

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Berks County

Pennsylvania · Reading · FIPS 42011 · Population 428,483 ·
Crosodo Index #2838*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
3 Pa.C.S. §§5721-5737	Good	—	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.

PENNSYLVANIA: BERKS COUNTY

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Berks County

Population 428,483 · State baseline: 3 Pa.C.S. §§5721-5737 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Conditional (Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment (LFE) registration from PA Dept. of Agriculture (\$35 fee, 2-year registration). An initial on-site inspection is required before registration is issued. Allowed non-TCS foods include baked goods, jams and jellies, beverages/drinks, acid/acidified/fermented foods (with pH testing), candy, and other shelf-stable foods. Application must be submitted at least 60 days before operation. NOT available in Philadelphia County. Berks County falls under PA Dept. of Agriculture statewide jurisdiction.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Standard food safety GMP requirements apply during production.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Berks County municipalities (Reading, Wyomissing, Muhlenberg Township, etc.) have their own zoning ordinances governing home occupations. Operators should verify local zoning allows food production as a home occupation in their residential zone. Berks County government does not administer cottage food permits.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Initial on-site inspection required before registration; subsequent routine inspections by PA Dept. of Agriculture.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Conditional — Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment (LFE) registration from PA Dept. of Agriculture (\$35 fee, 2-year registration). An initial on-site inspection is required before registration is issued. Allowed non-TCS foods include baked goods, jams and jellies, beverages/drinks, acid/acidified/fermented foods (with pH testing), candy, and other shelf-stable foods. Application must be submitted at least 60 days before operation. NOT available in Philadelphia County. Berks County falls under PA Dept. of Agriculture statewide jurisdiction.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

PET RESTRICTIONS

Standard food safety GMP requirements apply during production.

WATER SUPPLY

No specific water supply requirement beyond standard food code compliance.

HANDWASHING

Required per food establishment inspection standards.

FOOD STORAGE

Non-TCS, non-refrigerated finished products only.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED

Yes — Initial on-site inspection required before registration; subsequent routine inspections by PA Dept. of Agriculture.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT

Varies — Berks County municipalities (Reading, Wyomissing, Muhlenberg Township, etc.) have their own zoning ordinances governing home occupations. Operators should verify local zoning allows food production as a home occupation in their residential zone. Berks County government does not administer cottage food permits.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE

Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales and some limited indirect sales permitted. Online sales and in-state delivery permitted.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law; local zoning home occupation rules typically restrict to family members.

Relevant county code

3 Pa.C.S. §§5721-5737 (Limited Food Establishment); local Berks County municipal zoning codes vary.

RESEARCH NOTES

Pennsylvania LFE program well-documented via state .gov source. Berks County has no county health department; PA Dept. of Agriculture has statewide jurisdiction. Initial inspection required is a key restriction. Individual municipalities in Berks County (Reading, townships) have their own zoning codes for home occupation compliance. Confidence medium: state rules high-confidence; county-specific zoning not researched at municipal level.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/food/limited-food-establishment.html>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Berks County	Lehigh County	Chester County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Conditional	Conditional	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Standard food safety GMP requirements apply during production.	Standard food safety GMP requirements apply during production.	No specific state cottage food pet restriction; general sanitation standards apply per inspection
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional	Conditional	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct-to-consumer sales and some limited indirect sales permitted. Online sales and in-state delivery permitted.	Direct-to-consumer sales and limited indirect sales permitted. Online sales and in-state delivery permitted.	All venues permitted: direct from home, online, retail stores, restaurants, interstate. Retail Food Facility License may be required for fa...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	Yes
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment (LFE) registration from PA Dept. of Agriculture (\$35 fee, 2-year registration). An initi...	Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment (LFE) registration from PA Dept. of Agriculture (\$35 fee, 2-year registration). An initi...	Must produce only non-hazardous foods not requiring finished-product refrigeration. Kitchen must pass state inspection. Registration requir...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS, non-refrigerated finished products only.	Non-TCS, non-refrigerated finished products only.	Food must be stored in compliant home kitchen conditions
POPULATION	428,483	374,110	536,474

State context — Pennsylvania cottage food law

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

STATUTE

3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737

ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Yes

FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

KITCHEN INSPECTION

Yes

DIRECT SALES ONLY

No

INDIRECT SALES

Limited (see notes) — Registration includes sales direct from the production site including internet sales. However, a separate Retail Food Facility License may be required for sales at events or Farmers Markets. Businesses aiming to sell across state lines might also need FDA registration. The registration covers home-based operations in residential kitchens as well as residential-style kitchens in alternate locations such as churches, fire halls, or remodeled garages. Not available in Philadelphia County.

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/consCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&t1=03&div=0&chpt=57>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/food/limited-food-establishment.html>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/pennsylvania/>

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/pennsylvania/berks-county-discuss>
