

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Imperial County

California · El Centro · FIPS 06025 · Population 179,578 ·
Crosodo Index #756*

STATE BASELINE

Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

Tiered (see notes)

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.

CALIFORNIA: IMPERIAL COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #756* · FIPS 06025 · El Centro

Imperial County

Population 179,578 · State baseline: Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Class A: direct sales only, ~\$86,206 annual cap (CPI-adjusted 2025). Class B: direct and indirect sales, ~\$172,411 annual cap, requires home kitchen inspection. Registration with Imperial County Environmental Health required. Food safety training (ANSI-accredited, every 3 years) required. Only state-approved foods list permitted.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (California Gov. Code §51035 preempts local zoning restrictions on cottage food operations. Imperial County Environmental Health handles CFO registrations. No local zoning restrictions can be imposed on qualifying cottage food operations.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (Class A: no initial inspection. Class B: inspection required. Complaint-based inspections possible.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Class A: direct sales only, ~\$86,206 annual cap (CPI-adjusted 2025). Class B: direct and indirect sales, ~\$172,411 annual cap, requires home kitchen inspection. Registration with Imperial County Environmental Health required. Food safety training (ANSI-accredited, every 3 years) required. Only state-approved foods list permitted.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-potentially hazardous foods stored in clean, sanitary conditions.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — Class A: no initial inspection. Class B: inspection required. Complaint-based inspections possible.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — California Gov. Code §51035 preempts local zoning restrictions on cottage food operations. Imperial County Environmental Health handles CFO registrations. No local zoning restrictions can be imposed on qualifying cottage food operations.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Class A: direct sales only within California. Class B: direct and indirect sales within California. No interstate sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Only one non-family employee permitted.

Relevant county code

Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758; Imperial County Environmental Health cottage food registration

RESEARCH NOTES

Imperial County is a rural border county in Southern California. County URLs were blank in input. State preemption prevents local restrictions on cottage food operations. County environmental health department administers registration. Same California two-tier framework as other CA counties.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/Cottage%20Food%20Operations/CFO_Faq.pdf

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=HSC§ionNum=113758

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Imperial County	Riverside County	San Diego County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.	State baseline applies	State baseline applies
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	Conditional	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Class A: direct sales only within California. Class B: direct and indirect sales within California. No interstate sales.	Direct/indirect sales within California only. State baseline applies. Operator may hire up to 1 full-time employee.	MEHKO permits on-site dining, pickup, and delivery by operator/staff. CFO allows in-home direct sales and online orders. State preemption b...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Varies by city	Varies by city
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies by city	Varies by city
RESTRICTIONS	Class A: direct sales only, ~\$86,206 annual cap (CPI-adjusted 2025). Class B: direct and indirect sales, ~\$172,411 annual cap, requires hom...	Riverside University Health System – Environmental Health administers CFO Class A and Class B registrations/permits. No MEHKO opt-in confir...	San Diego County opted into the permanent MEHKO program (effective January 5, 2024), administered by the Department of Environmental Health...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-potentially hazardous foods stored in clean, sanitary conditions.	State baseline applies	State baseline applies
POPULATION	179,578	2,429,487	3,289,701

State context — California cottage food law

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

<p>STATUTE Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758</p> <p>REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes</p> <p>KITCHEN INSPECTION No</p> <p>INDIRECT SALES Limited (see notes) — Class B permit holders may sell indirectly through retail stores and restaurants statewide; Class A registrants are limited to direct sales only and may not sell through any retail or wholesale venue.</p>	<p>ANNUAL SALES CAP Tiered (see notes)</p> <p>FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course)</p> <p>DIRECT SALES ONLY No</p>
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For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [California cottage food law report](#).

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

- State statute: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=HSC§ionNum=113758
 - State dept cottage food page: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/Cottage%20Food%20Operations/CFO_Faq.pdf
 - Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/california/>
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Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/california/imperial-county-discuss>
