

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Lee County

Alabama · Opelika · FIPS 01081 · Population 175,126 ·
Crosodo Index #1128*

STATE BASELINE

Ala. Code §22-20-5.1

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

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: LEE COUNTY

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Lee County

Population 175,126 · State baseline: Ala. Code §22-20-5.1 · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Registration and approval from local county health department required. State-approved food safety course required. Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Direct sales only; no wholesale. Online and in-state shipping permitted since 2021 amendment. No sales cap (removed by 2021 SB 160).)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Lee County Health Department inspects the home kitchen; pets likely required away from food prep areas during production.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes (Opelika (Lee County seat) requires a home occupation permit and business license for home-based businesses (Zoning Ordinance Section 8.14). Requirements: permit from Zoning Administrator before operating, no more than 25% of total floor area (max 500 sq ft), must be incidental to residential use, residents only conduct business, no outdoor storage/display, one small sign (max 2 sq ft, on door/window). Maximum one non-resident employee. County/unincorporated Lee County areas have separate zoning rules.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (No routine inspections post-approval. Health department may investigate upon complaint.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Registration and approval from local county health department required. State-approved food safety course required. Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Direct sales only; no wholesale. Online and in-state shipping permitted since 2021 amendment. No sales cap (removed by 2021 SB 160).
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Lee County Health Department inspects the home kitchen; pets likely required away from food prep areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply; reviewed during health department approval.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities; reviewed during health department approval.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable storage; products must not require refrigeration.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — No routine inspections post-approval. Health department may investigate upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes — Opelika (Lee County seat) requires a home occupation permit and business license for home-based businesses (Zoning Ordinance Section 8.14). Requirements: permit from Zoning Administrator before operating, no more than 25% of total floor area (max 500 sq ft), must be incidental to residential use, residents only conduct business, no outdoor storage/display, one small sign (max 2 sq ft, on door/window). Maximum one non-resident employee. County/unincorporated Lee County areas have separate zoning rules.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Yes

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	In-person sales and in-state online/shipping allowed since 2021. Farmers markets and direct sales from home permitted.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	One non-resident employee maximum per Opelika zoning ordinance. State law focuses on cottage food production by registered operator.

Relevant county code

Opelika Zoning Ordinance §8.14 (Home Occupation); Ala. Code §22-20-5.1

RESEARCH NOTES

Opelika city zoning ordinance (Section 8.14) directly retrieved from official Opelika city website. Home occupation permit required from Zoning Administrator, max 25% floor area (up to 500 sq ft), residents-only operation with one non-resident employee exception. Baking explicitly listed as an example of permitted home occupation. Alabama cottage food law requires local county health department approval before selling. Lee County website confirmed at leeco.us. 2021 amendment removed sales cap and added online/in-state shipping.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.leeco.us>

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

<https://www.opelika-al.gov/DocumentCenter/View/602/Home-Occupation-PDF?bidId=>

<https://www.opelika-al.gov/1154/Home-Occupation-Home-Business-PDF>

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

State context — Alabama cottage food law

Lee 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 Lee County's specific zoning rules, permits, and what other home bakers are seeing locally.

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