declared by common name in the ingredient statement or by placing the word "Contains" followed by the name of each major food allergen present in the food. The "Contains" statement must be immediately after or adjacent to the ingredient statement. The "major food allergens" are milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, sesame and soybeans. The type of tree nut (e.g., almonds, walnuts, pecans, etc.), fish (e.g., anchovies), and crustacean shellfish (e.g., crab, lobster, shrimp, etc.) must be declared.

Note: If nutrient content claims (i.e. low fat, salt free, etc.) or health claims (i.e. may reduce heart disease) are made, the product must bear all required nutritional information in the form of the Nutrition Facts panel. All labeling components are to comply with 21 CFR Part 101, Food Labeling. The [FDA Food Labeling Guide](https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/LabelingNutrition/ucm2006828.htm) (<https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/LabelingNutrition/ucm2006828.htm>) is an excellent resource for the proper labeling of food products.

What does the Statement "This Product is Home Produced" Mean?

The statement means that the food product was produced in a private home that is not subject to inspection by a food regulatory authority.

Where can Cottage Food Production Operations Sell Their Food Products?

Cottage Food Products may only be sold in Ohio. Cottage Food Products that are properly identified and labeled may be sold directly to the consumer from the home where the products are produced. They may also be sold through licensed grocery stores, registered farm markets, farmers market, and sold and/or used in preparing food in a licensed restaurant. Cottage foods may also be sold at festivals or celebrations, on the condition that the festival or celebration is organized by a political subdivision of the state and lasts for a period not longer than seven consecutive days.

Does a Cottage Food Production Operation Need to Acquire a License to Process and Package Food Products?

No. A "Cottage Food Production Operation" is exempt from inspection and licensing by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. However, all food products, including those produced and packaged by "Cottage Food Production Operations," are subject to food sampling conducted by the Ohio Department of Agriculture to determine if a food product is misbranded or adulterated.

Questions? Contact ODA Division of Food Safety; 614-728-6250; E-mail: foodsafety@agri.ohio.gov.

Please see the Label Example on the following page.

Basic Required Food Labeling Components Label Example

(Cottage Food Production)

This label example is just one way to present the information required on a food product label. Information may be placed in different ways and may appear on more than one label. Labels must comply with all applicable regulations and all information must be accurate and not misleading. **Foods cannot be made with partially hydrogenated oils. Additional information can be found at:**

<https://www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/FoodAdditivesIngredients/ucm449162.htm>

Ingredient List – Ingredients shall be listed by common or usual name in descending order of predominance by weight. Meaning, the ingredient that weighs the most is listed first, followed by the next heaviest ingredient, with the ingredient that weighs the least listed last.

Any ingredient that is composed of two or more ingredients (sub-ingredients) must list those sub-ingredients parenthetically following the name of the ingredient. The label of any food that contains an ingredient that is or contains a protein from a “major food allergen” shall declare the presence of the allergen by its common or usual name either in the list of ingredients or placing the word “Contains” followed by the name of the food source from which the allergen is derived immediately after or adjacent to the list of ingredients (e.g. Contains: wheat, soy, milk, eggs, almonds).

Ref: ORC 3715.023

Statement of Identity –

The Statement of Identity is the name of the food. The name shall be the common or usual name of the food and shall accurately identify or describe the basic nature of the food or its characterizing properties or ingredients.

Ref: ORC 3715.023

Statement of Responsibility – Shall include the:

Business Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

All information in the *Statement of Responsibility* shall be continuous.

Telephone numbers, web-site addresses, and e-mail addresses are permitted, but not required. This type of extra information shall not be placed between the Ingredient List and the Statement of Responsibility and cannot be used in lieu of listing the business name, street address, city, state, and/or zip code.

Ref: ORC 3715.023

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED FLOUR (BLEACHED WHEAT FLOUR, MALTED BARLEY FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMINE MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN, FOLIC ACID), BROWN SUGAR (MOLASSES, SUGAR), SEMI-SWEET CHOCOLATE CHIPS (SEMI-SWEET CHOCOLATE (SUGAR, CHOCOLATE LIQUOR, COCOABUTTER), SOY LECITHIN, VANILLA), VEGETABLE SHORTENING (SOYBEAN AND COTTONSEED OIL, MONO- AND DIGLYCERIDES, ARTIFICIAL BUTTER FLAVOR, BETA CAROTENE (PRO VITAMIN A-ADDED FOR COLOR)), MILK CHOCOLATE CHUNKS (SUGAR, COCOA BUTTER, MILK, CHOCOLATE LIQUOR, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLIN), EGGS, MILK, BAKING POWDER (POTASSIUM BITARTRATE, CORN STARCH, BAKING SODA), NATURAL FLAVOR, SALT, BAKING SODA.

Agriculture Cookie Co.
8995 E. Main Street
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

NET WT 8 OZ (227 g)

This product is home produced.

ODA – Ohio Department of Agriculture
ORC – Ohio Revised Code

The 9 major food allergens are sesame, milk, eggs, tree nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts, pecans), peanuts, wheat, soybeans, fish (e.g., anchovies) and Crustacean shellfish.

Net Quantity of Contents – The term “NET WEIGHT” - or an appropriate abbreviation - shall be used when stating the Net Quantity of Contents in terms of weight. The Net Quantity of Contents shall be declared in both the U.S. Customary System and the SI (metric system).

Ref: ORC 3715.023

Cottage Food Declaration – Food products that are manufactured in compliance with Ohio’s Cottage Food Rules, must be properly labeled and bear the statement, “This product is home produced.” in 10-point type font.

The statement means that the food product was produced in a private home that is not subject to inspection by a food regulatory authority.

Ref: ORC 3715.023