

Cottage Food
February 19, 2026
Webinar Q&A

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Below you will find the summary of the questions and answers (Q & A) from the live Webinar Series. For clarity and brevity, the live session of Q & A was trimmed from the original recording. Please keep in mind that this document is meant as a job aide. It does not create or confer any right for or on any person and does not operate to bind federal, state, or local food safety regulatory agencies. If you have questions concerning interpretation or application of various portions, please reach out to your Regional Specialist for assistance. Current Regional Specialist and District Supervisor maps are linked on the main BEHS INFO HUB page.

Q: If they sell online, must they label the product "not for resale"?

A: There's nothing in the law that states that. Product is to be sold to the end consumer. If whoever is producing the food is shipping that product to their customer that's considered a direct consumer, not wholesale. When it gets to the wholesale realm, the manufactured food program would inspect and that means they're distributing to other businesses. Nothing in the law states marking "not for resale."

Q: Would cheesecake be a "baked good"?

A: It's a potentially hazardous food item. I would be hesitant to allow that.

Q: I did not think they needed to list the sub ingredients on the cottage food label?

A: It's ensuring that the consumer is aware of all allergens that are in that food item. The FDA has a great resource for labeling: [FDA Food Label Guide](#). This guide is helpful on handling things like allergen labeling.

Q: Would vinegars infused with dried herbs fall under cottage food?

A: Infused vinegars do not fall under cottage law. Depending on processes, they may fall under the exemption. Cottage food law states dry herbs and herb mixes.

Q: For infused vinegars, would that be allowed under exemption, if tested by a process authority or food tester for pH and aw (water activity)?

A: Maybe an exempted food item. You can request to have that sent to a process authority. Process authority doesn't have to be Missouri specific.

Q: Like the vinegar question, do all infused oils need to go to a process authority for testing? EX: olive oil with peppers, or lavender, etc.)?

A: If you are concerned with a product you can request to send it to a process authority for verification. In the food code, acidified foods are not covered. Those will always have to be done under inspection. Especially oil with peppers; we would want to see a process authority on it.

Q: If the producer does not put their full address on the label (like just Kansas City, MO as you said), do they need to supplement that with contact information? Otherwise, how would we trace back to them in the event of an outbreak?

A: Cottage food law says they must put the name and address of the operation. I would encourage you to reach out to your district staff if this area is a challenge.

A: A Technical Bulletin on this topic should be coming soon.

Q: What is the easiest way for us to find out if someone has a Manufacturer's license?

A: We don't issue licenses. They won't be able to present anything to you. We inspect these operations based on the risk factors - low, medium, high, like retail food. The easiest approach is to ask them how they verify that the product comes from an approved source. They should be able to explain their verification process and provide an inspection report for the processor if requested. Another way is to reach out to the manufactured food program to see if we have that facility in our inventory. We do have a few jurisdictions in Missouri that request lists periodically of manufacturers in our system.

Q: Can baked goods with butter cream frosting be sold? There is a debate on if it needs to be temp controlled or not.

A: There are various recipes for buttercream icing. To determine if it's non-potentially hazardous, you can request to submit products to a process authority, AFDO has posted on their website, food processing authorities by state. Process Authority: <https://www.afdo.org/directories/fpa/>

Q: Was the frosting question answered regarding the KSU recipe?

A: Please connect after to make sure we are talking about the same thing.

Q: Is premade Chex mix that is coated by the individual with sugar and baked in the oven a cottage law food?

A: I have questions on what is in the mix. Chex mix can be a broad category and would not be considered a baked good. It would probably be allowed under the food code exemption but is not a baked good for these purposes. Please email the retail food program to clarify more: retailfood@health.mo.gov .

Q: Can you expand on the difference between antique malls and farmstands? We have some set up outside of antique malls on the front porch area with baked goods for sale, and a QR code for payment and contact information. Is this allowed?

A: The law states the products must be sold to the end consumer. Farmstands, assuming they are following the law, would just need to sell to the end consumer. We do encourage a way to contact the producer, in case the consumer has questions. In the case of antique malls or flea markets, the person selling isn't the producer of the product. So, if the consumer has questions, they don't have a way of contacting the producer.

Q: We have several unattended stands in Jefferson County that are selling baked goods and eggs, etc. A couple of these stands have a crazy feral cat population nearby that have been seen ON the stand. Are these allowed? Or can we regulate these in any way from the cats?

A: We encourage the food to be protected as much as possible, but these are non-inspected establishments. If they are selling products not under the cottage food law or exemption, then they shouldn't be selling those items. They would need to have or be selling them in an inspected food establishment. If there are concerns over adulterations, like the cats, then it's perfectly within the authority for local agencies to look at those farmstands. If you have questions, you can always reach out to your district/regional staff.

Q: So, a situation where cottage foods could become adulterated (by cats, for example) can and should still be inspected/regulated?

A: Only if there is a foodborne illness involved. Otherwise, by law we can't interfere with cottage foods.

Q: Would a licensed food establishment be permitted to have a designated pick-up area for cottage foods, like a farmstand, provided there is clear signage indicating that the products were not prepared in the licensed facility?

A: Generally speaking, no. In Ch. 3 of the food code, it states all food must come from an approved source. Cottage food is not from an approved source and should not be in a food establishment.

Q: Could you please provide guidance on homemade vanilla extract? I have been told in the past that this does not fall under the exemption. Is this still the case?

A: Homemade vanilla extract can be made under the exemption if local laws allow. Make sure the producer isn't doing anything different.

Q: Can commercially canned fruit be candied and sold under cottage law?

A: No

Q: I have a guy importing coffee beans, roasting and selling them. Does that require inspection?

A: Please connect with your district staff. I have follow-up questions for that.

Q: Is there a link to access all these monthly trainings?

A: <https://www.mo-lpha.com/>

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