

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Muscogee County

Georgia · Columbus · FIPS 13215 · Population 204,572 ·  
Crosodo Index #2311\*

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: MUSCOGEE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2311\* · FIPS 13215 · Columbus

# Muscogee County

Population 204,572 · 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 (effective July 1, 2025): no license or fee required, complaint-based inspections only, interstate sales allowed, all sales channels permitted. Food handler certification required. Private water source requires annual coliform testing. Muscogee County is a consolidated city-county (Columbus-Muscogee County); Columbus is a major city.)

**SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?**

No

**PETS ALLOWED?**

No explicit pet restriction in Georgia HB 398 cottage food law.

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?**

Conditional (Muscogee County is a consolidated city-county government (Columbus-Muscogee). The Columbus Georgia city-county government (columbusga.gov) handles zoning and may require home occupation permits for food businesses. Contact Columbus Planning Department for current requirements. Georgia HB 398 removed state licensing but local zoning still applies.)

**ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?**

Yes

**INSPECTION REQUIRED?**

Upon-complaint (Complaint-based only under Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 2025). No routine or pre-operational inspections.)

### Home kitchen rules

<b>HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED</b>	Yes — Georgia HB 398 (effective July 1, 2025): no license or fee required, complaint-based inspections only, interstate sales allowed, all sales channels permitted. Food handler certification required. Private water source requires annual coliform testing. Muscogee County is a consolidated city-county (Columbus-Muscogee County); Columbus is a major city.
<b>SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN</b>	No
<b>PET RESTRICTIONS</b>	No explicit pet restriction in Georgia HB 398 cottage food law.
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	Private water source requires annual coliform testing.
<b>HANDWASHING</b>	Food handler certification required, covering handwashing and hygiene.
<b>FOOD STORAGE</b>	Non-TCS foods only. Standard GMP storage.

### Inspection & permitting

<b>INSPECTION REQUIRED</b>	Upon-complaint — Complaint-based only under Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 2025). No routine or pre-operational inspections.
<b>HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT</b>	Conditional — Muscogee County is a consolidated city-county government (Columbus-Muscogee). The Columbus Georgia city-county government (columbusga.gov) handles zoning and may require home occupation permits for food businesses. Contact Columbus Planning Department for current requirements. Georgia HB 398 removed state licensing but local zoning still applies.
<b>LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE</b>	Varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Georgia HB 398 allows all sales channels including direct from home, online, through retailers, restaurants, wholesalers, and interstate sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No explicit employee cap in Georgia HB 398. Home occupation zoning may restrict non-resident employees.

### Relevant county code

O.C.G.A. §26-2-470 et seq. (HB 398, eff. July 2025); Columbus-Muscogee County zoning ordinances

#### RESEARCH NOTES

Georgia state baseline applies with July 2025 HB 398 expansion. Muscogee County is a consolidated city-county government with Columbus as the main city — also near Fort Benning/Fort Moore (major military installation). No county-specific overrides documented. Georgia HB 398 significantly improved Georgia’s cottage food framework, making it one of the best nationally.

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#### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.columbusga.gov>

<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/muscogee-county-discuss>

## Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Muscogee County	Chattahoochee County	Harris County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No explicit pet restriction in Georgia HB 398 cottage food law.	Not specified in state law; products must not be contaminated	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	Georgia HB 398 allows all sales channels including direct from home, online, through retailers, restaurants, wholesalers, and interstate sa...	Under HB 398 (eff. July 2025): direct-to-consumer sales, online sales, sales to retail stores, restaurants, and interstate sales are all pe...	Under HB 398, sales permitted via wholesale, retail, online, and direct. Delivery allowed. No geographic sales restriction within Georgia; ...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Yes
RESTRICTIONS	Georgia HB 398 (effective July 1, 2025): no license or fee required, complaint-based inspections only, interstate sales allowed, all sales ...	Must be produced in operator’s primary domestic residence home kitchen only. Secondary homes, vacation homes, or motor homes do not qualify...	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. Standard GMP storage.	Ingredients and finished products must be stored appropriately in the domestic residence	All cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; non-TCS foods only.
POPULATION	204,572	9,402	34,914

## State context — Georgia cottage food law

Muscogee 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.

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<b>STATUTE</b> O.C.G.A. §26-2-470 et seq. (eff. July 2025); prior: GA R&R 40-7-19	<b>ANNUAL SALES CAP</b> —
<b>REGISTRATION REQUIRED</b> No	<b>FOOD HANDLER CERT</b> Yes (specific course)
<b>KITCHEN INSPECTION</b> Upon-complaint	<b>DIRECT SALES ONLY</b> No
<b>INDIRECT SALES</b> 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.	

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

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### 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/>

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## Questions?

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

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

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