

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Polk County

North Carolina · Columbus · FIPS 37149 · Population 21,106 ·
Crosodo Index #2563*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
02 NCAC 9C.0307	Good	—	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.

How to start — 60-second path

Polk County, North Carolina — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Yes

PETS

No pets allowed in the home at all — presence of pet animals in the home disqualifies the applicant under GMP requirements (21 CFR 117 Subpart B as incorporated by 02 NCAC 09C .0307).

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under North Carolina 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
- ☐ North Carolina home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[North Carolina label one-pager →](#)

Local notes & questions →

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

NORTH CAROLINA: POLK COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2563* · FIPS 37149 · Columbus

Polk County

Population 21,106 · State baseline: 02 NCAC 09C.0307 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (NC state law requires annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS. Pets in the home disqualify the applicant entirely. Shelf-stable, low-risk foods only. Registration required with NC Department of Agriculture. No sales cap.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No pets allowed in the home at all — presence of pet animals in the home disqualifies the applicant under GMP requirements (21 CFR 117 Subpart B as incorporated by 02 NCAC 09C .0307).

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Polk County has zoning jurisdiction in unincorporated areas. Home occupation permit may be required. Operators should contact Polk County Planning for specific requirements.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Annual inspection of home kitchen by NCDA&CS required before registration renewal each year.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Yes — NC state law requires annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS. Pets in the home disqualify the applicant entirely. Shelf-stable, low-risk foods only. Registration required with NC Department of Agriculture. No sales cap.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

PET RESTRICTIONS

No pets allowed in the home at all — presence of pet animals in the home disqualifies the applicant under GMP requirements (21 CFR 117 Subpart B as incorporated by 02 NCAC 09C .0307).

WATER SUPPLY

Must use an approved water supply; well water may require testing.

HANDWASHING

Adequate handwashing facilities required as part of the kitchen inspection.

FOOD STORAGE

Shelf-stable storage required; products must be non-refrigerated.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED

Yes — Annual inspection of home kitchen by NCDA&CS required before registration renewal each year.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT

Varies — Polk County has zoning jurisdiction in unincorporated areas. Home occupation permit may be required. Operators should contact Polk County Planning for specific requirements.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE

Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP

Yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE

Conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES

Sales permitted at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, craft fairs, home delivery, and online (within NC). Indirect sales to stores permitted under state law.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME

Not specified in state rule; household members may assist.

Relevant county code

Polk County Zoning Ordinance (home occupation provisions); no specific cottage food county code identified.

RESEARCH NOTES

No county-specific cottage food ordinance found for Polk County. Small mountain-foothills county in western NC near Tryon. State baseline (02 NCAC 09C .0307) applies. Annual kitchen inspection and pet disqualification rules apply statewide.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.polkcounty.gov>

<https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/food-drug-protection/food-program/fdpd-food-program-home-processor>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Polk County	Henderson County	Rutherford County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No pets allowed in the home at all — presence of pet animals in the home disqualifies the applicant under GMP requirements (21 CFR 117 Subp...	Pets anywhere in the home disqualify the applicant for a home processor permit. Complete pet prohibition.	Pets in the home DISQUALIFY the applicant entirely from the NC Home Processor program
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Sales permitted at farms, farm stands, farmers markets, craft fairs, home delivery, and online (within NC). Indirect sales to stores permit...	North Carolina allows direct and indirect sales (retail stores, restaurants). No sales cap. Shelf-stable only.	Direct and indirect sales allowed; no online shipping restriction; products must be shelf-stable
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	NC state law requires annual home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS. Pets in the home disqualify the applicant entirely. Shelf-stable, low-risk...	North Carolina requires annual kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS. Pets anywhere in the home disqualify the applicant. Henderson County follows ...	NC requires annual inspection by NCDA&CS. Pets in the home disqualify applicants. Kitchen must meet GMP requirements. No sales cap.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable storage required; products must be non-refrigerated.	Shelf-stable products only. Acidified foods require pH/ water activity testing.	Shelf-stable low-risk foods; proper storage required
POPULATION	21,106	116,469	64,680

State context — North Carolina cottage food law

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

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
02 NCAC 9C.0307	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
Yes	No
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
Yes	No
INDIRECT SALES	
Yes — Home processors may sell to retail stores, restaurants, and directly to consumers. Sales at farmers markets are permitted. Labels are required for wholesale and packaged self-service retail; direct hand-to-consumer sales (e.g., from home or at events) may be exempt from affixed labels if ingredient info is available on request. NC requires annual home kitchen inspection, which is unusual among no-cap states.	

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the **North Carolina cottage food law report** on Crosodo, or open the live guide: crosodo.com/states/north-carolina.

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2002%20-%20agriculture%20and%20consumer%20services/chapter%2009%20-%20food%20and%20drug%20protection/subchapter%20c/02%20ncac%2009c%20.0307.pdf>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/food-drug-protection/food-program/fdpd-food-program-home-processor>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/north-carolina/>

Questions about Polk 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/north-carolina/polk-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 Polk County, North Carolina. 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/north-carolina/polk-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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