

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Columbia County

Georgia · Appling · FIPS 13073 · Population 156,921 · Crosodo Index #2682*

STATE BASELINE

O.C.G.A. §26-2-470 et seq. (eff. July 2025); prior: GA R&R 40-7-19

STATE TIER

Okay

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

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.

GEORGIA: COLUMBIA COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2682* · FIPS 13073 · Appling

Columbia County

Population 156,921 · State baseline: O.C.G.A. §26-2-470 et seq. (eff. July 2025); prior: GA R&R 40-7-19

· MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 1, 2025): no license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. Interstate sales now allowed. Wholesale, retail, online, and restaurant sales permitted. Food handler certification required. Must label 'NOT MADE IN A STATE-INSPECTED FACILITY.' Private water supply (well) requires annual coliform testing.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Columbia County may require a business license and home occupation permit under local zoning. No county-specific cottage food overlay identified.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (GDA may inspect upon consumer complaint.)

Home kitchen rules

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED | Yes — Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 1, 2025): no license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. Interstate sales now allowed. Wholesale, retail, online, and restaurant sales permitted. Food handler certification required. Must label 'NOT MADE IN A STATE-INSPECTED FACILITY.' Private water supply (well) requires annual coliform testing. |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No |
| PET RESTRICTIONS | No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practices apply. |
| WATER SUPPLY | Private water supply (well) requires annual coliform bacteria testing per state rules. |
| HANDWASHING | Adequate handwashing required per GDA cottage food guidelines. |
| FOOD STORAGE | Non-TCS foods only; proper storage to prevent contamination. |

Inspection & permitting

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| INSPECTION REQUIRED | Upon-complaint — GDA may inspect upon consumer complaint. |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT | Varies — Columbia County may require a business license and home occupation permit under local zoning. No county-specific cottage food overlay identified. |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE | Yes |

Customer-facing rules

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP | Yes |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE | Conditional |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES | Under HB 398, sales permitted via wholesale, retail, online, and direct. Delivery allowed. Interstate sales now permitted. |
| MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME | Not specified by state law; local home occupation rules may limit non-resident employees. |

Relevant county code

Columbia County Zoning Ordinance; O.C.G.A. §26-2-470 et seq.

RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county. State baseline (GA HB 398, eff. July 2025) governs. No Columbia County-specific cottage food code identified.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://agr.georgia.gov/cottage-food-program>

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2020/title-26/chapter-2/>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

| Regulation | Columbia County | Richmond County | Lincoln County |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No | No | No |
| PETS ALLOWED | No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practices apply. | No explicit pet restriction in Georgia HB 398 cottage food law. Standard food safety practices apply. | No specific state prohibition, but pets should be excluded from food prep areas per good manufacturing practices. |
| INSPECTION REQUIRED | Upon-complaint | Upon-complaint | Upon-complaint |
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE | Conditional | Conditional | Conditional |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP | Under HB 398, sales permitted via wholesale, retail, online, and direct. Delivery allowed. Interstate sales now permitted. | Georgia HB 398 allows all sales channels: direct from home, online, through retailers, restaurants, and wholesalers. Interstate sales permi... | Under HB 398, sales permitted via wholesale, retail, online, and direct. Delivery allowed. No geographic sales restriction within Georgia; ... |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT | Varies | Conditional | Varies |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE | Yes | Varies | Yes |
| RESTRICTIONS | Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 1, 2025): no license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. Interstate sales now allowed. Wholesale, ... | Georgia HB 398 (effective July 1, 2025) dramatically expanded cottage food law: no license or fee required, complaint-based inspections onl... | Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 1, 2025) dramatically expanded cottage food rules. No license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. ... |
| FOOD STORAGE | Non-TCS foods only; proper storage to prevent contamination. | Non-TCS (non-potentially hazardous) foods only. Standard GMP storage practices. | All cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; non-TCS foods only. |
| POPULATION | 156,921 | 206,153 | 7,726 |

State context — Georgia cottage food law

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

| | |
|---|---|
| STATUTE O.C.G.A. §26-2-470 et seq. (eff. July 2025); prior: GA R&R 40-7-19 | ANNUAL SALES CAP — |
| REGISTRATION REQUIRED No | FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course) |
| KITCHEN INSPECTION Upon-complaint | DIRECT SALES ONLY No |
| INDIRECT SALES Yes — As of July 1, 2025 (HB 398), Georgia allows wholesale, online, retail store, restaurant, and mail-order sales; third-party sellers must display cottage food products separately and label the section as products from residential kitchens exempt from state inspection. | |

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2020/title-26/chapter-2/>

State dept cottage food page: <https://agr.georgia.gov/cottage-food-program>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/georgia/columbia-county-discuss>
