



HEALTH CARE AGENCY/PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

Cottage Food Operation Information

As of January 1, 2013, California law allows certain foods to be made from home. This document provides basic information for anyone considering starting a Cottage Food business. For more detailed information please visit our web page at <http://ocfoodinfo.com/cottage>.

What foods can I make in my home?

This law allows only specific foods. The state keeps a list of food products you are allowed to make. Some examples include muffins, cookies, nuts, candies, roasted coffee, and popcorn. An updated list of approved food products can be found at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/Pages/fdbCottageFood.aspx>.

Do I Need A Permit?

Yes, the new law allows for two different options, Class A and Class B.

Class A is for selling food directly to individuals such as customers at a community event. Class A requires the operator to register with the local health department. There is no inspection with a Class A registration.

Class B is for selling to retailers who will then resell the food. For example, you sell food to a market who resells it to their customers. Class B requires the operator to obtain a permit from the local health department. There is a yearly inspection in order to obtain a Class B permit.

A permit may also be required for the location where cottage food is sold outside the home, such as a booth at a community event.

Do I have to take any classes?

You and all others that are a part of your operation must take an approved food safety class within 90 days of obtaining your permit or registration. You can find a list of State-approved classes at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/Pages/fdbCottageFood.aspx>.

How do I get a permit?

Prior to applying for registration or a permit, check with your local government for any local requirements. You may apply for a registration or permit by completing the application packet and paying the fee to Environmental Health. The packet is available at the Environmental Health office or online at <http://ocfoodinfo.com/cottage>. You will need to renew your registration or permit each year and also if you change the types of food, or relocate to a different home.

How much does Class A Registration or a Class B Permit cost?

The fee for registration or a permit will be based on the time needed to review and process the application and, if necessary, the time spent on inspections. The fee amount will be \$25.75 per 15 minutes or a fraction thereof (effective through June 30, 2013). Under normal circumstances most reviews should take no more than 45 minutes for a Class A registration and no more than 2 ½ hours for the Class B permit, which includes the one inspection with related program activities.

What restrictions are there?

You can only make and store food in your kitchen and an attached storage room that is only used for your home operation. You may only hire up to one full-time employee. Annual gross sales may not exceed the following,

\$35,000 during the 2013 calendar year

\$45,000 during the 2014 calendar year

\$50,000 per calendar year from 2015 and on

Am I subject to complaint investigations? Do I need to grant access into my home?

Environmental Health may investigate any complaint received concerning cottage food operations. If your cottage food operation is the subject of a complaint, you must allow a representative of Environmental Health in your cottage food operation to conduct an inspection.

Are there labeling requirements?

Yes, all Cottage food operations must meet specified requirements relating to labeling under Sherman Law and conform to specified federal labeling requirements regarding nutrition, nutrient content or health claims, and food allergens.

Where can I get more information?

To obtain additional information, please visit the following websites:

Orange County Environmental Health at: www.ocfoodinfo.com

California Department of Public Health at: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/Pages/fdbCottageFood.aspx>