

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Richmond County

Georgia · Augusta · FIPS 13245 · Population 206,153 ·
Crosodo Index #2326*

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: RICHMOND COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2326* · FIPS 13245 · Augusta

Richmond County

Population 206,153 · 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) dramatically expanded cottage food law: no license or fee required, complaint-based inspections only, interstate sales allowed, wholesale/retail/online/restaurant sales allowed. Food handler certification required. Private water source requires annual coliform testing. Richmond County is a consolidated city-county (Augusta-Richmond County); Augusta has its own local governance but state preemption applies to cottage food.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No explicit pet restriction in Georgia HB 398 cottage food law. Standard food safety practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Augusta-Richmond County (consolidated city-county) may have home occupation zoning requirements. Contact Augusta-Richmond County Planning & Development Department (augustaga.gov) for home occupation permit requirements for food businesses. Georgia HB 398 removed state-level licensing/inspection requirements but local zoning still applies.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 2025): complaint-based inspection only; no routine or pre-operational inspections required.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Georgia HB 398 (effective July 1, 2025) dramatically expanded cottage food law: no license or fee required, complaint-based inspections only, interstate sales allowed, wholesale/retail/online/restaurant sales allowed. Food handler certification required. Private water source requires annual coliform testing. Richmond County is a consolidated city-county (Augusta-Richmond County); Augusta has its own local governance but state preemption applies to cottage food.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No explicit pet restriction in Georgia HB 398 cottage food law. Standard food safety practices apply.
WATER SUPPLY	Private water source requires annual coliform testing under Georgia cottage food rules.
HANDWASHING	Food handler certification required, which covers handwashing and hygiene standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS (non-potentially hazardous) foods only. Standard GMP storage practices.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — Georgia HB 398 (eff. July 2025): complaint-based inspection only; no routine or pre-operational inspections required.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Augusta-Richmond County (consolidated city-county) may have home occupation zoning requirements. Contact Augusta-Richmond County Planning & Development Department (augustaga.gov) for home occupation permit requirements for food businesses. Georgia HB 398 removed state-level licensing/inspection requirements but local zoning still applies.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Georgia HB 398 allows all sales channels: direct from home, online, through retailers, restaurants, and wholesalers. Interstate sales permitted (rare nationally). Home pickup and delivery allowed.
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); Augusta-Richmond County zoning ordinances

RESEARCH NOTES

Georgia HB 398 (effective July 1, 2025) fundamentally changed Georgia’s cottage food landscape — now one of the most permissive nationally. The state baseline notes this was a MAJOR 2025 UPDATE. Richmond County is a consolidated city-county government (Augusta-Richmond County since 1996). Georgia also now allows interstate sales, which is rare nationally. The state baseline’s ‘Okay’ tier and ‘D+’ IJ grade reflect the pre-July 2025 state of law; post-July 2025 should be rated much higher.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

- <https://www.augustaga.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/richmond-county-discuss>

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Richmond County	Columbia County	Burke 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. Standard food safety practices apply.	No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practices apply.	Not specified in state law; products must not be contaminated
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: 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. Interstate sales now permitted.	Under HB 398 (eff. July 2025): direct-to-consumer sales, online sales, sales to retail stores, restaurants, and interstate sales are all pe...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Varies	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Yes	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	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): no license or fee required. Complaint-based inspections only. Interstate sales now allowed. Wholesale, ...	Must be produced in operator's primary domestic residence home kitchen only. Secondary homes, vacation homes, or motor homes do not qualify...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS (non-potentially hazardous) foods only. Standard GMP storage practices.	Non-TCS foods only; proper storage to prevent contamination.	Ingredients and finished products must be stored appropriately in the domestic residence
POPULATION	206,153	156,921	24,337

State context — Georgia cottage food law

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

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