

Introduction: Cottage Food Freedom

“Like clockwork every Christmas, my family loves my special gingerbread cookies and tells me I could make money selling them, but I don’t know where to start.”

“I have so many extra tomatoes from my garden each summer. It’d be great to sell some salsa.”

“I love baking, but I really have no interest in starting a full-time bakery, especially being a stay-at-home mom with young kids. But doing something part-time from my home kitchen. That’s something for me.”

“There’s nothing more satisfying than making and sharing my fruit jams and jellies with others. I keep giving everything away, but my friends tell me they’d be happy to buy from me. But I don’t have big bucks to start a full-blown commercial operation.”

“My husband keeps telling me that I need a project. We’re retired, but I don’t like playing golf or fishing. I feel at home in the kitchen and have a knack for creating yummy treats for my husband and his friends. Starting a food business sounds like it might be fun and rewarding.”

CAN YOU RELATE TO ANY OF THESE ENTHUSIASTIC HOME COOKS? If so, you’re not alone.

You could be part of a growing movement of people starting small food businesses from their homes. No capital needed, just good recipes, enthusiasm and commitment, plus enough know-how to turn ingredients into sought-after treats for your local community. Everything you require is probably already in your home kitchen. Best of all, you can start tomorrow!



Cottage Food Freedom

Thanks to new laws currently on the books in more than forty-two US states, small-scale food businesses can now be operated from home kitchens. These state laws, often referred to as “cottage food legislation” or “cottage food laws,” have nothing to do with cottage cheese and everything to do with allowing you to sell certain food products to your neighbors and community. By certain foods, the laws mean various “non-hazardous” food items, often defined as those that are high-acid, like pickles, or low-moisture, like breads. Because of this definition, some of the state cottage food laws have been nicknamed Pickle Bills, Cookie Bills or Bakery Bills on their journey to becoming laws where you live.

While no one claims to have invented the term “cottage food,” its meaning is clear. A cottage is small and handcrafted, typically one story tall, no more, and designed with simplicity and modesty in mind. That definition forms the essence of these modern cottage food laws, enabling us to step away from the industrialized and factory-based food systems that engulf our world today toward a more authentic and tastier time filled with unique, homemade items from small food artisans. At their heart, today’s cottage food laws allow us to do much more than just launch individual businesses. They provide the catalyst for transporting our society back to an era when everyone bought locally from trusted neighbors.

With most of the cottage food laws passed since 2008, states make it possible for anyone to earn income, follow a culinary passion or dream, and have some fun. How? By selling specific food items made in your home kitchen. From pies to pickles, wedding cakes to granola, preserves to decorated cookies, fledgling food entrepreneurs no longer need to sink more than fifty thousand dollars into a commercial kitchen or fork over fifty dollars an hour to rent a licensed facility to turn Aunt Emma’s biscotti recipe into a money-making dream business. We now have the freedom to earn.

The new cottage food laws make home kitchen enterprises the next hot small business trend, accessible to anyone with a passion for food. So turn your ribbon-winning state fair strawberry rhubarb pie or “famous within your family” fudge into an enjoyable business that can earn you some money to pay off those credit card balances or save for a rainy day. With millions of Americans living paycheck to paycheck, never has it been easier to moonlight out of your kitchen to make ends meet. Perhaps you’ll even

“Starting a food-oriented small business can be more than just a dream. If you want to package and sell your soup, jam, candy or grandma’s salsa, you’ll find many customers willing to try your new taste sensation, plenty of places such as farmers’ markets to sell your product, and believe it or not, you can have low start-up costs.”

— RHONDA ABRAMS, *USA TODAY*
(NOVEMBER 29, 2013)



Canada's "Cottage Food" Conundrum

At the time of writing, there are no general national or provincial "cottage food laws" (or pending bills) in Canada. Generally speaking, if you live in Canada, under no circumstances can you produce food in your kitchen and sell it to the public — unless you're a farmer.

"The Canadian Food Inspection Agency provides regulatory oversight with respect to many aspects of food and related products in Canada, including, for example, labeling and packaging requirements for these products," explains Carly Dunster, a food lawyer with Carly Dunster Law (carlydunsterlaw.com), based in Ontario, Canada. "The federal government has also passed new legislation entitled the *Safe Food for Canadians Act*, coming into force in 2015, that will consolidate a number of federal food laws and which demonstrates an increased emphasis on food safety at the federal level.

"It is conceivable that someone could create a commercial kitchen in their home, but the requirements are onerous, both in terms of just the physical infrastructure you would need and in terms of the zoning," continues Dunster. "For example, you can't operate a commercial kitchen out of your home unless your house is zoned commercially, which isn't typical. The federal organization that regulates food is the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (inspection.gc.ca), but the operation of a commercial kitchen would, in many ways, be governed by provincial and municipal regulations and public health agencies."

Another source of further information related to food preparation is the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association at their website, crfa.com.

However, in specific cases — if you operate a farm, for example, and want to sell specific non-hazardous food items made in your home kitchen at a farmers' market, community market, charity fair or similar "temporary food market" — your province may allow you to do so. Consult with your local health authority.

