

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Lake County

Indiana · Crown Point · FIPS 18089 · Population 497,682 ·
Crosodo Index #1265*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Ind. Code §16-42-5.2	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.

INDIANA: LAKE COUNTY

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Lake County

Population 497,682 · State baseline: Ind. Code §16-42-5.2 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Non-potentially hazardous (non-PHF) foods only. No registration required. Food handler certificate (ANSI-accredited) required and must be provided to local health department. Direct sales only within Indiana. Perishable baked goods, acidified foods, low-acid canned foods, and meat jerkies are prohibited.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state cottage food pet restriction

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Indiana 2022 HEA 1149 preempts local governments from imposing licensing or inspection requirements beyond state law for home-based vendor operations. However, general zoning/home occupation permits may still apply. Lake County and its cities (Gary, Hammond, Merrillville, Crown Point, etc.) may have home occupation zoning provisions. Operators should check with local municipality for any zoning-related home occupation permit requirements.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (No pre-operational inspection; Indiana state law (2022 HEA 1149) preempts local governments from adding licensing or inspection requirements)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Non-potentially hazardous (non-PHF) foods only. No registration required. Food handler certificate (ANSI-accredited) required and must be provided to local health department. Direct sales only within Indiana. Perishable baked goods, acidified foods, low-acid canned foods, and meat jerkies are prohibited.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction
WATER SUPPLY	No specific water testing requirement in state cottage food law
HANDWASHING	Implied by food handler certification requirement
FOOD STORAGE	Standard home kitchen storage for approved non-PHF foods

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — No pre-operational inspection; Indiana state law (2022 HEA 1149) preempts local governments from adding licensing or inspection requirements
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Indiana 2022 HEA 1149 preempts local governments from imposing licensing or inspection requirements beyond state law for home-based vendor operations. However, general zoning/home occupation permits may still apply. Lake County and its cities (Gary, Hammond, Merrillville, Crown Point, etc.) may have home occupation zoning provisions. Operators should check with local municipality for any zoning-related home occupation permit requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers only within Indiana: home, farmers markets, events, online. No annual sales cap. No wholesale to stores or restaurants.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state cottage food law

Relevant county code

Ind. Code §16-42-5.3 (HEA 1149, 2022 — operative provision; §16-42-5.2 is prior law). Local: Lake County/city zoning codes.

RESEARCH NOTES

Indiana is a Great-tier state. 2022 HEA 1149 (Ind. Code §16-42-5.3) is the operative provision (the input cites §16-42-5.2 which is prior law). State preempts local licensing/inspection requirements but not general home occupation zoning. Food handler certificate required. No sales cap. Lake County is in northwest Indiana (Chicago metro area). Local municipality home occupation zoning requirements not confirmed from direct source. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.lakecountyin.org>

[https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-\(cottage-foods\)/](https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-(cottage-foods)/)

<https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food-seller/indiana/>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Lake County	Porter County	Jasper County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state cottage food pet restriction	No explicit state restriction; good manufacturing practices apply.	Not specified in state statute; proper sanitary procedures and good hygienic practices required.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct sales to consumers only within Indiana: home, farmers markets, events, online. No annual sales cap. No wholesale to stores or restau...	Direct sales from home, farmers markets, online with in-state delivery. No sales cap.	Products may be sold in-person, by telephone, or via the internet, and delivered to the end consumer in person, by mail, or by third-party ...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Non-potentially hazardous (non-PHF) foods only. No registration required. Food handler certificate (ANSI-accredited) required and must be p...	Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Direct sales only; no wholesale or interstate sales. Food handler certification (ANSI-accredited) req...	Must prepare food in the individual's primary residential home kitchen (or permanent structure on the same property). Only non-TCS (non-tim...
FOOD STORAGE	Standard home kitchen storage for approved non-PHF foods	Shelf-stable storage for non-PHF products.	Must use proper sanitary procedures; containers and packaging must be sanitized before use.
POPULATION	497,682	173,355	33,478

State context — Indiana cottage food law

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

STATUTE Ind. Code §16-42-5.2	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED No	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course)
KITCHEN INSPECTION Upon-complaint	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Sales to restaurants, retail stores, and wholesale are prohibited; producers may sell at events, farmers markets, home, online, and roadside stands only.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <http://iga.in.gov/laws/2022/ic/titles/016/articles/042/chapters/005.2>

State dept cottage food page: [https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-\(cottage-foods\)/](https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-(cottage-foods)/)

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/indiana/lake-county-discuss>
