

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Watauga County

North Carolina · Boone · FIPS 37189 · Population 54,540 ·
Crosodo Index #2575*

STATE BASELINE

02 NCAC 9C .0307 (NC Home Processor Program)

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.

How to start — 60-second path

Watauga County, North Carolina — 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?

Conditional

INSPECTION

Yes

PETS

Pet animals in the home DISQUALIFY the applicant for NC home processor registration (state rule). Town of Boone home occupation rules also apply for in-town operations.

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: WATAUGA COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2575* · FIPS 37189 · Boone

Watauga County

Population 54,540 · State baseline: 02 NCAC 9C .0307 (NC Home Processor Program) · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Annual kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. No sales cap. Allowed: shelf-stable, low-risk foods. Pets in home disqualify applicant. Town of Boone has specific home occupation requirements under UDO Section 15.53.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Pet animals in the home DISQUALIFY the applicant for NC home processor registration (state rule). Town of Boone home occupation rules also apply for in-town operations.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes (NCDA&CS home processor registration required (annual, with annual inspection). In Town of Boone: Home Occupation Permit required under Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance Section 15.53. Boone restrictions: only resident family members (no outside employees); home use max 25% of floor area; no external business evidence except permitted signage; no excess traffic or parking; no noise/vibration/odor detectable off lot. On-premise sale/delivery of goods not produced in the home is prohibited. Application fee required. Contact Town of Boone Planning & Inspections. Outside Boone town limits: Watauga County Planning and Development Ordinance applies.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Annual inspection by NCDA&CS required for all home processor registrations.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Annual kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. No sales cap. Allowed: shelf-stable, low-risk foods. Pets in home disqualify applicant. Town of Boone has specific home occupation requirements under UDO Section 15.53.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pet animals in the home DISQUALIFY the applicant for NC home processor registration (state rule). Town of Boone home occupation rules also apply for in-town operations.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific well testing requirement identified beyond standard sanitation.
HANDWASHING	Covered under annual inspection requirements.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-refrigerated products only.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — Annual inspection by NCDA&CS required for all home processor registrations.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes — NCDA&CS home processor registration required (annual, with annual inspection). In Town of Boone: Home Occupation Permit required under Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance Section 15.53. Boone restrictions: only resident family members (no outside employees); home use max 25% of floor area; no external business evidence except permitted signage; no excess traffic or parking; no noise/vibration/odor detectable off lot. On-premise sale/delivery of goods not produced in the home is prohibited. Application fee required. Contact Town of Boone Planning & Inspections. Outside Boone town limits: Watauga County Planning and Development Ordinance applies.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Yes

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct and indirect sales permitted under NC program. Within Town of Boone: customers visiting home may trigger home occupation restrictions on traffic; confirm with Boone Planning. Delivery allowed.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Town of Boone: no persons other than resident family members may be engaged in the occupation.

Relevant county code

02 NCAC 09C .0307; Town of Boone UDO Section 15.53 (Home Occupation); Watauga County Planning and Development Ordinance

RESEARCH NOTES

Watauga County includes Boone (home of Appalachian State University) and surrounding mountain area. Town of Boone has specific, well-documented home occupation permit requirements under UDO §15.53: family-members only, max 25% floor area, no external business evidence, no excess traffic. The county planning site and Boone home occupation application PDF were both accessible and specific. NC's annual inspection requirement and pet disqualification rule are uniquely strict. Verified via county and town government sources — high confidence.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.wataugacounty.org/App_Pages/Dept/Planning/ordinances.aspx

<https://www.wataugacounty.org>

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

https://www.wataugacounty.org/App_Pages/Dept/Planning/ordinances.aspx

<https://townofboone.net/DocumentCenter/View/970/Home-Occupation-Application-PDF>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Watauga County	Wilkes County	Caldwell County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Pet animals in the home DISQUALIFY the applicant for NC home processor registration (state rule). Town of Boone home occupation rules also ...	Pets in the home DISQUALIFY the applicant from the NC Home Processor program entirely	Any pets in the home at any time disqualify the applicant from the NC Home Processor program.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct and indirect sales permitted under NC program. Within Town of Boone: customers visiting home may trigger home occupation restriction...	Direct and indirect sales allowed; no online shipping restriction; products must be shelf-stable	Sales allowed at farmers markets, from home, at events, to retail stores, and to restaurants after passing inspection.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes	Varies	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Yes	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Annual kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required. No sales cap. Allowed: shelf-stable, low-risk foods. Pets in home disqualify applicant. Town...	NC requires annual inspection of the home kitchen by NCDA&CS. Pets in the home disqualify applicants. Kitchen must meet GMP requirements (2...	Same as all NC counties: home kitchen inspection by NCDA&CS required before sales. Pets (including indoor pets) completely disqualify appli...
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-refrigerated products only.	Shelf-stable foods only; proper storage away from contaminants	Detailed storage plan required. All storage areas inspected.
POPULATION	54,540	66,125	80,716

State context — North Carolina cottage food law

Watauga 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 Watauga 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/watauga-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 Watauga 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/watauga-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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