

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Cascade County

Montana · Great Falls · FIPS 30013 · Population 84,423 ·  
Crosodo Index #546\*

## STATE BASELINE

Mont. Code §50-50-116 and §50-50-117 (cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq.  
(Local Food Choice Act)

STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Freedom	—	HIGH	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.

## MONTANA: CASCADE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #546\* · FIPS 30013 · Great Falls

# Cascade County

Population 84,423 · State baseline: Mont. Code §50-50-116 and §50-50-117 (cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq. (Local Food Choice Act) · **HIGH**

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

### HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Cascade County has a specific Cottage Food Operation guidance and registration application administered by the Cascade City-County Health Department. One-time registration fee of \$40. Approved foods include non-PHF items: baked goods (bread, cakes, pastries, cookies, crackers, granola, nuts/mixes, pies), dried fruits/herbs (pH ≤4.6), standardized jams/jellies/preserves/fruit butters (≥55% sugar), popcorn/cotton candy, fudge/candies with cooking step, molded chocolate. Prohibited: buttercream/cream cheese frostings, pepper/low-sugar jams, products with meat or cheese, cheesecake, pumpkin/meringue/custard/unbaked fruit pies, no-bake cookies. Montana Local Food Choice Act (§§50-49-201 et seq.) provides an additional broader pathway for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.)

### SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

### PETS ALLOWED?

Pets must be excluded from the kitchen during food production per Cascade County guidance.

### HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (A home occupancy license or certificate may be required. City of Great Falls Planning: 406-455-8414 (City of Great Falls Home Occupation Application). Unincorporated areas: Cascade County Planning Department: 406-454-6905 (Cascade County Home Occupation Permit Application). This is explicitly noted in the Cascade County Cottage Food Operation guidance document.)

### ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

### INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Applicant grants local health official access to residence for inspection in event of complaint based on illness associated with products. No routine inspection.)

## Home kitchen rules

### HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Yes — Cascade County has a specific Cottage Food Operation guidance and registration application administered by the Cascade City-County Health Department. One-time registration fee of \$40. Approved foods include non-PHF items: baked goods (bread, cakes, pastries, cookies, crackers, granola, nuts/mixes, pies), dried fruits/herbs (pH ≤4.6), standardized jams/jellies/preserves/fruit butters (≥55% sugar), popcorn/cotton candy, fudge/candies with cooking step, molded chocolate. Prohibited: buttercream/cream cheese frostings, pepper/low-sugar jams, products with meat or cheese, cheesecake, pumpkin/meringue/custard/unbaked fruit pies, no-bake cookies. Montana Local Food Choice Act (§§50-49-201 et seq.) provides an additional broader pathway for direct producer-to-consumer transactions.

### SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

### PET RESTRICTIONS

Pets must be excluded from the kitchen during food production per Cascade County guidance.

### WATER SUPPLY

No specific additional requirement identified in county guidance.

### HANDWASHING

Food must be produced in a clean kitchen; food-contact surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized. Standard hygiene practices required.

### FOOD STORAGE

Products must be properly stored and handled to prevent contamination.

## Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — Applicant grants local health official access to residence for inspection in event of complaint based on illness associated with products. No routine inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — A home occupancy license or certificate may be required. City of Great Falls Planning: 406-455-8414 (City of Great Falls Home Occupation Application). Unincorporated areas: Cascade County Planning Department: 406-454-6905 (Cascade County Home Occupation Permit Application). This is explicitly noted in the Cascade County Cottage Food Operation guidance document.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Conditional

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers at farmers markets, events, and from home. Under standard cottage food (§50-50-116), no consignment/retail/wholesale. Under MLFCA, broader direct-to-consumer transactions permitted.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in county guidance or state law.

## Relevant county code

Administrative Rules of Montana 37.110 Subchapter 5 (Cottage Food Operations). Cascade County Cottage Food Operation Guidance and Registration Application (2023 version). City of Great Falls Home Occupation Application. Cascade County Home Occupation Permit Application.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Cascade County is notable for having specific county-level cottage food guidance from the Cascade City-County Health Department, including a registration application with a \$40 one-time fee. The county guidance document explicitly lists approved and prohibited foods, sanitation requirements, labeling requirements, and notes that a home occupancy license may be required from either City of Great Falls Planning (406-455-8414) or Cascade County Planning (406-454-6905). The county .gov website confirms these resources. Confidence is high: county-specific guidance obtained from official Cascade County government website (.cascadecountymt.gov).

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.cascadecountymt.gov>

<https://www.cascadecountymt.gov/576/Home-Kitchens>

[https://www.cascadecountymt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2186/2023\\_CCHD-Cottage-Food-Application-PDF?bidId=](https://www.cascadecountymt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2186/2023_CCHD-Cottage-Food-Application-PDF?bidId=)

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/fcs/foodsafety/cottagefoods>

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

## State context — Montana cottage food law

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

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<b>STATUTE</b> Mont. Code §50-50-116 and §50-50-117 (cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq. (Local Food Choice Act)	<b>ANNUAL SALES CAP</b> —
<b>REGISTRATION REQUIRED</b> Yes	<b>FOOD HANDLER CERT</b> No
<b>KITCHEN INSPECTION</b> Upon-complaint	<b>DIRECT SALES ONLY</b> Yes
<b>INDIRECT SALES</b> No — Consignment sales at retail food establishments or through wholesale establishments are explicitly prohibited under §50-50-116(3). The Montana Local Food Choice Act also requires direct producer-to-informed-end-consumer transactions only; retail locations require a wholesale food license.	

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

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### STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: [https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title\\_0500/chapter\\_0500/part\\_0010/section\\_0160/0500-0500-0010-0160.html](https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0500/chapter_0500/part_0010/section_0160/0500-0500-0010-0160.html)

State dept cottage food page: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/fcs/foodsafety/cottagefoods>

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

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## Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/montana/cascade-county-discuss>

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