

Missoula Public Health

City-County Health Department

Cottage Food Rules Update

(The following are taken from the Working Draft of Montana's new Cottage Food rules, which go into effect on Oct. 1st, 2015. For the complete ARM rules, click [here](#).)

Cottage Food Rules and You.



What's changed? After discussions with the people of Montana, DPHHS, and local health authorities, the 64th Legislature passed HB0478 governing the production and sale of cottage food products. As of Oct. 1st, 2015, Montana DPHHS will implement a Cottage Food Program, allowing certain food items to be produced in a home kitchen, and sold to the general public.

How does this affect me? If you wish to make any of the state's approved cottage food products in your kitchen, and sell them directly to the public, you can start the process by clicking [here](#). This will take you to DPHHS's Guidance and Permit Application. You must submit this completed application, and a \$40 registration fee, to MCCHD before your Cottage Food Operation can be considered for permitting. This fee is non-refundable, and a new application and fee must be submitted with most changes to your permitted operation. MCCHD highly encourages you to read through the application, then decide if you are still interested in producing cottage foods.



Can I make anything I want? There is a very specific list of products approved by the Legislature and DPHHS. The best first step is to read the application, and decide if what you want to do makes sense to you.



If my permit application is approved, where may I sell my product(s)? Approved Cottage Food Operators may sell their product(s), directly to the public, in any county of Montana. They must not sell to Licensed Establishments, wholesale via the internet, by mail order, or out of the state. You must have your state approved permit with you at all times.

If my Cottage Food Operator application and approval documents are public record, how do I protect my secret recipes/processes? While the documents are public record, we consider the specific recipes and processes as proprietary information, and will remove them before granting anyone's request for public access.



Will I automatically receive a permit, when I submit the application and fee? That depends on several factors; completeness of application, risk assessment of production, and availability of Licensed Establishment Sanitarian on-duty, as examples. When submitting your application, schedule additional time for discussion, and expect that it might not happen in one visit. This is a learning experience for all of us, and we all want to be sure that public safety is protected.

Contact our office, at 258-4755, with any questions. While we can't complete your application for you, we encourage you to ask us general questions about your proposed operation.

