

# COTTAGE FOOD FACT SHEET AND FOOD SAFETY GUIDELIES

A “cottage food operation”, as allowed by Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 446, means a natural person who manufactures or prepares food items in a non-food establishment setting for sale to a natural person.

## □ Step One—Do I Qualify for a Cottage Registration?

Make sure all proposed food products are non-TCS (Time/Temperature Control for Safety), and that they are listed on the Foods list of allowed Cottage Food Items below:

- Nuts and nut mixes
- Candies
- Jams, jellies and preserves
- Vinegar and flavored vinegar
- Dry herbs and seasoning mixes
- Dried fruits
- Cereals, trail mixes and granola
- Popcorn and popcorn balls
- Baked goods that:
  - Are not time/temperature control for safety foods
  - Do not contain cream, uncooked eggs, custard, meringue or cream cheese frosting or garnishes

**The following are NOT cottage foods:** Frostings with dairy (buttercream with butter, cream cheese, etc.), cheese of any kind, fresh fruit/vegetables, pumpkin or other custard pies, meringue, lemon or other curd, chocolate ganache, sourdough bread starters, raw dough, dried or cooked pasta, dried vegetables, fresh fruit pies (may use canned pie filling) any finished food product that is not considered to be shelf stable.

*This is not an exhaustive list!*

*If you are not sure if the food you want to make qualifies as Cottage Food, email [cottagefood@NNPH.org](mailto:cottagefood@NNPH.org) to ask us!*

## □ Step 2—Decide Where You’ll Sell Your Cottage Foods

Sales of Cottage Foods must meet the following requirements:

- Must be direct to the end consumer and not for resale.
- May take place on the cottage food operator’s property, a farmer’s market, craft fair or similar special event.
- Cottage foods must remain in their durable, labeled packaging.
- Sampling is only allowed in pre-portioned, closed, labeled containers.
- Online sales are not permitted for cottage foods, but you may advertise online.
- Sales of Cottage Foods may not exceed \$35,000 per year.

## What is a TCS Food?

Time/Temperature Control for Safety foods are any food that requires temperature or time control for safety (to prevent bacterial growth!). Examples of TCS foods are foods that you keep in the refrigerator, such as dairy products, eggs, meat, cooked fruits and vegetables, garlic in oil, cream, custard, etc.

Since Cottage Foods are not subject to government food safety inspection as restaurants, grocery stores and other food establishments are, they must be non-TCS (shelf-stable) to remove the inherent risk that comes with preparing, storing and serving TCS foods.



### □ Step 3—Apply for a Cottage Registration

Once you've determined the foods you want to make qualify as Cottage Foods, it's time to apply for a Cottage Registration!

- Complete "[Permit to Operate](#)" and "[Cottage Food Operation Registration](#)" Applications. List ALL food products you will be making/selling NOW on the Registration form; you can attach an extra sheet of paper if necessary. **You can apply online at [onenv.us](http://onenv.us).**
- Create **labels** for **EACH** different food item you will make.
  - Use the labeling guidance below for label requirements.
  - Include PDF file or photo final labels with Permit to Operate and Cottage Food Operation Registration
- Find durable, food-safe **packaging** that protects your food from contamination.
  - Include photos of all packaging with your application
- **Submit the following via email to [HealthEHS@NNPH.org](mailto:HealthEHS@NNPH.org) or online at [onenv.us](http://onenv.us) for review and approval:**
  - Permit to Operate application
  - Cottage Food Registration with list of all foods to be offered
  - Example labels for all foods to be offered
  - Photos of packaging for all foods to be offered



### • Step 4—Approval

- Your documents will be forwarded to an NNPH food safety inspector for review and approval. Your inspector may contact you to request revisions to documents you've submitted prior to approval and Cottage Registration Issuance.
- Once labels, packaging, and application have been reviewed and approved, your Cottage Food Registration will be issued, and you will receive a Cottage Food Registration letter in the mail.



