

Excerpts from Environmental Health's web site:

A new California State law becomes effective January 1, 2013, that allows a "Cottage Food Operation," or CFO, to operate in a private home by preparing or packaging low-risk food products for sale to consumers.

Only foods that are defined as "non-potentially hazardous" are approved for preparation by CFO's. These are foods that do not require refrigeration to keep them safe from bacterial growth that could make people sick. The California Department of Public Health will establish and maintain a list of approved cottage food categories on their website and will establish a process by which new foods can be added to the list and other foods can be challenged and removed. The initial list included in the new law includes:

- 1) Baked goods without cream, custard, or meat fillings, such as breads, biscuits, churros, cookies, pastries, and tortillas
- 2) Candy, such as brittle and toffee
- 3) Chocolate-covered non-perishable foods, such as nuts and dried fruit
- 4) Dried fruit
- 5) Dried pasta
- 6) Dry baking mixes
- 7) Fruit pies, fruit empanadas, and fruit tamales
- 8) Granola, cereals, and trail mixes
- 9) Herb blends and dried mole paste
- 10) Honey and sweet sorghum syrup
- 11) Jams, jellies, preserves, and fruit butter that comply with the standard described in Part 150 of Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations (These should be fruit products to assure that they are not potentially hazardous).
- 12) Nut mixes and nut butters
- 13) Popcorn
- 14) Vinegar and mustard
- 15) Roasted coffee and dried tea
- 16) Waffle cones and pizzelles

There are two classifications of Cottage Food Operations (CFOs): **Class A for direct sales** and **Class B for direct and indirect sales**.

- **"Direct Sale"** means a transaction between a CFO operator and a consumer, where the consumer purchases the cottage food product directly from the CFO. Direct sales include, but are not limited to, transactions at holiday bazaars* or other temporary events*, such as bake sales or food swaps, transactions at farm stands, certified farmers' markets, or through community-supported agriculture subscriptions, and transactions occurring in person in the cottage food operation. CFO products cannot be sold to retail food facilities, wholesale, or by mail order. Products cannot be sold out of state. Internet sales must be picked up or delivered in person within the state of California. The registration requires a completed application, self certification checklist, and an annual fee.

- **"Indirect Sale"** means an interaction between a CFO, a third-party retailer, and a consumer, where the consumer purchases cottage food products made by the CFO from a third-party retailer that holds a valid permit issued by the local environmental health agency in their jurisdiction. Indirect sales 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. CFO products can be sold to retail food facilities or by mail order. Products cannot be sold out of state. Internet sales must be picked up or delivered in person within the state of California. The annual permit requires a completed application, kitchen inspection completed by county REHS staff, and an annual fee.

[Approved by Governor – September 21, 2012. Filed Secretary of State – September 21, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1616, Gatto. Food safety: cottage food operations.

Existing law, the Sherman Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Law (Sherman Law), requires the State Department of Public Health to regulate the manufacture, sale, labeling, and advertising activities related to food, drugs, devices, and cosmetics in conformity with the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. The Sherman Law makes it unlawful to manufacture, sell, deliver, hold, or offer for sale any food that is misbranded. Food is misbranded if its labeling does not conform to specified federal labeling requirements regarding nutrition, nutrient content or health claims, and food allergens. Violation of this law is a misdemeanor.

The existing California Retail Food Code provides for the regulation of health and sanitation standards for retail food facilities, as defined, by the State Department of Public Health. Under existing law, local health agencies are primarily responsible for enforcing the California Retail Food Code. That law exempts private homes from the definition of a food facility, and prohibits food stored or prepared in a private home from being used or offered for sale in a food facility. That law also requires food that is offered for human consumption to be honestly presented, as specified. A violation of these provisions is a misdemeanor.

This bill would include a cottage food operation, as defined, that is registered or has a permit within the private home exemption of the California Retail Food Code. The bill would also exclude a cottage food operation from specified food processing establishment and Sherman Law requirements. This bill would require a cottage food operation to meet specified requirements relating to training, sanitation, preparation, labeling, and permissible types of sales and would subject a cottage food operation to inspections under specified circumstances. The bill would require a food facility that serves a cottage food product without packaging or labeling to identify it as homemade. The bill would establish various zoning and permit requirements relating to cottage food operations.

This bill would incorporate additional changes in Section 113789 of the Health and Safety Code, proposed by AB 2297, to be operative only if AB 2297 and this bill are both chaptered and become effective January 1, 2013, and this bill is chaptered last.

By imposing duties on local officials and adding new crimes, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that with regard to certain mandates no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

With regard to any other mandates, this bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs so mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: MAJORITY Appropriation: NO Fiscal Committee: YES Local Program: YES