

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Tompkins County

New York · Ithaca · FIPS 36109 · Population 102,555 ·
Crosodo Index #561*

STATE BASELINE

N.Y. Agric. & Mkts. Law §251-z-4; 1 CRR-NY 276.4

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

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 YORK: TOMPKINS COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #561* · FIPS 36109 · Ithaca

Tompkins County

Population 102,555 · State baseline: N.Y. Agric. & Mkts. Law §251-z-4; 1 CRR-NY 276.4 · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (New York Home Processor Exemption: Only baked goods (must be baked — all products must have a pathogen kill step), certain jams, jellies, preserves, snack mixes, and similar low-risk foods. All products must be pre-packaged in the home and labeled. Sales within New York State only. If private well, a water potability test required with registration application.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

NY state recommends consulting local zoning officials before starting. Tompkins County Environmental Health administers local food program permits.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Tompkins County municipalities may have home occupation requirements. NY State recommends consulting local zoning officials before commencing any home-based business. The City of Ithaca and surrounding towns (Lansing, Dryden, etc.) each have their own zoning. Tompkins County Environmental Health handles food permits for licensed establishments; Home Processor Exemption (no license) does not trigger their permitting.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (No routine inspections. NY Ag & Markets administers the Home Processor Exemption. Tompkins County Environmental Health (607-274-6688) handles local food program permits for licensed establishments.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — New York Home Processor Exemption: Only baked goods (must be baked — all products must have a pathogen kill step), certain jams, jellies, preserves, snack mixes, and similar low-risk foods. All products must be pre-packaged in the home and labeled. Sales within New York State only. If private well, a water potability test required with registration application.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	NY state recommends consulting local zoning officials before starting. Tompkins County Environmental Health administers local food program permits.
WATER SUPPLY	Private well requires Total Coliform and E. coli test from a certified lab submitted with the registration application.
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing practices required.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF only. Pre-packaged in home required. Prohibited: refrigerated/TCS products, no-bake items, pickles, relishes, sauces, salsas, vinegars, dairy products, meats, fish, poultry, beverages, cheesecakes, cream-filled pastries, buttercream/cream cheese frostings, fudge, nut butters, roasted coffee, freeze-dried foods.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — No routine inspections. NY Ag & Markets administers the Home Processor Exemption. Tompkins County Environmental Health (607-274-6688) handles local food program permits for licensed establishments.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Tompkins County municipalities may have home occupation requirements. NY State recommends consulting local zoning officials before commencing any home-based business. The City of Ithaca and surrounding towns (Lansing, Dryden, etc.) each have their own zoning. Tompkins County Environmental Health handles food permits for licensed establishments; Home Processor Exemption (no license) does not trigger their permitting.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Sales at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, green markets, craft fairs, flea markets, home delivery, and internet — all within NYS only. Wholesale to local facilities (restaurants, cafes, grocery stores) within NYS also permitted.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

Relevant county code

No specific Tompkins County code section identified. State law governs: 1 CRR-NY 276.4. Tompkins County Environmental Health: (607) 274-6688.

RESEARCH NOTES

Tompkins County was flagged as 'verified-large' with county_govt_url. Tompkins County Environmental Health Division page retrieved directly from tompkinscountyny.gov — confirms they administer food program permits and inspections for licensed establishments. Home Processor Exemption (state-level, free, no expiry) does not require local health department involvement unless producers also hold a separate food service establishment permit. Ithaca is a college town (Cornell University, Ithaca College) with an active local food economy. Confidence high due to county government source retrieved.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh>

<https://www.tompkinscountyny.gov>

<https://agriculture.ny.gov/food-safety/home-processing>

<https://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Tompkins County	Chemung County	Cayuga County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	NY state recommends consulting local zoning officials before starting. Tompkins County Environmental Health administers local food program ...	Not specified in state law.	Not explicitly stated; standard sanitary practices apply.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	No	No
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Sales at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, green markets, craft fairs, flea markets, home delivery, and internet — all within NYS only. ...	Sales at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, green markets, craft fairs, flea markets, via home delivery, and online permitted within New ...	Products may be sold at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, green markets, craft fairs, flea markets, via home delivery, and online within...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	New York Home Processor Exemption: Only baked goods (must be baked — all products must have a pathogen kill step), certain jams, jellies, p...	New York Home Processor Exemption: only baked goods and some jams/jellies/ preserves that are shelf-stable and non-PHF are allowed. All prod...	Non-potentially hazardous shelf-stable baked goods only (must be baked — pathogen kill step required). Products must be pre-packaged and la...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF only. Pre-packaged in home required. Prohibited: refrigerated/TCS products, no-bake items, pickles, relishes, sauces, salsas, vineg...	No specific statutory requirement.	Products must be shelf-stable and non-potentially hazardous.
POPULATION	102,555	83,584	76,171

State context — New York cottage food law

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

STATUTE N.Y. Agric. & Mkts. Law §251-z-4; 1 CRR-NY 276.4	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT No
KITCHEN INSPECTION No	DIRECT SALES ONLY No
INDIRECT SALES Yes — Wholesale to restaurants, cafes, and grocery stores within New York State is explicitly permitted. Products may also be sold online (NY residents only) and via delivery. Shipping out of state is not permitted. Registration is free, location-specific, and has no expiration date.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/AGM/251-Z-4>

State dept cottage food page: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/food-safety/home-processing>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/new-york/tompkins-county-discuss>
