

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Penobscot County

Maine · Bangor · FIPS 23019 · Population 152,640 · Crosodo  
Index #2321\*

## STATE BASELINE

7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act)

## STATE TIER

Freedom

## 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.

## MAINE: PENOBSHOT COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2321\* · FIPS 23019 · Bangor

## Penobscot County

Population 152,640 · State baseline: 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act) · MEDIUM

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

## HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Conditional (Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License — requires license, kitchen inspection by DACF, and well/septic testing if not on public systems. Most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed; some acidified foods need University of Maine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — if the municipality has adopted an ordinance, direct producer-to-consumer transactions are exempt from state food law (almost any food allowed). Bangor and other Penobscot County municipalities may or may not have adopted food sovereignty ordinances.)

## SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

## PETS ALLOWED?

Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production; no specific pet restriction listed but good practices required.

## HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Penobscot County municipalities may have home occupation permit requirements. Bangor and other cities each have their own zoning rules. Farmers market vendors also need a Mobile Food Vendor license at the state level.)

## ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

## INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection by DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations. Food sovereignty ordinance pathway requires no inspection.)

## Home kitchen rules

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED       | Conditional — Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License — requires license, kitchen inspection by DACF, and well/septic testing if not on public systems. Most non-TCS shelf-stable foods allowed; some acidified foods need University of Maine lab approval (~\$26-39/product). (2) Local Food Sovereignty Ordinances — if the municipality has adopted an ordinance, direct producer-to-consumer transactions are exempt from state food law (almost any food allowed). Bangor and other Penobscot County municipalities may or may not have adopted food sovereignty ordinances. |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| PET RESTRICTIONS           | Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production; no specific pet restriction listed but good practices required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| WATER SUPPLY               | Well water testing required for statewide Home Food Processor License if not on public water system.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| HANDWASHING                | Adequate handwashing required per DACF inspection for statewide license.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| FOOD STORAGE               | Non-TCS shelf-stable foods for statewide license. Acidified foods need lab approval. Almost anything allowed under food sovereignty ordinance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## Inspection & permitting

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| INSPECTION REQUIRED    | Yes — Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection by DACF Division of Quality Assurance and Regulations. Food sovereignty ordinance pathway requires no inspection.                                               |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT | Conditional — Penobscot County municipalities may have home occupation permit requirements. Bangor and other cities each have their own zoning rules. Farmers market vendors also need a Mobile Food Vendor license at the state level. |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE | Varies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## Customer-facing rules

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP | Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE         | Conditional                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES | Statewide license: sales from home, at farmers markets (with Mobile Food Vendor license), online, direct-to-consumer, and some retail. Food sovereignty ordinance: direct producer-to-consumer transactions exempt from most regulations. |
| MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME   | Not specified by state law; local home occupation rules may apply.                                                                                                                                                                        |

## Relevant county code

Penobscot County municipalities' zoning ordinances; 7 M.R.S.A. §282; 7 M.R.S.A. §284

### RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county. Maine has two-track system. Food sovereignty ordinances available if municipality has adopted. Bangor status as food sovereignty municipality not confirmed. Statewide Home Food Processor License pathway requires initial inspection. No Penobscot County-specific cottage food code identified.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.penobscot-county.net>

[https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home\\_food\\_processor.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml)

<https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

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

## Bordering counties — cottage food law

| Regulation                 | Penobscot County                                                                                                                               | Aroostook County                                                                                                                               | Hancock County                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED       | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             |
| PETS ALLOWED               | Under statewide license: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production; no specific pet restriction listed but good pract... | Not specified in state law                                                                                                                     | Under statewide license pathway: 'uncontrolled children' prohibited in kitchen during production. Standard sanitation applies for pets.        |
| INSPECTION REQUIRED        | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            |
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP    | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE            | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Conditional                                                                                                                                    |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP          | Statewide license: sales from home, at farmers markets (with Mobile Food Vendor license), online, direct-to-consumer, and some retail. Food... | Direct and indirect sales allowed; no out-of-state sales                                                                                       | Under statewide license: sales at farm, farm stands, farmers markets (with additional license), and home direct sales. Under food sovereign... |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT     | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Conditional                                                                                                                                    |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE     | Varies                                                                                                                                         | Varies                                                                                                                                         | Varies                                                                                                                                         |
| RESTRICTIONS               | Maine has two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License — requires license, kitchen inspection by DACF, and well/septic testing i... | Kitchen inspection required for home food processor license. Registration required. Direct-to-consumer and indirect sales allowed. Perishab... | Two pathways: (1) Statewide Home Food Processor License requires kitchen inspection by DACF, well/septic testing if not on public systems, ... |
| FOOD STORAGE               | Non-TCS shelf-stable foods for statewide license. Acidified foods need lab approval. Almost anything allowed under food sovereignty ordinan... | Appropriate storage; no perishable items under home processor pathway                                                                          | Under statewide license: non-TCS shelf-stable products only. Under food sovereignty: broader including potentially hazardous foods if sold ... |
| POPULATION                 | 152,640                                                                                                                                        | 67,237                                                                                                                                         | 55,851                                                                                                                                         |

## State context — Maine cottage food law

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

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| STATUTE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | ANNUAL SALES CAP  |
| 7 M.R.S.A. §282 (Food Sovereignty Act)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | —                 |
| REGISTRATION REQUIRED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | FOOD HANDLER CERT |
| Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | No                |
| KITCHEN INSPECTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | DIRECT SALES ONLY |
| Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | No                |
| INDIRECT SALES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                   |
| Yes — Under the statewide Home Food Processor License, producers may sell at any venue including restaurants, retail stores, farmers markets, and online, with no sales limit; indirect wholesale and retail channels are allowed once licensed and kitchen-inspected. |                   |

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

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### STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/7/title7sec282.html>

State dept cottage food page: [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home\\_food\\_processor.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/qar/inspection/home_food_processor.shtml)

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

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/maine/penobscot-county-discuss>

## Classifieds

Resources for cottage food & home bakers · [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

### NATIONAL

#### SUPPLIES

##### Advertise here — Supplies

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### COURSES

##### Advertise here — Courses

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### INSURANCE

##### Advertise here — Insurance

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

### LOCAL

#### Advertise here

Reach home bakers in Penobscot County, Maine. Supply stores, farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and bakery services welcome.

[crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### Your business here

Local cottage food listings, kitchen rentals, co-packer referrals, and community events — post yours free on the Crosodo Forum.

[crosodo.com/nb/maine/penobscot-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/maine/penobscot-county-discuss)

#### Free ad space available

Let us know if you're a non-profit or community organization. Farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and cottage food events near you welcome.

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