

COTTAGE FOOD *Operation*

IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A HIGH STANDARD OF FOOD SAFETY WHILE PREPARING FOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS TO PREVENT CUSTOMERS FROM BECOMING SICK.

UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS A HOME INSPECTION MAY NEED TO BE DONE. IF AN INSPECTION NEEDS TO BE DONE THERE MAY BE A FEE ASSOCIATED WITH THE INSPECTION

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THESE COTTAGE FOOD REQUIREMENTS AT ALL TIMES

WHAT STEPS HAVE TO BE TAKEN BEFORE YOU OPEN?

- **Fill out the registration form and provide a copy of your Certified Food Protection Manager Certification to the Hancock County Health Department**
- **Provide a copy of a product label for an item in each product category to the Health Department**
- **Complete the home self-certification checklist**
- **Complete water testing (if applicable)**
- **If producing acidified or fermented foods - a food safety plan with pH testing results or an approved recipe is required and a copy must be given to the Health Department**
- **If producing canned tomatoes or a canned tomato product - pH testing results or an approved recipe is required and a copy must be given to the Health Department**

HOME REQUIREMENTS

Water from a safe water supply must be used. Water from unsafe sources can cause contamination like E.coli on your hands, equipment, and food.

Sinks must have both hot and cold water. Running water which can be mixed to any temperature is important for proper cleaning and sanitation. Hot water makes washing of hands and equipment more effective.

All bathrooms must have a sink for handwashing. Washing hands in a kitchen sink after using the restroom can allow microorganisms which are transmitted via the fecal-oral route to contaminate food and surfaces.

Preparation and storage can not take place in a sleeping area. There is a higher risk of potential contamination from areas of the home not designed for food preparation.

Pets are not allowed in the kitchen during preparation. Animals, including pets, can carry diseases which can contaminate food and equipment.

The home must be free from rodents and insects. Pests harbor diseases that can contaminate food and equipment.

Chemicals must be used according to label instructions and stored away from food and packaging materials. Chemicals can leave toxic residues on surfaces and equipment if not used properly. Chemicals can also spill onto food or packaging which may cause poisoning if not stored away from food activities.

Domestic activities such as family meal preparation, guest entertainment, and household chores should not be conducted in the same space at the same time as Cottage Food activities. Doing other activities at the same time as preparing foods for your business may lead to contamination of food or equipment.

A sink must be available in the kitchen for handwashing. An easily accessible sink makes hand washing easier and more likely to occur. Soap and paper towels must also be available at the sink.

Soap must be used to help reduce germs and particulate matter on the hands. Common cloth kitchen towels should not be used for hand drying as they can recontaminate hands.

Hands must be washed often, before food preparation and handling, and any time contamination may have occurred. Proper handwashing prevents the spread of foodborne illness causing germs. The use of hand sanitizer instead of handwashing is not allowed as hand sanitizer is not effective when used while handling food.

H A N C O C K C O U N T Y H E A L T H D E P A R T M E N T

671 WABASH AVE. CARTHAGE, IL 217-357-2171 OPTION 4

HOME REQUIREMENTS

(CONTINUED)

Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food products must be avoided during preparation and packaging by using single use gloves, deli tissue, tongs, or other utensils. Handwashing does not eliminate all germs from hands. It's also important not to touch the ready-to-eat product with your bare hands to prevent contamination from occurring.

Cuts or wounds on the wrists or hands must be bandaged and a disposable glove must be worn at all times. Bandaging cuts and protecting the area with a glove helps prevent contamination.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

If you or a household member is ill, especially with diarrhea or vomiting, do not prepare food for your business. Many foodborne illnesses are fecal-oral transmitted. The germs are shed in your stool, transferred to your hands, and then can contaminate food. Additionally, some germs can spread up to 30 feet from where a diarrhea or vomiting "event" occurs.

Clean clothes and/or aprons must be worn. Soiled clothing may harbor germs which can contaminate food.

Smoking, vaping, and tobacco can not be used while preparing or packaging food. Eating, drinking, and gum chewing is also not allowed. These activities can cause contamination of the hands and surfaces.

If tasting your food, do not use the same utensil more than once before washing. Reusing the same utensil after touching it to your mouth can cause contamination of the food you are preparing.

Hair should be restrained with a hair tie, hat, scarf, hair net, or other means. Finding hair in your food can be particularly unappetizing and can also cause contamination.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment and utensils should be clean and in good condition. Equipment that is not in good condition can harbor disease causing bacteria.

Surfaces, equipment, and utensils must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before each use. Proper washing and sanitizing of equipment reduces the number of germs on equipment.

SANTITIZER

Sanitizer must be used on equipment and surfaces to reduce the number of foodborne illness causing germs.

The most common types of sanitizer are Quaternary Ammonia or Chlorine (bleach).

Disinfecting wipes and pre-mixed disinfecting sprays should not be used. Chemicals in these can be too strong and are often not used correctly to the manufacturers' instructions. If using bleach, make sure that it is EPA registered and has wording such as "Kills Germs" or "Sanitizes". Not all bleaches will kill germs- stay away from those that are scented or splashless or only advertise cleaning, brightening, and whitening.

Test strips for the specific sanitizer should be used. Test strips help make sure sanitizer is being mixed correctly.

REFRIGERATION & SET-UP

Refrigerators must maintain a temperature of 41 °F or less at all times. Bacteria can grow at temperatures above 41 °F. Freezers must be able to maintain foods frozen.

Thermometers should be available in the refrigerator to check the temperature. Thermometers are important tools to use to ensure bacteria will not survive and grow on your products.

The vehicle and containers used to transport your food should be clean and able to keep dirt, bugs, and other contaminants away from the food. Food must be protected from physical contamination.

Cold foods must be transported in a way that ensures the product stays at 41 degrees or less. Bacteria will grow if the food is not held at 41 F at all times.

Your booth or stand should be clean and clutter free.



For more information about the cottage food law, go to www.ilga.gov search for Illinois Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act" or "Public Act 102-0633". Cottage Food is addressed in Section 4.