Cottage Food Fact Sheet and Food Safety Guidelines

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. In Carson City County, this activity is restricted from taking place at a location that holds a food establishment permit through the Carson City Health and Human Services (CCHHS).

Sales:
- Must be direct to the end consumer and not for resale.
- May take place on the cottage food operator’s private property/site of manufacture or at a farmer’s market, swap meet, flea market, church bazaar, garage sale, or craft fair.
- To remain exempted from permitting, cottage foods sold at a venue that is regulated by CCHHS, such as a farmers’ market or swap meet, the food product must remain in its durable packaging with proper labeling affixed. Food samples may be individually pre-portioned in closed, disposable containers at the cottage food operation kitchen for sample distribution at the sale site. Open product sampling requires a health permit to operate. Contact CCHHS Environmental Health (EH) Program at 775-887-2190, if you have permitting questions.

The types of food that can be manufactured:
1. Nuts and nut mixes;
2. Candies;
3. Jams, jellies, and preserves;
4. Vinegar and flavored vinegar;
5. Dry herbs and seasoning mixes;
6. Dried fruits;
7. Cereals, trail mixes, and granola;
8. Popcorn and popcorn balls; or
9. Baked goods that:
   a. Are not potentially hazardous foods;
   b. Do not contain home canned foods, cream, uncooked egg, custard, meringue or cream cheese frosting or garnishes, fillings or frostings with low sugar content; and
   c. Do not require time or temperature controls for food safety.

Before selling foods, the cottage food operator:
1. Needs to determine the type of durable packaging that will be used to protect the food items from contamination during transport, display, sale, and acquisition by consumers.

Revised June 30, 2013
2. Must design labeling for the food product (see Cottage Food Labeling Guide).
3. Must register with the health authority.

Kitchen Sanitation and Food Safety Guidelines for Cottage Food Operators

1. The preparation, packaging, and handling of cottage foods should take place separately from other domestic activities, such as family meal preparation, dishwashing, clothes washing, kitchen cleaning, or guest entertainment. No infants, small children, or pets should be present in the kitchen during cottage food preparation.
   • Smoking should not take place during a cottage food operation.
   • A person with a contagious illness should refrain from working in the cottage food operation while ill.
   • Individuals involved in the preparation or packaging of cottage food products should keep their hands and exposed portions of their arms clean and should wash their hands before any food preparation or packaging activity.
   • Particularly with ready-to-eat food, bare hand contact should be minimized by use of utensils, single-use gloves, bakery papers, or tongs.

2. Kitchen equipment and utensils used to produce cottage food products should be clean and maintained in a good state of repair.
   • All food contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before each use.
   • Water used during the preparation of cottage food products should meet the potable drinking water standards.
   • All food preparation and food and equipment storage areas should be maintained free of rodents and insects.

3. All food should be manufactured, produced, prepared, packed, stored, transported, and kept for sale so as to be pure and free from adulteration and spoilage.
   • Ingredients should have been obtained from approved sources.
   • Food should be protected from dirt, vermin, unnecessary handling, droplet contamination, overhead leakage, or other environmental sources of contamination.
   • Care should be taken to prevent cross contamination of cottage foods and ingredients used in the manufacture of cottage foods with raw animal products and chemicals.
   • All cottage foods should be prepackaged in a manner that protects the food item from contamination during transport, display, sale, and acquisition by consumers.