

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Lake County

Michigan · Baldwin · FIPS 26085 · Population 11,853 ·
Crosodo Index #874*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
MCL §289.4102	Great	50000	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.

MICHIGAN: LAKE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #874* · FIPS 26085 · Baldwin

Lake County

Population 11,853 · State baseline: MCL \$289.4102 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Must be the kitchen of the operator’s primary domestic residence. Single-family home, apartment, condo, or rental home qualifies; second homes, vacation homes, and motor homes do not qualify if not primary residence. Products must be stored at primary residence. Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Annual sales cap \$50,000 (raised from \$25,000 by 2025 HB 4122, effective March 2026).)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state prohibition on pets; good manufacturing practices apply and pets should be excluded from food production areas during production.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Michigan state law exempts cottage food operators from MDARD licensing and inspection but expressly requires operators to contact their local unit of government regarding local regulations. Lake County unincorporated areas governed by township zoning; Village of Baldwin has its own ordinances. Operators should verify with local township or village zoning office.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (No routine inspection under Michigan cottage food law. MDARD may investigate upon complaint or foodborne illness report.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Must be the kitchen of the operator’s primary domestic residence. Single-family home, apartment, condo, or rental home qualifies; second homes, vacation homes, and motor homes do not qualify if not primary residence. Products must be stored at primary residence. Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Annual sales cap \$50,000 (raised from \$25,000 by 2025 HB 4122, effective March 2026).
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state prohibition on pets; good manufacturing practices apply and pets should be excluded from food production areas during production.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required; no specific county-level additional requirement identified for cottage food operations.
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing required per good manufacturing practices; no state-mandated separate handwashing sink required for cottage food.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-potentially hazardous foods only; must be stored at primary residence in a clean, pest-free area to prevent adulteration.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — No routine inspection under Michigan cottage food law. MDARD may investigate upon complaint or foodborne illness report.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Michigan state law exempts cottage food operators from MDARD licensing and inspection but expressly requires operators to contact their local unit of government regarding local regulations. Lake County unincorporated areas governed by township zoning; Village of Baldwin has its own ordinances. Operators should verify with local township or village zoning office.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales within Michigan only. Allowed venues include farmers markets, roadside stands, craft shows, and home pickup. Online/mail order and third-party delivery platform sales allowed per 2025 HB 4122 amendment (effective March 2026) provided direct consumer interaction occurs before or during the transaction.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No state limit specified; cottage food law assumes operator and household members only; non-household employees not addressed.

Relevant county code

No county-level cottage food code section identified for Lake County. State: MCL §289.4102. Township and village zoning ordinances vary.

RESEARCH NOTES

No county-specific cottage food rules found for Lake County. Rules reflect Michigan state baseline under MCL §289.4102. Lake County is a small rural west-central Lower Peninsula county (pop. ~11,900) with significant Manistee National Forest coverage. State law governs; no county health department cottage food override identified. Local township and village zoning for home occupations varies. 2025 HB 4122 raised annual sales cap to \$50,000 and authorized online/delivery sales effective March 2026.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/food-dairy/cottage-foods>

<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/Laws/MCL?objectName=MCL-289-4102>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Lake County	Manistee County	Mason County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state prohibition on pets; good manufacturing practices apply and pets should be excluded from food production areas during pro...	No specific state prohibition on pets; good manufacturing practices apply and pets should be excluded from food production areas during pro...	No specific state prohibition on pets; good manufacturing practices apply and pets should be excluded from food production areas during pro...
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	No	No
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct sales within Michigan only. Allowed venues include farmers markets, roadside stands, craft shows, and home pickup. Online/mail order...	Direct sales within Michigan only. Allowed venues include farmers markets, roadside stands, craft shows, and home pickup. Online/mail order...	Direct sales within Michigan only. Allowed venues include farmers markets, roadside stands, craft shows, and home pickup. Online/mail order...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Must be the kitchen of the operator's primary domestic residence. Single-family home, apartment, condo, or rental home qualifies; second ho...	Must be the kitchen of the operator's primary domestic residence. Single-family home, apartment, condo, or rental home qualifies; second ho...	Must be the kitchen of the operator's primary domestic residence. Single-family home, apartment, condo, or rental home qualifies; second ho...
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-potentially hazardous foods only; must be stored at primary residence in a clean, pest-free area to prevent adulteration.	Shelf-stable, non-potentially hazardous foods only; must be stored at primary residence in a clean, pest-free area to prevent adulteration.	Shelf-stable, non-potentially hazardous foods only; must be stored at primary residence in a clean, pest-free area to prevent adulteration.
POPULATION	11,853	24,552	29,305

State context — Michigan cottage food law

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

STATUTE MCL §289.4102	ANNUAL SALES CAP 50000
REGISTRATION REQUIRED No	FOOD HANDLER CERT No
KITCHEN INSPECTION No	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes

INDIRECT SALES

No — Sales through retail stores, restaurants, or wholesale are prohibited. Online sales, mail order, and third-party delivery platform sales (e.g., DoorDash) are allowed in-state only, but require the producer to offer the customer an opportunity to directly interact (face-to-face or virtually) before purchase. A separate \$75,000 cap applies if all products are priced at \$250 or more per item. Honey and maple syrup have a separate exemption permitting indirect retail sales up to \$15,000/year.

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/Laws/MCL?objectName=MCL-289-4102>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/food-dairy/cottage-foods>

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

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/michigan/lake-county-discuss>
