

Contra Costa County offers two kinds of permits for home-based food operations.

COTTAGE FOOD OPERATION (CFO)

CFO permits allow production and packaging of foods in home kitchens if they do not need time or temperature control to stay safe to eat. Examples: candy, baked goods with no cream or custard, honey, nuts and vinegar.

MICROENTERPRISE HOME KITCHEN OPERATION (MEHKO)

MEHKO permits allow ready-to-eat food made in the kitchen to be sold or served directly to customers. Example: any food you can make at a restaurant, including meat, dairy, seafood and other perishables.

SAFETY



Contra Costa Environmental Health (CCEH) evaluates all kitchens to ensure safe and clean operation.



MEHKO and CFO B kitchens need annual health inspections, like many other commercial food businesses.



Food safety training or certification is required for all permit holders.

CONTRA COSTA HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION

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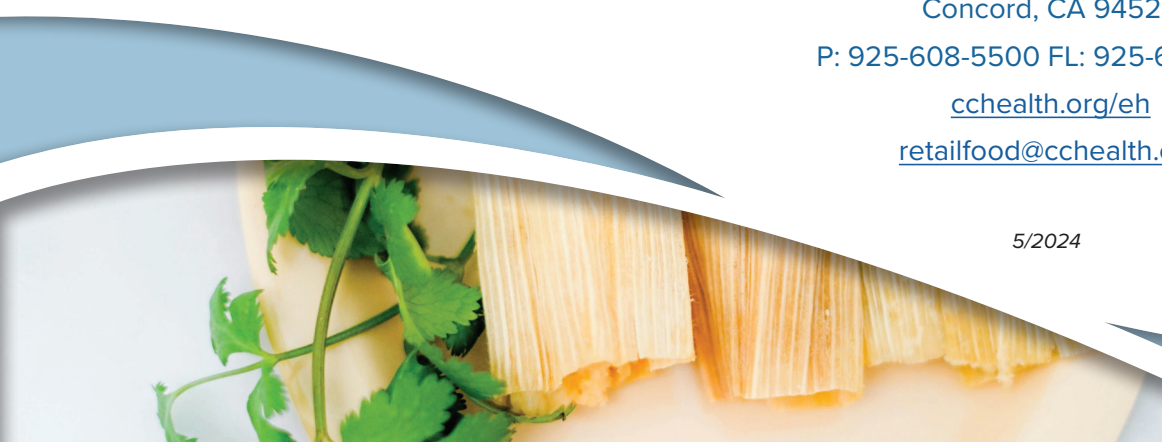
5/2024



Home-Based Food Businesses



Did you know you can start your own business right at home?



WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

MEHKO	CFO A & B
Limited to annual sales of \$100,000	CFO A limited to annual sales of \$75,000 CFO B limited to annual sales of \$150,000
Can only do direct sales	CFO A can only do direct sales CFO B can do both direct and indirect sales
Food does not require labeling	All CFO products require approved labels
Operator needs a Certified Food Protection Manager certificate Others need food handler cards	Requires completion of a food handler course
Can prepare foods that are cooked and served the same day	Can prepare nonperishable food on a state-approved list
Can store ingredients in a fridge/freezer in an approved garage or other home unit	Cannot store food or ingredients in garages, sheds or outdoor areas
Can serve alcohol with an Alcoholic Beverage Control license	Cannot sell or cook food containing alcohol
Cannot sell more than 30 meals per day and 90 meals per week	No sales cap on meals

For detailed requirements and application packets, email retailfood@cchealth.org.

WHAT IS THE SAME?

- ✔ Can serve as commissaries or mobile support units for up to two Compact Mobile Food Operations
- ✔ Annual inspections for MEHKO and CFO B
- ✔ Subject to complaint-based inspections
- ✔ Infants, children, pets not allowed in kitchen or dining area during operational hours
- ✔ Limited to one full-time employee
- ✔ Cannot conduct specialized food processing
- ✔ Advertising must say, “made in a home kitchen,” or “prepackaged in a home kitchen”
- ✔ Site evaluation is required

