



COTTAGE FOODS & FARMERS MARKETS

COTTAGE FOODS

“Cottage foods” are foods that are prepared in a residence that is not subject to licensing or inspection. As defined by legislation, cottage foods must be properly labeled and meet ALL of the following criteria:



- The food is prepared in a private residence;
- The food is sold directly from the producer to the consumer;
- The food does not need to be kept hot or cold to ensure safety (“time/temperature-controlled for safety,” or TCS). When it is not obvious whether a food needs to be kept hot or cold for safety, the food producer must provide documentation that it doesn’t need to be kept hot or cold to the regulatory authority upon request;
- The food is not unpasteurized fruit or vegetable juice;
- The food is not a milk or milk product regulated under Iowa Code chapters 192 and 194, OR a meat, meat food product, poultry, or poultry food product regulated under Iowa Code Chapter 189A.

The only food establishment where cottage foods can be sold are temporary food establishments, if the temporary establishment is operated by the producer of the food and is packaged and labeled as outlined above.

LABELING REQUIREMENTS FOR COTTAGE FOODS

Cottage foods must have the following on the label:

- Information to identify the name and address, phone number, or electronic mail address of the person preparing the food;
- The common name of the food;
- The ingredients of the cottage food in descending order of predominance;
- The following statement: *“This product was produced at a residential property that is exempt from state licensing and inspection”*;
- If the cottage food contains one or more major food allergens, an additional allergen statement identifying each major allergen contained in the food by its common name. (Major allergens include: milk, egg, fish (like bass, flounder, or cod), shellfish (like crab, lobster, or shrimp), tree nuts (like almonds, pecans, or walnuts), wheat, peanuts, soybeans, sesame, or food ingredients that contain protein derived from one of these allergens.);
- If the food is home-processed and contains home-canned pickles, vegetables, or fruits permitted under this rule, the date that the food was processed and canned.



Mama B's Home Bakery

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Mama's Famous Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients: Enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, riboflavin, folic acid), butter (milks, water, salt), chocolate chips (sugar, chocolate liqueur, cocoa butter, butterfat, milk), soy lecithin (as an emulsifier), sugar, eggs, salt, vanilla extract, baking soda

CONTAINS: WHEAT, EGG, MILK, SOY

This product was produced at a residential property that is exempt from state licensing and inspection.

COTTAGE FOOD **MAY** INCLUDE HOME-CANNED PICKLES, VEGETABLES, OR FRUITS IF **ALL** OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

- 🍽 The product has a pH value of 4.60 or lower or a water activity (Aw) of .85 or lower;
- 🍽 Each batch is measured by a pH meter or (Aw) meter;
- 🍽 Each container is properly labeled, including the date the food was produced and canned;
- 🍽 The producer provides documentation to the regulatory authority upon request.

FARMERS MARKETS

A "farmers market" is a marketplace which operates seasonally, mainly as a retail common market for Iowa-produced farm products for consumption elsewhere. **Food items approved for sale at a farmers market WITHOUT a farmers market license:**

- 🍽 Fresh, whole, uncut fruits and vegetables;
- 🍽 Fresh wholesome shell eggs;
- 🍽 Honey, though products containing honey need to be individually evaluated;
- 🍽 Cottage foods;
- 🍽 Packaged TCS foods that need to be kept hot or cold for safety that were produced, packaged, and labeled in a licensed facility, and sold as a packaged product;
- 🍽 Foods that do not have to be kept hot or cold, which are prepared at the market (for example: apples dipped in caramel, peanut butter, candy coated nuts, etc.).

Products that may NOT be sold at a farmers market without appropriate licensing:

- 🍽 Unpackaged "TCS" foods that must be kept hot or cold for safety, including meat, poultry, dairy products, and cooked foods. This includes all ingredients (including eggs) used in the preparation of these foods, with the exception of honey and whole uncut fruits and vegetables;
- 🍽 TCS food or beverages being prepared **at** the farmers market;
- 🍽 Wild harvested mushrooms, as outlined in Iowa Administrative Code 481-31;
- 🍽 Ingredients for the products produced and sold that do not come from an approved source;
- 🍽 TCS food or beverages not prepared at the farmers market or produced in a licensed facility.

*TCS foods include: **Animal food** that is **raw or heat-treated**; a **plant food** that is **heat-treated** or consists of **raw seed sprouts, cut melons, cut leafy greens, cut tomatoes or mixtures of cut tomatoes** that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation, or **garlic-in-oil mixtures** that are not modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation. "**Cut leafy greens**" means fresh, leafy greens whose leaves have been cut, shredded, sliced, chopped, or torn. The term "leafy greens" includes iceberg lettuce, romaine lettuce, leaf lettuce, butter lettuce, baby leaf lettuce (i.e., immature lettuce or leafy greens), escarole, endive, spring mix, spinach, cabbage, kale, arugula and chard. The term "leafy greens" does not include herbs such as cilantro or parsley.*

