

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Whitley County

Indiana · Columbia City · FIPS 18183 · Population 34,885 ·
Crosodo Index #1926*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Ind. Code §16-42-5.3	Great	—	MEDIUM	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.

INDIANA: WHITLEY COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1926* · FIPS 18183 · Columbia City

Whitley County

Population 34,885 · State baseline: Ind. Code §16-42-5.3 · **MEDIUM****QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY****HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?**

Yes (Indiana home-based vendor law (IC 16-42-5.3, amended 2022 via HEA 1149) allows sales of non-TCS foods from primary residence. No routine inspection. State law preempts local food licensing and inspection ordinances. Local zoning for home-based business may still apply — contact Whitley County Plan Commission.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (State HBV law preempts local food licensing and inspection requirements. However, local zoning ordinances for home occupations may apply. Contact Whitley County Plan Commission (Columbia City) to verify any home occupation permit requirements for a home-based food business.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Indiana Department of Health may inspect upon complaint or food safety concern; local health department enforces.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Indiana home-based vendor law (IC 16-42-5.3, amended 2022 via HEA 1149) allows sales of non-TCS foods from primary residence. No routine inspection. State law preempts local food licensing and inspection ordinances. Local zoning for home-based business may still apply — contact Whitley County Plan Commission.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific water testing requirement under state HBV law.
HANDWASHING	Proper handwashing required as part of sanitary procedures per IC 16-42-5.3.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS (shelf-stable) foods only; proper sanitary storage required.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — Indiana Department of Health may inspect upon complaint or food safety concern; local health department enforces.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — State HBV law preempts local food licensing and inspection requirements. However, local zoning ordinances for home occupations may apply. Contact Whitley County Plan Commission (Columbia City) to verify any home occupation permit requirements for a home-based food business.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer only. Sales allowed in person, by phone, online, or via third-party carrier within Indiana. No interstate shipping. No wholesale or retail resale.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

Relevant county code

No specific Whitley County cottage food ordinance identified. State law (IC 16-42-5.3) preempts local food licensing. Local zoning may apply.

RESEARCH NOTES

Indiana IC 16-42-5.3 (HEA 1149, 2022) governs statewide. State law explicitly preempts local food licensing and inspection ordinances (Sec. 12). Food handler certificate (ANSI-accredited) required. No sales cap. Whitley County is a northeast Indiana county; no county-specific cottage food ordinance identified. Local zoning home occupation rules may still apply.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

[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://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/files/Indiana-Home-Based-Vendor-Handbook-2.pdf>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Whitley County	Huntington County	Noble County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.	Not specified in state statute; proper sanitary procedures and good hygienic practices required.	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-to-consumer only. Sales allowed in person, by phone, online, or via third-party carrier within Indiana. No interstate shipping. No w...	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 ...	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	Varies	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Indiana home-based vendor law (IC 16-42-5.3, amended 2022 via HEA 1149) allows sales of non-TCS foods from primary residence. No routine in...	Must prepare food in the individual's primary residential home kitchen (or permanent structure on the same property). Only non-TCS (non-tim...	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	Non-TCS (shelf-stable) foods only; proper sanitary storage required.	Must use proper sanitary procedures; containers and packaging must be sanitized before use.	Must use proper sanitary procedures; containers and packaging must be sanitized before use.
POPULATION	34,259	36,520	47,744

State context — Indiana cottage food law

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

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