

Colorado Cottage Foods

Product Information

Dehydrated Produce:

Dehydrating foods is an age-old practice that has been used extensively throughout history. Dehydrating produce removes water from the product, extending its shelf life. **Under the Colorado Cottage Foods Act, only dehydrated produce is allowed—jerkies and other dehydrated meat products are not permitted.**

Potential Products:

Fruits:

Dehydrated slices or chopped pieces of various types of fruit.

Fruit/Vegetable Leathers:

Dehydrated purees of fruits and vegetables formed into strips.

Vegetables:

Dehydrated and eaten as snacks or used in cooked foods.

Soup/Dip Mix:

Dehydrated vegetables and herbs with instructions for adding ingredients and preparing.

Powdered Mix:

Dehydrated fruits and/or vegetables powdered to be used in the preparation of food products.

Safe Sampling:

Samples must be offered in a sanitary manner using single-use service items such as disposable napkins, toothpicks, or cups. Servers must wear a new pair of gloves when preparing samples and/or use clean utensils when handling samples. If providing any product in its prepared form, such as dip mix, precautions to maintain proper temperatures and avoid contamination must be taken. Customers must not be allowed to dip directly into products.

Packaging:

Products must be packaged in food-grade plastic. All labels must display the required information including the allergen disclaimer.



> Photo Credits

Food Safety Concerns:

There is a risk of mold and pathogen growth if the product is not dehydrated adequately. Oils should not be added, either sprayed on during processing or post dehydration.

QUESTIONS:

Q: Can I make Kale Chips?

A: Yes, but only if no oils are used in the processing due to the risk of rancidity. Salt, herbs, and spices may be added to the product during or after processing.

Q: Can I sell sun-dried tomatoes?

A: Sun drying is not recommended due to risk of contamination and inconsistent dehydration. Produce should be dried using a dehydrator or oven to achieve adequate water activity levels.

Resources:

- CSU Extension: <http://ext.colostate.edu>
- National Center for Home Food Preservation: <http://nchfp.uga.edu>

Colorado Cottage Foods Act:

In 2012, the Colorado Legislature enacted Senate Bill 12-048 allowing individuals to produce, sell, and store a limited number of specific, non-potentially hazardous “cottage food” products, in an unlicensed home kitchen. Dehydrated produce is one of the products allowed under this legislation.

Cottage food businesses require no license or permit from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and are not inspected by any state or local government entity. Products must be sold directly by the cottage foods operator to the end consumer and gross sales for each product produced must not exceed \$5,000 annually. Sales by consignment or to retail food or wholesale food establishments are prohibited.

What are Cottage Foods in Colorado?

A limited range of foods that are non-potentially hazardous and do not require refrigeration. These foods are limited to spices, teas, dehydrated produce, nuts, seeds, honey, jams, jellies, preserves, fruit butter, and baked goods, including candies.

General Labeling Requirements:

A cottage food operation may only sell products offered with a label containing the following information (printed in English):

The identification of the cottage food product →

The producer’s name →

The address at which the cottage food was produced →

The producer’s current phone number →

The producer’s current email address →

The date on which the food was produced →

A complete list of ingredients →

The exact disclaimer →

Food Safety Training:

Although a cottage food kitchen does not require licensure, the producer does need to obtain food safety training. The Colorado Cottage Foods Act requires “producers to be certified in safe food handling and processing by a third-party certifying entity... and maintain a status of good standing in accordance with the certifying entity practices and procedures, including attending any classes required for certification.”

Recognized food safety training includes: ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification, ServSafe® online certification from the National Restaurant Association, or National Environmental Health Association’s Certified Professional Food Manager. Contact CSU Extension or your local public health agency for more information or refer to the Colorado Farm to Market website:

<http://cofarmtomarket.com/value-added-products/cottage-foods>

Chocolate Chip Cookie
Joe Baker
123 Safe Food Ave. Anywhere, CO 80XXX
303-555-1234
jbbaker@cookie.com
Manufacture Date: March 15, 2013
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), soy lecithin as an emulsifier), walnuts, sugar, eggs, salt, artificial vanilla extract, baking soda.
DISCLAIMER: This product was produced in a home kitchen that is not subject to state licensure or inspection and that may also process common food allergens such as tree nuts, peanuts, eggs, soy, wheat, milk, fish and crustacean shellfish. This product is not intended for resale.

Resources:

- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: <http://cdphe.state.co.us>
- Colorado Farm to Table: <http://farmtotable.colostate.edu>
- Colorado Farm to Market: <http://cofarmtomarket.com>