

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Yellowstone County

Montana · Billings · FIPS 30111 · Population 165,524 ·
Crosodo Index #1653*

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	—	MEDIUM	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.

How to start — 60-second path

Yellowstone County, Montana — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

PETS

No explicit state restriction; good manufacturing practices apply.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under Montana cottage food rules (county cannot expand a state ban).
- ☐ **2. Pickup & zoning** — Home occupation and porch pickup cells above; HOA/lease may still block customer traffic.
- ☐ **3. Local tax / license** — Business license or sales tax certificate if your city/parish requires it (common even with no state food permit).
- ☐ **4. Training** — Food handler or state registration before market day.
- ☐ **5. Labels** — Disclaimer, allergens, ingredients, net quantity, producer info.
- ☐ **6. Call if unclear** — County health and planning for your exact address.

LABEL FIELDS TO INCLUDE

- ☐ Product name · producer name · address (or allowed alternative)
- ☐ Ingredients by weight · major allergens · net weight/quantity
- ☐ Montana home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Montana label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

Planning path only — not legal advice. Rules change. Always verify with state and local offices before selling.

MONTANA: YELLOWSTONE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1653* · FIPS 30111 · Billings

Yellowstone County

Population 165,524 · State baseline: Mont. Code §50-50-116 and §50-50-117 (cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq. (Local Food Choice Act) · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Standard cottage food (§50-50-116): local health authority registration required, labeling required, no consignment sales through retail/wholesale establishments. Montana Local Food Choice Act (§§50-49-201 et seq.): no licensing/inspection for direct producer-to-consumer sales of virtually any homemade food including potentially hazardous foods. No sales cap under either track. All sales must be in-state.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No explicit state restriction; good manufacturing practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes (Yellowstone County requires home occupation permit for home-based businesses in residential zones. Billings city has its own cottage food operations rules distinct from county. County zoning defines home occupation as accessory activity — no non-resident employees, conducted entirely within dwelling, no visible signage, no external evidence of business. Billings-area zoning (various Planning and Zoning Districts) governs properties in the county.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (DPHHS may investigate upon complaint. No routine inspections under MLFCA.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Standard cottage food (§50-50-116): local health authority registration required, labeling required, no consignment sales through retail/wholesale establishments. Montana Local Food Choice Act (§§50-49-201 et seq.): no licensing/inspection for direct producer-to-consumer sales of virtually any homemade food including potentially hazardous foods. No sales cap under either track. All sales must be in-state.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No explicit state restriction; good manufacturing practices apply.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing per food safety practices.
FOOD STORAGE	Appropriate storage; MLFCA requires informed consumer disclosure.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — DPHHS may investigate upon complaint. No routine inspections under MLFCA.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes — Yellowstone County requires home occupation permit for home-based businesses in residential zones. Billings city has its own cottage food operations rules distinct from county. County zoning defines home occupation as accessory activity — no non-resident employees, conducted entirely within dwelling, no visible signage, no external evidence of business. Billings-area zoning (various Planning and Zoning Districts) governs properties in the county.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	No
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales within Montana at home, farmers markets, and other venues. MLFCA: delivery to informed end consumers allowed.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residents only per home occupation zoning rules.

Relevant county code

Yellowstone County Zoning Regulations (Planning and Zoning Districts); Mont. Code §50-50-116 through §50-50-117; Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq.

RESEARCH NOTES

Yellowstone County zoning regulations retrieved from billingsmt.gov (District 17 zoning regulations) confirm home occupation definition: no non-resident employees, conducted wholly within dwelling, no signage, no exterior evidence of business, no heavy vehicles. Billings has its own cottage food rules distinct from county. Montana's two-track system (standard cottage food + MLFCA) provides broad freedoms. Billings is the most populous city in Montana.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov>

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

<https://billingsmt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1290/Special-Zoning-Districts-17?bidId=>

<https://www.cityrulelookup.com/home-business/cottage-food/yellowstone-county-mt>

Questions about this county? Local notes and a place to leave a question: crosodo.com/nb/montana/yellowstone-county-discuss

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Yellowstone County	Big Horn County	Carbon County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No explicit state restriction; good manufacturing practices apply.	Not specified in state cottage food law; individual county health departments may have additional requirements.	Not specified in state cottage food law; individual county health departments may have additional requirements.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	No	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct sales within Montana at home, farmers markets, and other venues. MLFCA: delivery to informed end consumers allowed.	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted at farmers markets, events, and from home. Under standard cottage food (§50-50-116), no consignment, ret...	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted at farmers markets, events, and from home. Under standard cottage food (§50-50-116), no consignment, ret...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Standard cottage food (§50-50-116): local health authority registration required, labeling required, no consignment sales through retail/wh...	Cottage food operations must register with local health authority under Mont. Code §50-50-117. Non-potentially-hazardous foods only under s...	Cottage food operations must register with local health authority under Mont. Code §50-50-117. Non-potentially-hazardous foods only under s...
FOOD STORAGE	Appropriate storage; MLFCA requires informed consumer disclosure.	Products must be non-potentially hazardous (standard cottage food track) or properly disclosed as unlicensed/uninspected (MLFCA track). Pro...	Products must be non-potentially hazardous (standard cottage food track) or properly disclosed as unlicensed/uninspected (MLFCA track). Pro...
POPULATION	165,524	13,090	10,645

State context — Montana cottage food law

Yellowstone 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.

STATUTE

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

ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Yes

FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

KITCHEN INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

INDIRECT SALES

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.

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Montana cottage food law report](#) on Crosodo, or open the live guide: crosodo.com/states/montana.

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: 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/>

Questions about Yellowstone County? Local notes and a place to leave a question are on Crosodo. We monitor new threads — start with zoning, permits, or porch pickup.

crosodo.com/nb/montana/yellowstone-county-discuss

Classifieds

Resources for cottage food & home bakers · crosodo.com/advertise

NATIONAL

SUPPLIES

Advertise here — Supplies

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

COURSES

Advertise here — Courses

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

INSURANCE

Advertise here — Insurance

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

LOCAL

Advertise here

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

crosodo.com/advertise

Your business here

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

crosodo.com/nb/montana/yellowstone-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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