

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Highlands County

Florida · Sebring · FIPS 12055 · Population 102,339 · Crosodo  
Index #1231\*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Fl. Stat. \$500.80	Great	250000	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.

FLORIDA: HIGHLANDS COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1231\* · FIPS 12055 · Sebring

# Highlands County

Population 102,339 · State baseline: Fla. Stat. §500.80 · **MEDIUM**

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?**

Yes (Florida uses a broad non-TCS standard — any food that does not require time/temperature control for safety is allowed. Annual sales cap of \$250,000 (raised in 2021). No registration, permit, or inspection required before beginning operations. Strong state preemption clause (§500.80(6)) — local governments cannot restrict cottage food operations, though business must comply with home-based business rules under §559.955.)

**SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?**

No

**PETS ALLOWED?**

No specific state restriction in the cottage food statute.

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?**

Conditional (Florida state preemption (§500.80(6)) prevents local governments from restricting cottage food operations. However, home-based business rules under §559.955 may still apply in Highlands County. Highlands County may have general home occupation/zoning rules applicable to the business operation aspect. No specific Highlands County cottage food restriction identified.)

**ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?**

Yes

**INSPECTION REQUIRED?**

Upon-complaint (Inspections may only occur upon receipt of a complaint (§500.80(7)). No routine inspections.)

## Home kitchen rules

<b>HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED</b>	Yes — Florida uses a broad non-TCS standard — any food that does not require time/temperature control for safety is allowed. Annual sales cap of \$250,000 (raised in 2021). No registration, permit, or inspection required before beginning operations. Strong state preemption clause (§500.80(6)) — local governments cannot restrict cottage food operations, though business must comply with home-based business rules under §559.955.
<b>SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN</b>	No
<b>PET RESTRICTIONS</b>	No specific state restriction in the cottage food statute.
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	No specific state requirement for cottage food operations.
<b>HANDWASHING</b>	Standard food safety practices recommended but not legally mandated.
<b>FOOD STORAGE</b>	Non-TCS foods only. Foods requiring temperature control for safety (meat, dairy requiring refrigeration, custard-filled pastries, raw sprouts) prohibited. No wholesale sales permitted.

## Inspection & permitting

<b>INSPECTION REQUIRED</b>	Upon-complaint — Inspections may only occur upon receipt of a complaint (§500.80(7)). No routine inspections.
<b>HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT</b>	Conditional — Florida state preemption (§500.80(6)) prevents local governments from restricting cottage food operations. However, home-based business rules under §559.955 may still apply in Highlands County. Highlands County may have general home occupation/zoning rules applicable to the business operation aspect. No specific Highlands County cottage food restriction identified.
<b>LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE</b>	Varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Online sales and mail-order delivery expressly permitted. Direct-to-consumer and indirect sales (except wholesale) permitted. \$250,000 annual sales cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

### Relevant county code

No specific Highlands County code section identified. State law governs: Fla. Stat. §500.80. State preemption prevents local restrictions.

#### RESEARCH NOTES

Highlands County has no county URLs in the input. State baseline governs. Florida’s strong state preemption means local governments cannot restrict cottage food. \$250,000 cap is among the highest in the country. No county-specific restrictions found. Confidence medium.

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#### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Food/Cottage-Foods>

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0500/Sections/0500.80.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0500/Sections/0500.80.html)

**Questions?** Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss your county’s specific zoning rules at <https://crosodo.com/nb/florida/highlands-county-discuss>

## State context — Florida cottage food law

Highlands County’s rules sit on top of Florida’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> Fla. Stat. §500.80	<b>ANNUAL SALES CAP</b> 250000
<b>REGISTRATION REQUIRED</b> No	<b>FOOD HANDLER CERT</b> No
<b>KITCHEN INSPECTION</b> Upon-complaint	<b>DIRECT SALES ONLY</b> No
<b>INDIRECT SALES</b> Limited (see notes) — Florida prohibits wholesale sales but allows online, mail-order, and in-person sales including delivery to consumers; state law preempts local restrictions on cottage food operations.	

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

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### STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0500/Sections/0500.80.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0500/Sections/0500.80.html)

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Food/Cottage-Foods>

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

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## Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/florida/highlands-county-discuss>

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