

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Lea County

New Mexico · Lovington · FIPS 35025 · Population 73,103 ·
Crosodo Index #506*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE
NMSA §25-12-3 (Homemade Food Act)	Great	—	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.

NEW MEXICO: LEA COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #506* · FIPS 35025 · Lovington

Lea County

Population 73,103 · State baseline: NMSA §25-12-3 (Homemade Food Act) · **MEDIUM****QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY**

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Non-TCS foods produced in a private farm, ranch, or residence. No sales cap. Direct sales within New Mexico through any channel. Cannot sell to restaurants, wholesalers, distributors, or across state lines.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Not specified in state statute.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (State Homemade Food Act does not require a permit. Voluntary NMED permit available. Lea County may have local zoning requirements. County government URL confirmed in input. No Lea County-specific cottage food ordinance found.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (No routine inspection. NMED must issue written warning before fines (\$100 max).)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Non-TCS foods produced in a private farm, ranch, or residence. No sales cap. Direct sales within New Mexico through any channel. Cannot sell to restaurants, wholesalers, distributors, or across state lines.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state statute.
WATER SUPPLY	Not specified in state statute.
HANDWASHING	Food handler certification required.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS products must be stored appropriately.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — No routine inspection. NMED must issue written warning before fines (\$100 max).
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — State Homemade Food Act does not require a permit. Voluntary NMED permit available. Lea County may have local zoning requirements. County government URL confirmed in input. No Lea County-specific cottage food ordinance found.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	All channels permitted within New Mexico: farmers markets, festivals, internet, roadside stands, home pickup/delivery, mail. No interstate sales. No sales to restaurants, wholesalers, distributors.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified.

Relevant county code

NMSA §25-12-3. No Lea County-specific code section found.

RESEARCH NOTES

Lea County follows New Mexico Homemade Food Act (NMSA §25-12-3). No county-specific overrides found. County government URL confirmed in input. Confidence: medium (state law verified, county URL confirmed, no specific county ordinance confirmed).

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.leacounty.gov>

<https://www.env.nm.gov/food-program/homemade-food/>

<https://www.leacounty.gov>

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

State context — New Mexico cottage food law

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

STATUTE NMSA §25-12-3 (Homemade Food Act)	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED No	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes
KITCHEN INSPECTION No	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Sales must be direct to consumers within New Mexico. Products may not be sold to restaurants, wholesalers, distributors, or outside New Mexico. Internet, mail, and phone sales directly to consumers are permitted. The NMED Food Safety Program does not have jurisdiction in Bernalillo County and Albuquerque (which have their own programs); those areas may operate mandatory or voluntary permit systems.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://laws.nmonesource.com/w/nmos/Chapter-25-NMSA-1978>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.env.nm.gov/foodprogram/homemade-food-act/>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/new-mexico/>

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/new-mexico/lea-county-discuss>
