

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Nelson County

Kentucky · Bardstown · FIPS 21179 · Population 48,706 ·
Crosodo Index #2711*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
KRS §217.137	Okay	60000	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.

KENTUCKY: NELSON COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2711* · FIPS 21179 · Bardstown

Nelson County

Population 48,706 · State baseline: KRS §217.137 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Annual sales cap \$60,000. Registration required with KY Dept of Public Health (\$50/year). No food handler cert required. Inspection upon complaint only. Direct-to-consumer sales only; no wholesale or retail. Allowed: non-TCS baked goods, candies, jams/jellies, fruit butters, maple/sorghum syrups, granola, dried goods, snack mixes, popcorn. Prohibited: acidified foods, pickles, salsas, nut butters, fermented foods, low-acid canned foods, meats. No more than two non-commercial ranges/ovens and three refrigerators.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Not specified in state law

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Nelson County has a zoning ordinance (revised November 2024; available from nelsoncountyky.gov). Home occupation provisions are typical for KY counties. Bardstown city limits have separate zoning. No specific cottage food overlay identified in the zoning ordinance title search.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Consumer complaint or foodborne illness investigation)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Annual sales cap \$60,000. Registration required with KY Dept of Public Health (\$50/year). No food handler cert required. Inspection upon complaint only. Direct-to-consumer sales only; no wholesale or retail. Allowed: non-TCS baked goods, candies, jams/jellies, fruit butters, maple/sorghum syrups, granola, dried goods, snack mixes, popcorn. Prohibited: acidified foods, pickles, salsas, nut butters, fermented foods, low-acid canned foods, meats. No more than two non-commercial ranges/ovens and three refrigerators.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state law
WATER SUPPLY	Standard residential water supply
HANDWASHING	Good sanitation practices implied
FOOD STORAGE	Appropriate storage for non-TCS products

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — Consumer complaint or foodborne illness investigation
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Nelson County has a zoning ordinance (revised November 2024; available from nelsoncountyky.gov). Home occupation provisions are typical for KY counties. Bardstown city limits have separate zoning. No specific cottage food overlay identified in the zoning ordinance title search.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer only within KY; farmers markets, roadside stands, fairs, festivals, community events, online orders (in-state); home pickup and delivery allowed. No wholesale, no mail delivery, no out-of-state.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

Relevant county code

Not identified

RESEARCH NOTES

Kentucky Okay-tier state. \$60,000 annual cap. Local ordinances not preempted by state law. State law confirmed via IJ.org and CHFS.ky.gov. No county-specific zoning records identified for home occupation / cottage food overlay. Defaulted to state baseline.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dphps/fsb/Pages/cottage-foods.aspx>

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

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

State context — Kentucky cottage food law

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

STATUTE KRS §217.137	ANNUAL SALES CAP 60000
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT No
KITCHEN INSPECTION Upon-complaint	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Sales limited to direct-to-consumer only within Kentucky — from home (pickup or delivery), markets, roadside stands, community events, and online; shipping outside Kentucky is prohibited, and sales to restaurants or retail stores for resale are not allowed.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=44478>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dphps/fsb/Pages/cottage-foods.aspx>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/kentucky/nelson-county-discuss>
