

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Warren County

Iowa · Indianola · FIPS 19181 · Population 52,709 · Crosodo Index #1668*

STATE BASELINE

Iowa Code §137F.20 (cottage food exemption); §137F.8B (HFPE pathway)

STATE TIER

Good

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.

IOWA: WARREN COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1668* · FIPS 19181 · Indianola

Warren County

Population 52,709 · State baseline: Iowa Code §137F.20 (cottage food exemption); §137F.8B (HFPE pathway) · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Cottage food exemption: no license, no cap, direct sales only. Most non-TCS foods allowed including pH-tested acidified foods (pH 4.6 or below or water activity 0.85 or below) with production date on label. Separate HFPE registration allows broader foods including some TCS items and indirect retail sales.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific IA state or Warren County restriction.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Warren County is a suburban/exurban county south of Des Moines (Indianola). Growing population near metro area. No specific Warren County cottage food zoning ordinance identified. Contact Warren County government in Indianola for home occupation requirements.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (Iowa DIAL may investigate on complaint or foodborne illness.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Cottage food exemption: no license, no cap, direct sales only. Most non-TCS foods allowed including pH-tested acidified foods (pH 4.6 or below or water activity 0.85 or below) with production date on label. Separate HFPE registration allows broader foods including some TCS items and indirect retail sales.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific IA state or Warren County restriction.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific requirement under cottage food exemption.
HANDWASHING	No formal requirement under cottage food exemption.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods primarily. pH-tested acidified foods allowed with testing. Perishable TCS foods require HFPE registration.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — Iowa DIAL may investigate on complaint or foodborne illness.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Warren County is a suburban/exurban county south of Des Moines (Indianola). Growing population near metro area. No specific Warren County cottage food zoning ordinance identified. Contact Warren County government in Indianola for home occupation requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Under cottage food exemption: direct to consumer only. Under HFPE: indirect retail sales also permitted.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in IA statute.

Relevant county code

Iowa Code §137F.20; no Warren County-specific ordinance identified

RESEARCH NOTES

Warren County is a growing suburban county south of Des Moines; Indianola is home to the National Balloon Classic. No county-specific cottage food rules found. Iowa has two distinct pathways: (1) cottage food exemption under §137F.20 with no license or cap; (2) HFPE registration for broader foods. Iowa renamed its agency to DIAL (Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing) in 2023.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://dia.iowa.gov/food-safety/home-food-establishment>

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/137F.pdf>

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

State context — Iowa cottage food law

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

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
Iowa Code §137F.1 / §137F.20	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
No	No
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
No	Yes
INDIRECT SALES	
Limited (see notes) — Cottage food direct-to-consumer sales only; however, a separate Home Food Processing Establishment (HFPE) license allows indirect retail and wholesale sales of almost any food including perishables.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/137F.pdf>

State dept cottage food page: <https://dia.iowa.gov/food-safety/home-food-establishment>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/iowa/warren-county-discuss>
