

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Oconee County

Georgia · Watkinsville · FIPS 13219 · Population 44,751 ·  
Crosodo Index #2692\*

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

2026-05-06

**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: OCONEE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2692\* · FIPS 13219 · Watkinville

# Oconee County

Population 44,751 · 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) dramatically expanded cottage food rules. No license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. Interstate sales now allowed. Wholesale, retail, online, and restaurant sales permitted. Food handler certification (specific course) required. Must label 'NOT MADE IN A STATE-INSPECTED FACILITY.' Under HB 398, counties may opt out of allowing third-party vendor sales but cannot otherwise directly regulate cottage food operators.)

**SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?**

No

**PETS ALLOWED?**

No specific state prohibition, but pets should be excluded from food prep areas per good manufacturing practices.

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?**

Varies (No county-specific cottage food overlay found. Oconee County may require a business license for commercial activity. Home occupation rules vary by zoning district under Oconee County's zoning ordinance. Oconee County is an affluent suburb of Athens-Clarke County; zoning codes are more developed than most rural Georgia counties and may have specific home occupation restrictions.)

**ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?**

Yes

**INSPECTION REQUIRED?**

Upon-complaint (GDA may inspect upon consumer complaint or reported foodborne illness.)

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED**

Yes — Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 1, 2025) dramatically expanded cottage food rules. No license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. Interstate sales now allowed. Wholesale, retail, online, and restaurant sales permitted. Food handler certification (specific course) required. Must label 'NOT MADE IN A STATE-INSPECTED FACILITY.' Under HB 398, counties may opt out of allowing third-party vendor sales but cannot otherwise directly regulate cottage food operators.

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN**

No

**PET RESTRICTIONS**

No specific state prohibition, but pets should be excluded from food prep areas per good manufacturing practices.

**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**

All cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; non-TCS foods only.

### Inspection & permitting

**INSPECTION REQUIRED**

Upon-complaint — GDA may inspect upon consumer complaint or reported foodborne illness.

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT**

Varies — No county-specific cottage food overlay found. Oconee County may require a business license for commercial activity. Home occupation rules vary by zoning district under Oconee County's zoning ordinance. Oconee County is an affluent suburb of Athens-Clarke County; zoning codes are more developed than most rural Georgia counties and may have specific home occupation restrictions.

**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. No geographic sales restriction within Georgia; 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

Oconee County Zoning Ordinance (home occupation provisions); Oconee County Code of Ordinances

#### RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county — no county-specific cottage food rules found. State baseline (GA HB 398, eff. July 1, 2025) governs. Georgia’s 2025 law significantly expanded cottage food rights. Under HB 398, cities/ counties may opt out of third-party vendor sales via ordinance but cannot impose broader cottage food regulations. Oconee County is a suburban/exurban county adjacent to Athens-Clarke County with more developed zoning infrastructure; home occupation provisions in the Oconee County zoning code are likely more detailed than rural counties. Operators in Oconee should verify home occupation permit requirements with Oconee County Planning. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified in research.

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#### 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/oconee-county-discuss>

## State context — Georgia cottage food law

Oconee 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.

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

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

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

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