

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Honolulu County

Hawaii · — · FIPS 15003 · Population 1,010,100 · Crosodo
Index #2438*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
HAR §11-50-3	Poor	—	HIGH	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.

HAWAII: HONOLULU COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2438* · FIPS 15003 · —

Honolulu County

Population 1,010,100 · State baseline: HAR §11-50-3 · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Hawaii Homemade Food Operations (HMF) are exempt from a DOH food establishment permit under HAR Chapter 11-50. Honolulu County (City and County of Honolulu) has no separate county-level cottage food permit — state rules apply. Note: As of January 2026 updated rules (HAR 11-50 revised), the allowed food list has been expanded to include some acidified/fermented plant foods (pH ≤4.2 or Aw <0.88) and wholesale to retailers — a significant change from the prior direct-to-consumer only framework.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

State baseline applies

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Hawaii/Honolulu does not have a specific home occupation permit for cottage food operations. However, some farmers markets and events may require a Special Event permit. DOH will review and sign off on Special Event permit applications for HMF operators.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (DOH may conduct inspections to investigate consumer complaints and potential foodborne illness outbreaks. No routine inspection.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Hawaii Homemade Food Operations (HMF) are exempt from a DOH food establishment permit under HAR Chapter 11-50. Honolulu County (City and County of Honolulu) has no separate county-level cottage food permit — state rules apply. Note: As of January 2026 updated rules (HAR 11-50 revised), the allowed food list has been expanded to include some acidified/fermented plant foods (pH ≤4.2 or Aw <0.88) and wholesale to retailers — a significant change from the prior direct-to-consumer only framework.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	State baseline applies
WATER SUPPLY	State baseline applies
HANDWASHING	State baseline applies
FOOD STORAGE	State baseline applies

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — DOH may conduct inspections to investigate consumer complaints and potential foodborne illness outbreaks. No routine inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Hawaii/Honolulu does not have a specific home occupation permit for cottage food operations. However, some farmers markets and events may require a Special Event permit. DOH will review and sign off on Special Event permit applications for HMF operators.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies by city

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Updated rules (January 2026): wholesale to retailers now allowed. Direct-to-consumer sales at events, markets, online also allowed. Prior rule (pre-2026): direct-to-consumer only, no internet/mail/wholesale.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	State baseline applies

Relevant county code

HAR §11-50-3 (Hawaii Administrative Rules, Food Safety Code)

RESEARCH NOTES

Hawaii is among the most restrictive states (state tier: Poor), but the January 2026 updated rules represent a significant expansion: pickles, kimchi, salsa (plant-based, pH ≤4.2 or Aw <0.88) are now allowed; wholesale to retailers is now permitted; and online sales appear to be allowed. The prior (pre-2026) rules were: direct-to-consumer only, no fermented/acidified foods, limited to basic baked goods/candies/jams. City and County of Honolulu encompasses most of Oahu including Honolulu city. State rules apply uniformly throughout Hawaii’s counties.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.honolulu.gov>

<https://health.hawaii.gov/san/files/2019/09/hmf-foods-01.29.2026.pdf>

<https://health.hawaii.gov/san/home-bakery-permit/>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Honolulu County	Hawaii County	Maui County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Conditional
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	State baseline applies	No explicit pet restriction in HAR §11-50-3, but DOH retains authority to inspect for complaints and foodborne illness investigations. Stan...	Pets must be excluded from food preparation areas during production.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	No	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Updated rules (January 2026): wholesale to retailers now allowed. Direct-to-consumer sales at events, markets, online also allowed. Prior r...	Hawaii HMF program allows direct-to-consumer sales only. Home pickup permitted. No internet sales, mail order, consignment, or wholesale al...	Direct sales only. No online/mail-order delivery. Customers may pick up at home or operator may sell at markets, events. No wholesale or in...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies by city	Varies	Yes
RESTRICTIONS	Hawaii Homemade Food Operations (HMF) are exempt from a DOH food establishment permit under HAR Chapter 11-50. Honolulu County (City and Co...	Hawaii Homemade Food Operation (HMF) program (HAR §11-50-3) allows non-potentially hazardous (non-PHF) foods produced in the operator's pri...	Hawaii requires a mandatory food safety training course (free on-island workshop or ANSI-accredited online course ~\$10, valid 3 years) befo...
FOOD STORAGE	State baseline applies	Only non-PHF (not potentially hazardous) foods. No fermented foods, acidified foods, canned or bottled foods (except jams/jellies), dried m...	All cottage food must be stored away from non-food items; no TCS foods permitted.
POPULATION	1,010,100	202,163	164,765

State context — Hawaii cottage food law

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

STATUTE HAR §11-50-3	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED No	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course)
KITCHEN INSPECTION Upon-complaint	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Hawaii prohibits online sales, mail order, consignment, wholesale, restaurant, and retail store sales; only in-person direct sales at home, farmers markets, roadside stands, and events are allowed.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol06_Ch0321-0344/HRS0321/HRS_0321-0030_0005.htm

State dept cottage food page: <https://health.hawaii.gov/san/home-bakery-permit/>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/hawaii/honolulu-county-discuss>
