Labeling Requirements for Cottage Food Products

Cottage food products are required to be labeled in accordance with specific state and federal labeling regulations. The following list of labeling requirements is intended to assist cottage food operations (CFOs) in complying with basic labeling laws and regulations.

Packaged, processed food labels usually have two distinct areas: the Principal Display Panel (aka: Primary Display Panel) and the Information Panel. The principal display panel information is the part of the label the consumer will see first and is usually located on the front of the package. This panel lists the product name and net quantity of contents. The information panel is usually located to the immediate right of the principle display panel and contains the nutrition facts statement. Computer generated labels affixed to cottage food products may list all required information on the principle display panel, provided that the information is displayed in a size and manner that will allow the information to be read by the average consumer.

A comprehensive guide to labeling requirements and regulations for processed foods is available at general food labeling requirements. Additionally, complete federal labeling requirements may be found in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act available at 21 U.S.C. Sec. 343 et seq. and 21 CFR Part 101.

Labels on cottage food products must contain the following information:

(1) The common or descriptive name of the CFO food product located on the primary (principal) display panel.

(2) The name, city, and zip code of the CFO operation which produced the cottage food product. If the CFO is not listed in a current telephone directory, then a street address must also be included on the label. (A contact phone number or email address is optional but may be helpful for contact in case a consumer wishes to contact you.

(3) The words **"Made in a Home Kitchen" or "Repackaged in a Home Kitchen"** as applicable, in 12-point type must appear on the principal display panel. *Note: if labeled as "Repackaged in a Home Kitchen" then a description of any purchased ready-to-eat products not used as an ingredient must also be included on the label.

(4) The registration or permit number of the CFO which produced the cottage food product and the name of the county of the local enforcement agency that issued the permit number.

(5) The ingredients of the cottage food product, in descending order of predominance by weight, if the product contains two or more ingredients.

(6) The net quantity (count, weight, or volume) of the food product, stated in both English (pound) units and metric units (grams).

(7) A declaration on the label in plain language if the food contains any of the major food allergens such as milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soybeans. There are two approved methods prescribed by federal law for declaring the food sources of allergens in packaged foods:
a) in a separate summary statement immediately following or adjacent to the ingredient list, or
b) within the ingredient list.

See an example of a cottage food label below (principal display panel):

MADE IN A HOME KITCHEN
Permit #: 12345
Issued in county: County name

Chocolate Chip Cookies With Walnuts
Sally Baker
123 Cottage Food Lane
Anywhere, CA 90XXX

Ingredients: Enriched flour (Wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine, mononitrate, riboflavin and folic acid), butter (milk, salt), chocolate chips (sugar, chocolate liquor, cocoa butter, butterfat (milk), walnuts, sugar, eggs, salt, artificial vanilla extract, baking soda.

Contains: Wheat, eggs, milk, soy, walnuts

Net Wt. 3 oz. (85.049g)

(8) The use of the following eleven terms are considered nutrient content claims (nutritional value of a food): free, low, reduced, fewer, high, less, more, lean, extra lean, good source, and light. The Federal Food and Drug Administration has set conditions for the use of these terms. (For details, please refer to 21 CFR Sections 101.13 and 101.54 et seq.)

For example: the term "sodium free" means that the food contains less than 5 milligrams of sodium per serving of the food.

(9) A health claim is a statement or message on the label that describes the relationship between a food component and a disease or health-related condition (e.g., sodium and hypertension, calcium and osteoporosis). Health claims, if used, must conform to the requirements established in 21 CFR 101.14 and 101.70 et seq.

(10) Nutrition Facts panels will generally not be required for CFOs. If the food label makes any nutrient content or health claims then a Nutrition Facts Panel is required to be incorporated into the label. Nutrition information must be declared in a "Nutrition Facts" statement as indicated in the example below. The categories that are required to be on the Nutrition Facts panel include: Calories, total fat, saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrate, dietary fiber, sugar, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron. The amount of *trans* fat must be declared on the nutrition facts panel unless the total fat in the food is less than 0.5 gram (or ½ gram) per serving and no claims are made about fat, fatty acid, or cholesterol content. If it is not listed, a footnote must be added stating the food is "Not a significant source of *trans* fat."

See example of "Nutrition Facts" panel below:

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 260	Calories from Fat 120
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 13g	**20%**
Saturated Fat 5g	**25%**
Trans Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 30mg	**10%**
Sodium 660mg	**28%**
Total Carbohydrate 31g	**10%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15% • Iron 4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

(11) Labels must be legible and in English (accurately translated information in another language is optional).

(12) Labels, wrappers, inks, adhesives, paper, and packaging materials that come into contact with the cottage food product by touching the product or penetrating the packaging must be food-grade (safe for food contact) and not contaminate the food.

(13) Whenever a cottage food product is served without packaging or labeling in a permitted retail food facility or is used as an ingredient in a preparation of a food in a retail food facility including restaurants, bakeries, or delis, the retail customer must be notified that the food product or the ingredient in the food was processed in a CFO home kitchen.