

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Winnebago County

Illinois · Rockford · FIPS 17201 · Population 284,591 ·
Crosodo Index #1925*

STATE BASELINE

410 ILCS 625/4; no license required; no sales cap; food handler certificate required (ANAB-accredited); direct sales only; complaint-based inspection

STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Great	—	MEDIUM	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.

ILLINOIS: WINNEBAGO COUNTY

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Winnebago County

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QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?**

Yes (Non-TCS foods (prohibited list approach); ANAB-accredited food handler cert required; direct to consumer only; labeling required)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state restriction; general sanitation applies

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (IL does not preempt local zoning. Winnebago County and City of Rockford may have home occupation permit requirements. Operator should verify with local planning)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (IL Dept of Public Health complaint-based)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Non-TCS foods (prohibited list approach); ANAB-accredited food handler cert required; direct to consumer only; labeling required
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state restriction; general sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water at residence
HANDWASHING	Proper handwashing required
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods stored in sanitary conditions

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — IL Dept of Public Health complaint-based
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — IL does not preempt local zoning. Winnebago County and City of Rockford may have home occupation permit requirements. Operator should verify with local planning
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct to consumer only; farmers markets, events, home sales, online with direct delivery; no retail/wholesale
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

Relevant county code

Not identified

RESEARCH NOTES

Same IL state baseline as McHenry County. Winnebago County includes Rockford (IL's second-largest city). No county-specific overlay found.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://wincoil.gov>

<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/food-safety/cottage-food.html>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Winnebago County	DeKalb County	Boone County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state restriction; general sanitation applies	No specific state pet restriction for cottage food kitchens, but standard sanitation applies.	No specific IL state or Boone County rule.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct to consumer only; farmers markets, events, home sales, online with direct delivery; no retail/wholesale	Direct in-state sales. Online sales for non-perishables within Illinois only. Home pickup, farmers markets, events permitted.	Direct sales only within Illinois. Online sales allowed; non-perishable items shipped within IL only.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Conditional
RESTRICTIONS	Non-TCS foods (prohibited list approach); ANAB-accredited food handler cert required; direct to consumer only; labeling required	Illinois 'prohibited list' approach: operators can sell nearly everything not explicitly prohibited. Registration with local health departm...	Prohibited-list approach: most foods permitted including baked goods, candies, condiments, jams, pickles, salsas, sauces, fermented foods, ...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods stored in sanitary conditions	Non-prohibited foods only. Meat/poultry/fish/seafood, custard/cream pies with hazardous fillings, garlic in oil (unless acidified), low-aci...	Non-perishable items can be shipped within IL. Acidified and fermented foods require special documentation.
POPULATION	284,591	100,686	53,459

State context — Illinois cottage food law

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

STATUTE 410 ILCS 625/4 (Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act, §4)	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course)
KITCHEN INSPECTION Upon-complaint	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Illinois prohibits sales to restaurants, retail stores, and wholesale; direct in-state sales are allowed anywhere including home, online, farmers markets, events, and roadside stands; non-perishable items may be shipped within Illinois only.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2625&ChapterID=35>

State dept cottage food page: <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/food-safety/cottage-food.html>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/illinois/winnebago-county-discuss>
