



Iowa Cottage Food and Home Processing Licensing Information



Transfarmation



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What is “cottage food”?

The Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, & Licensing (DIAL) regulates cottage foods. The excerpts below from [DIAL's web page on cottage foods](#) provide the department's definition and labeling requirements.

“Cottage foods” are foods that are prepared in a residence that are not subject to licensing or inspection.

Cottage foods must meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

1. The food is prepared in a private residence;
2. The food does not require temperature control to ensure safety;
3. The food is sold directly from the producer to the consumer; and
4. The food is properly labeled.

Labeling Requirements

Cottage food labels **MUST** contain the following information:

1. Information to identify the name and address, phone number, or email address of the person preparing the food;
2. The common name of the food;
3. The ingredients of the cottage food in descending order of predominance;
4. The following statement: “This product was produced at a residential property that is exempt from state licensing and inspection.”;
5. If the cottage food contains one or more major food allergens, an additional allergen statement must be included on the label identifying each major allergen contained in the food by the common name of the allergen (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.); and
6. If the food is home-processed and home-canned pickles, vegetables, or fruits permitted under this section, the date that the food was processed and canned.



Sales

According to [Iowa law](#), cottage food may be sold directly by the producer or the producer's employee either in person or remotely. This means cottage foods may be sold at a local farmers market, through a farm's CSA (community supported agriculture) shares, or via phone or a farm's website and shipped directly to consumers.

Licensing

Depending on how a farm wants to sell its products and the products being sold, the state may require specific [licensing](#).

For [farmers markets](#), whole, uncut fresh fruits and vegetables and properly labeled cottage foods do not require a license.

A home food processing establishment (HFPE) license may be required to sell on a wholesale basis or directly to consumers,

depending on the food sold. A full list of food items and their licensing requirements can be found [here](#). Dried fruits, vegetables, cultivated mushrooms, herbs, and spices may be sold directly to consumers as cottage food but require an HFPE license for wholesale sales. Jams and jellies that require temperature control for food safety require an HFPE license whether being sold directly to consumers or on a wholesale basis.

DIAL provides a [requirements guide](#) for the HFPE [application](#) and inspection on its website. The annual fee for the license is \$50, and yearly sales are limited to \$50,000.

DIAL Contact Information

DIAL Main Office

6200 Park Ave.
Suite 100
Des Moines, IA 50321

DIAL Main Telephone: 515-281-DIAL (3425) or 844-281-DIAL (3425)

Food Safety and Licensing Telephone: 515-725-5342

Email: fcs-licensing@dia.iowa.gov (Your email will be routed to the appropriate subject-matter expert for your question.)