### □ Step 5—Ensure a Clean and Safe Work Area to Make your Cottage Foods

- The preparation of cottage foods should take place separately from other activities such as personal meal preparation, dishwashing, kitchen cleaning, etc. Kids and pets shouldn't be in the kitchen during preparation.
- **Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and warm running water prior to any food handling. Don't forget to re-wash after changing tasks, handling raw eggs, using the restroom, etc.**
- Do not eat or smoke during food preparation.
- If you are sick or have sick people in your household, refrain from making cottage foods until everyone is feeling better.
  - Anyone ill with vomiting and/or diarrhea must refrain from any work with the cottage food operation until at least 24 hours after all symptoms stop.
- Avoid bare hand contact with any foods that are ready-to-eat in their current form (foods that are already cooked or don't need to be cooked prior to eating)
  - Use utensils or single-use gloves to handle ready-to-eat foods.



#### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1001 East Ninth Street, Building B, Reno, NV 89512

775-328-2434 | [healthths@NNPH.org](mailto:healthths@NNPH.org)

- Make sure food contact surfaces such as counter tops, cutting boards, bowls, and other equipment are washed, rinsed, and sanitized prior to use.
  - You can wash utensils and equipment in the dishwasher, or in the sink using regular dishwashing liquid. Make a sanitizer by combining 1 teaspoon of household bleach (unscented) with 1 gallon of water to soak all equipment and utensils and to wipe down your countertop and other food prep surfaces before and after use. Do not rinse away the bleach solution—let these items/surfaces air dry before use.
- Water used for cottage food products should meet potable drinking water standards. If your water comes from a private well, you should use store-bought drinking water.
- Food, food preparation and storage areas must be protected from dirt, rodents, insects, overhead leakage, chemicals, and other sources of contamination.
- Food ingredients must be obtained from approved sources, i.e. grocery stores, etc.



### Things to keep in mind:

- If you wish to add food items after initial review period, you must email the labels for these items to [cottagefood@NNPH.org](mailto:cottagefood@NNPH.org) for approval prior to offering the new foods.
- You must apply for a **Business License** with the Licensing Agency having jurisdiction (Reno, Sparks, or un-incorporated Washoe County)
  - NNPH will sign off on your Business License once we've issued your cottage food registration.
- Please reference [REGULATIONS OF THE WASHOE COUNTY DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH GOVERNING FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS](#) for the complete requirements of Cottage Food Operations



# COTTAGE FOOD LABELING GUIDE

**Iced Sugar Cookie** ← **Statement of Identity**  
Business Name  
Address ← **Where Food is Made (Home; or Fraternal/Social Club, school, religious, charitable, or nonprofit organization if allowed)**  
Phone Number  
**Ingredients:** ← **Ingredient Statement**  
**Cookie:** All- Purpose Flour (bleached Wheat Flour, malted barley flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine, mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), Butter (pasteurized cream, salt), Sugar, Egg, Vanilla (vanilla bean extract, alcohol), Artificial Almond Extract (water, alcohol, benzaldehyde).  
**Royal Icing:**  
Ingredients: Powdered sugar, Meringue Powder (corn starch, powdered egg white, sugar, gum arabic, calcium sulphate, citric acid, potassium acid tartrate, artificial flavor, silicon dioxide)  
**Allergen Information:** This Product Contains: wheat, milk, eggs  
**Net Quantity:** 1 Cookie ← **Net Quantity of Contents**      ← **Additional Labeling Information**  
"MADE IN A COTTAGE FOOD OPERATION THAT IS NOT SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION"

\* All labels must be no smaller than 1/16 of an inch (8pt font) \*

## 1) STATEMENT OF IDENTITY

- Common usual name or descriptive identity of the packaged food prominently displayed.

## 2) NET QUANTITY OF CONTENTS

- Net Weight in ounces, pounds, grams, OR Net Content in fluid ounces, pints, liters, or number of pieces.

## 3) INGREDIENT STATEMENT

- A list of ingredients in descending order of predominance by weight, including a declaration of artificial color or flavor and chemical preservatives.
- List ingredients of ingredients as shown on commercial packaging label.

## 4) MANUFACTURER, PACKER, OR DISTRIBUTOR

- Include name, full address, and phone number. This must be the physical address of where the Cottage Food was made, not a P.O. Box.

## 5) ADDITIONAL LABELING INFORMATION

- An allergen statement for any of the included following ingredients: milk, eggs, peanuts, wheat, soybeans, tree nuts, sesame, fish, and crustacean shellfish.
- "Made in a Cottage Food Operation that is not subject to government food safety inspection" statement.