

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Etowah County

Alabama · Gadsden · FIPS 01055 · Population 103,348 ·
Crosodo Index #1758*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Ala. Code §22-20-5.1	Good	—	MEDIUM	2026-05-05

IMPORTANT — NOT LEGAL ADVICE

This report compiles publicly-available statutes, regulations, and county zoning rules into a research reference. It is **not legal advice** and is provided **without warranty** as to accuracy, completeness, or current applicability.

Cottage food law changes frequently. Counties may amend zoning, health departments may issue new permits, and state legislatures may update statutes after the publication date shown above.

Always verify rules directly with your state department of health/agriculture and your county health and planning offices before relying on them for any business or regulatory decision. Consult a licensed attorney for advice specific to your situation.

ALABAMA: ETOWAH COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1758* · FIPS 01055 · Gadsden

Etowah County

Population 103,348 · State baseline: Ala. Code §22-20-5.1 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Alabama requires state-approved food safety course completion and approval from the local county health department before selling. Non-potentially hazardous foods only: baked goods, jams/jellies, candy, dried herbs/vegetables, roasted coffee, dried baking mixes, fermented/preserved vegetables or fruit with approved acidity. Online and in-state shipping permitted (2021). No sales cap.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state pet restriction, but standard sanitation practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Gadsden and Etowah County municipalities may have home occupation zoning requirements. No specific Etowah County cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state county health department approval requirement.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Etowah County Health Department must approve applications. Requires proof of training, sample label, product list. Fees and approval vary by county.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Alabama requires state-approved food safety course completion and approval from the local county health department before selling. Non-potentially hazardous foods only: baked goods, jams/jellies, candy, dried herbs/vegetables, roasted coffee, dried baking mixes, fermented/preserved vegetables or fruit with approved acidity. Online and in-state shipping permitted (2021). No sales cap.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state pet restriction, but standard sanitation practices apply.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific state requirement beyond standard sanitation.
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing required per food safety course training.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Meat, poultry, fish, all perishable/temperature-controlled foods, low-acid canned goods, juices prohibited. Acidified foods require pH testing. Freeze-dried foods require water-activity testing.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — Etowah County Health Department must approve applications. Requires proof of training, sample label, product list. Fees and approval vary by county.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Gadsden and Etowah County municipalities may have home occupation zoning requirements. No specific Etowah County cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state county health department approval requirement.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only. No wholesale or indirect sales. Online and in-state shipping permitted. Out-of-state shipping prohibited.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

Relevant county code

No specific Etowah County code section identified. State law governs: Ala. Code §22-20-5.1. Etowah County Health Department administers local approval.

RESEARCH NOTES

Etowah County has no county URLs in the input. State baseline governs. No county-specific deviations from state law found. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/foodsafety/cottage-food-law.html>

Questions? Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss your county's specific zoning rules at <https://crosodo.com/nb/alabama/etowah-county-discuss>

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Etowah County	Marshall County	Calhoun County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state pet restriction, but standard sanitation practices apply.	No specific state restriction, but county health approval process may review kitchen conditions.	Standard sanitation practices; no specific state prohibition for standard cottage foods.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Upon-complaint	No
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct-to-consumer sales only. No wholesale or indirect sales. Online and in-state shipping permitted. Out-of-state shipping prohibited.	Direct sales only. In-state online sales and shipping allowed per 2021 amendment. Home pickup, farmers markets, and events permitted.	Alabama allows direct sales and online/in-state shipping (2021 amendment). No interstate shipping. No wholesale or retail store channels.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Alabama requires state-approved food safety course completion and approval from the local county health department before selling. Non-pote...	Alabama cottage food law (§22-20-5.1, 2021 amendment): no sales cap, direct sales only (no wholesale). Must complete state-approved food sa...	Alabama allows non-potentially hazardous cottage foods from home kitchen. Producer must complete state-approved food safety course and obta...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Meat, poultry, fish, all perishable/temperature-controlled foods, low-acid canned goods, juices prohi...	Non-potentially hazardous shelf-stable foods only; must prevent contamination.	Shelf-stable non-TCS products. Freeze-dried foods require water-activity testing. Acidified foods require pH testing.
POPULATION	103,348	97,923	116,162

State context — Alabama cottage food law

Etowah County's rules sit on top of Alabama's state cottage food framework. The state law sets the floor — counties can add but cannot remove protections.

STATUTE Ala. Code §22-20-5.1	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course)
KITCHEN INSPECTION No	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Indirect sales to grocery stores, restaurants, or wholesale are not permitted; producers may use an agent for delivery but cannot sell through retailers.	

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Alabama cottage food law report](#).

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/foodsafety/cottage-food-law.html>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/alabama/>

Questions?

Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss Etowah County's specific zoning rules, permits, and what other home bakers are seeing locally.

<https://crosodo.com/nb/alabama/etowah-county-discuss>
