

Colorado Cottage Foods

Product Information

Jams, Jellies, Preserves, and Fruit Butters:

Fruit preserves are preparations of fruits and often sugar, canned or sealed for long-term storage. In general, these products are produced by boiling mashed or chopped fruit with sugar and water. The proportion of sugar and fruit varies according to the type of fruit and its ripeness. **Jams, jellies, preserves, and certain fruit butters are considered non-potentially hazardous foods under the Colorado Cottage Foods Act and can be sold as a cottage food.**

Potential Products:

Jam:

Made from crushed or chopped fruit cooked with sugar, and often pectin and lemon juice. Jam can be a pure of fruit or have a soft pulp, but it does not contain chunks of fruit.

Jelly:

Generally made by cooking fruit juice and sugar with pectin as a jelling agent and lemon juice as an acid to maintain a consistent texture. Jelly is firm and will hold its shape; generally, jelly contains no pieces of fruit.

Preserves:

Fruit cooked with sugar to the point where large chunks of fruit or whole fruit, such as berries, are suspended in a slightly gelled syrup base. The texture of preserves is not smooth like jelly or jam.

Marmalade:

Soft jelly, often citrus-based, that includes both the flesh and peel of the fruit suspended throughout the jelly base.

Fruit Butter:

Made by cooking fruit pulp to a thick consistency, often have spices added.

Safe Sampling:

Samples must be offered in a sanitary manner using single-use service items such as toothpicks or disposable spoons. Crackers can be used with a serving spoon to apply product. Customers must not be allowed to dip directly into products. Servers must wear a new pair of gloves when preparing samples and/or use clean utensils when handling samples.

Food Safety Concerns:

Jams, jellies, preserves, and fruit butters are products characterized by low water activity and natural acidity. Since they are also packed at high temperatures, they are not likely to harbor harmful foodborne illness organisms. Processing times and temperatures must be sufficient to destroy harmful microorganisms. The modern preparation of fruit preserving often involves adding pectin as a gelling agent, although sugar or honey may be used. Sweeteners have a function in the safety of fruit spreads and changing the amount could have detrimental effects on safety and quality.

Packaging:

Standardized canning jars are recommended due to their ability to withstand processing temperatures. All cottage food products must display the information required by the Colorado Cottage Foods Act and outlined by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

QUESTIONS:

Q: Can I make pumpkin butter?

A: No. Due to the density and variation among home-prepared pumpkin purees, there is no safe process available for making pumpkin butter from canned puree. Therefore, it is not permitted under the Colorado Cottage Foods Act.

Q: Why is jam production allowed but canned fruit or vegetable products are not allowed?

A: The preserved products allowed in Colorado Cottage Foods (jams, jellies, preserves, and certain fruit butters) have different characteristic than canned fruits and vegetables. Namely, higher amounts of sugar, lower water activity level, and specific pH levels important to the inhibition of microorganism growth.

Resources:

Colorado State University Extension and the National Center for Home Food Preservation are good resources to find tested recipes with approved temperatures, sugar and fruit proportions, and processing procedures.

- 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. Jams, jellies, preserves, and fruit butters are some 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>