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Cottage Food Operations

The California Retail Food Code (CRFC) establishes [Cottage Food Operation \(CFO\) requirements](#).

CFOs are home-based kitchen operations where individuals are allowed to make certain foods at home and sell the food to the public. Cottage food products, the foods that are allowed in the CFO program, are non-potentially hazardous and must comply with the [Approved Cottage Food List](#). This list is maintained by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

All CFOs are registered or permitted at the local level. CDPH does not permit or register CFOs. Please contact your local enforcement agency ([LEA](#))- [Environmental Health Department](#).

There are two different classes of CFOs, Class A and Class B.

Class A CFO Requirements:

- **Registration:** A Class A CFO must register with the LEA and submit a completed self-certification checklist approved by the LEA. The self-certification checklist must verify that the CFO complies with CFO requirements found in the CRFC, including the 6 operational requirements listed below on page 2 of this document.
- **Authorized Sales:** A Class A CFO is authorized to engage only in **direct sales**¹ of cottage food products throughout the state.
- **Gross Annual Sales Limit:** \$75,000

Class B CFO Requirements:

- **Permitting:** A Class B CFO must obtain a permit from the LEA.
- **Authorized Sales:** A Class B CFO is authorized to engage in both **direct sales** and **indirect sales**² of cottage food products throughout the state.
- **Gross Annual Sales Limit:** \$150,000



Definitions:

¹ Direct sales:

- **Definition:** A transaction within the state between a CFO and a consumer, in which the consumer purchases the cottage food product directly from the CFO.
- **Fulfillment methods:** A direct sale may be fulfilled in person, via mail delivery, or using any other third-party delivery service.
- **Examples:** Examples include, but are not limited to, transactions at holiday bazaars or other temporary events, such as bake sales or food swaps, farm stands, certified farmers' markets, through community-supported agriculture subscriptions, and transactions occurring in person in the CFO, and transactions made via the phone, internet, or any other digital method.

² Indirect sales:

- **Definition:** An transaction within the state between a CFO, a third-party retailer, and a consumer where the consumer purchases cottage food products made by the CFO from a permitted third-party retailer.
- **Fulfillment methods:** An indirect sale may be fulfilled in person, via mail delivery, or using any other third-party delivery service.
- **Examples:** Examples include, but are not limited to, sales made to retail shops or to retail food facilities where food may be immediately consumed on the premises.

Operational Requirements for all CFOs:

1. CFO preparation, packaging, or handling may not occur in the home kitchen at the same time as any other domestic activities including family meal preparation, dishwashing, clothes washing or ironing, kitchen cleaning, or guest entertaining.
2. Infants, small children, or pets may not be in the home kitchen during the preparation, packaging, or handling of any cottage food products.
3. Kitchen equipment and utensils used to produce cottage food products must be cleaned and maintained in good repair.
4. All food contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils used for the preparation, packaging, or handling of any cottage food products must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before each use.
5. All food preparation and food and equipment storage areas must be vermin-free.
6. Smoking is prohibited in the areas of a private home used for the preparation, packaging, storage, or handling of cottage food products, related ingredients or equipment, or both, while cottage food products are being prepared, packaged, stored, or handled.