

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Jefferson County

Alabama · Birmingham · FIPS 01073 · Population 672,265 ·  
Crosodo Index #1761\*

## STATE BASELINE

Ala. Code §22-20-5.1 (2021 amendment, SB 160/Act 2021-461); no sales cap

## STATE TIER

**Good**

## ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

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## CONFIDENCE

MEDIUM

## LAST VERIFIED

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: JEFFERSON COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1761\* · FIPS 01073 · Birmingham

# Jefferson County

Population 672,265 · State baseline: Ala. Code §22-20-5.1 (2021 amendment, SB 160/Act 2021-461); no sales cap · **MEDIUM**

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?**

Yes (State baseline applies. Food handler certification (state-approved course, e.g., Learn2Serve ~\$7 or ACES course) required before selling. Application and fee required through Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH). Non-potentially hazardous foods only.)

**SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?**

No

**PETS ALLOWED?**

Not specified; standard sanitation applies

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?**

Conditional (Jefferson County Department of Health administers cottage food registration (includes proof of food safety training, sample label, product list). County fee applies. For the business zoning aspect: Jefferson County Planning and Zoning for unincorporated areas; City of Birmingham Planning, Engineering & Permits for incorporated areas.)

**ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?**

Yes

**INSPECTION REQUIRED?**

Upon-complaint (JCDH may inspect upon complaint. No routine inspections under state law.)

## Home kitchen rules

<b>HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED</b>	Yes — State baseline applies. Food handler certification (state-approved course, e.g., Learn2Serve ~\$7 or ACES course) required before selling. Application and fee required through Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH). Non-potentially hazardous foods only.
<b>SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN</b>	No
<b>PET RESTRICTIONS</b>	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	Potable water; state baseline
<b>HANDWASHING</b>	Food handler certification from state-approved program required
<b>FOOD STORAGE</b>	Standard food storage; non-PHF only

## Inspection & permitting

<b>INSPECTION REQUIRED</b>	Upon-complaint — JCDH may inspect upon complaint. No routine inspections under state law.
<b>HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT</b>	Conditional — Jefferson County Department of Health administers cottage food registration (includes proof of food safety training, sample label, product list). County fee applies. For the business zoning aspect: Jefferson County Planning and Zoning for unincorporated areas; City of Birmingham Planning, Engineering & Permits for incorporated areas.
<b>LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE</b>	Varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer: home, farmers markets, events, online, in-state shipping (permitted since 2021 amendment). No wholesale. No out-of-state shipping. No sales cap (2021 amendment removed prior cap).
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Unknown

### Relevant county code

Ala. Code §22-20-5.1; Jefferson County Department of Health cottage food application process

#### QUICK COMPARISON – BORDERING COUNTIES

Regulation	Jefferson County	Tuscaloosa County	Shelby County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Not specified; standard sanitation applies	Not specified in state statute; kitchen must be clean for health dept approval	Standard food safety practices apply; no explicit state-level pet restriction in Alabama cottage food statute, but county health inspectors...
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	Yes	Conditional
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct-to-consumer: home, farmers markets, events, online, in-state shipping (permitted since 2021 amendment). No wholesale. No out-of-stat...	Direct sales only; online and in-state shipping allowed. No wholesale.	Alabama cottage food law allows direct-to-consumer sales, including home pickup, online sales, and in-state shipping (as of 2021 amendment)...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	State baseline applies. Food handler certification (state-approved course, e.g., Learn2Serve ~\$7 or ACES course) required before selling. A...	Must complete state-approved food safety course before operating. Must get Tuscaloosa County Health Department approval. Application requir...	Alabama state law (§22-20-5.1) permits home kitchen production of non-potentially hazardous foods. Producer must complete a state-approved ...
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage; non-PHF only	Non-TCS shelf-stable; acidified foods require pH testing; freeze-dried require water-activity testing	Non-TCS, non-perishable storage required. Products must be shelf-stable.
POPULATION	672,265	231,558	223,916

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Jefferson County Alabama follows state baseline. The JCDH administers cottage food applications and fees vary by county per state law. Alabama's 2021 amendment (SB 160/Act 2021-461) removed the prior sales cap, expanded the allowed foods list, and added online sales/in-state shipping. Before selling, producers must complete a state-approved food safety course and get county health department approval. No Jefferson County-specific restriction beyond state baseline found.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.jcdh.org>

<https://www.jccal.org/planning>

<https://www.jccal.org>

<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/jefferson-county-discuss>

## State context — Alabama cottage food law

Jefferson 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.

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

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

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### 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/>

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## Questions?

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

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

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