According to the Guideline for the Sale of Foods at Temporary Markets, April 2014, from the BC Centre for Disease Control (bccdc.ca), an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, lower-risk foods prepared in home kitchens are allowed to be sold to the public at temporary markets, like farmers' markets. Additional requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lower-risk food means food in a form or state that is not capable of supporting the growth of disease-causing organisms or the production of toxins. One or more of the following factors usually apply to these foods:
 - Water activity (Aw) of 0.85 or less, or
 - A pH (hydrogen ion concentration) value of 4.6 or less.
- Vendors of home-prepared foods at temporary food markets must only sell foods that are considered to be lower risk. Vendors are allowed to sell home-prepared lower-risk foods at temporary food markets without contacting or receiving approval by the local Health Authority.



- Vendors of lower-risk foods are not required to submit an application before commencement of sales. It is the vendor's and the market manager's responsibility to ensure that all lower-risk foods meet the definition of a lower-risk food.
- Public health is protected by ensuring that food prepared at home which is offered for sale at temporary food markets is limited to lower-risk foods.
- A sign is displayed that is clearly visible to the consumer at the point of sale stating that "THIS FOOD HAS BEEN PREPARED IN A KITCHEN THAT IS NOT INSPECTED BY A REGULATORY AUTHORITY," or equivalent wording.
- Pets should be excluded from kitchens during the time food is being prepared.
- Home-prepared/packaged food may be subject to Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Health Canada requirements for allergens, labeling, weights and measures. Vendors are advised to check with their local CFIA office to ensure their packages/labels comply with applicable federal requirements.
- The following list contains examples of **lower-risk foods** that may be **acceptable** for home preparation and sale at a temporary food market:
 - Apple sauce
 - Brownies
 - Bread and buns (no dairy or cheese fillings)
 - Butter tarts
 - Pies (fruit-filled only, no cream-filled or cream-based)
 - Cakes (icing sugar only, no dairy or synthetic whipped cream)
 - Dry cereal products
 - Chocolate (provided it is used for re-melted or re-molded products only and (1) not purchased from bulk bins; (2) sourced from a chocolate manufacturer that can provide a certificate of assurance that chocolate is free from Salmonella).
 - Cinnamon buns (sugar icing only)
 - Cookies
 - Dried fruits
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Fudge
 - Hard candy
 - Honey
 - Jam and jelly (pH 4.6 or less or Aw of 0.85 or less)
 - Muffins (no dairy fillings)
 - Popcorn
 - Noodles (dry flour and water only, no egg based)
 - Pickled vegetables (vinegar base, pH 4.6 or less)
 - Relish (vinegar base, pH 4.6 or less)
 - Wine and herb vinegar
 - Syrup
 - Toffee
 - Salsa (if pH and Aw within acceptable ranges and the food contains no animal protein. If whole or cut tomatoes are

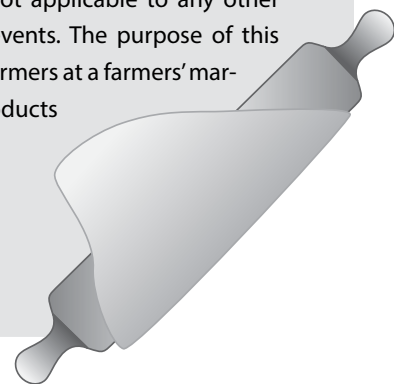
used as an ingredient, then the pH of the final product must be less than 4.2.)

"We sell wood-fire-baked sourdough bread, plus syrups, sauces, salsa, both pressure and water bath-canned, all produced from our vegetables and fruits," says Denise Cross of Mountain Valley Farm (mountain-valleyproduce.com) located in West Kelowna, British Columbia. She operates the "beyond organic" farm with her husband, Tom, and son, Brandon, making all their products in their farmhouse kitchen. "We sell all of the products at both our Farmgate Market and the local farmers' market."

"We've determined to take it one step at a time, practice what we preach and share our belief in respecting ourselves and our environment with the next generation, our neighbours, our customers and

our community," adds Tom Cross. "Our goal is to invite, support and share with all who believe there is importance in real food."

A similar exemption for farmers to sell value-added, non-hazardous foods at a farmers' market exists for Ontario as well. According to the Niagara Region Public Health (regional.niagara.on.ca), "A special exemption is provided at farmers' markets to allow vendors to sell non-hazardous home prepared products. This exemption is not applicable to any other commercial facilities or events. The purpose of this exemption was to allow farmers at a farmers' market to sell a variety of products made from their own produce or fruit (i.e., jams, jellies, pies)."



sell enough goodies to cover that family vacation you always wanted but could never afford.

As the first authoritative guide to launching a successful food enterprise operated from your home kitchen, *Homemade for Sale* provides a clear roadmap to go from idea and recipe to final product. It offers specific strategies and resources for people running home-based food businesses, unlike other books that focus on commercial baking or food

"If you've been spending the holiday season whipping up goodies to share with family and friends, you might have caught yourself wondering whether you could turn your prize-winning peppermint bark or mouthwatering marmalade into a tasty sideline business or retirement income. Maybe so. In fact, this is a great time to savor the increasing opportunities for food entrepreneurs. Consumers are embracing specialty and artisanal foods like never before."

— NANCY COLLAMER, *FORBES*



"Allowing for cottage food operations is an easy way that states can support the development of small businesses and increase the availability of local products within their borders. The fact that forty-two states allowed some sort of in-home processing of non-potentially hazardous foods demonstrates that these types of operations are important and valuable to the citizens of those states."

"As more consumers become interested in supporting local food economies and more producers begin starting their own food businesses, states need to make sure that those local businesses can survive and thrive. Although many states have cottage food or home-based food processing laws on their books, there are still a number of ways in which states can update and improve their cottage food regimes to match the growing demand and opportunity for cottage food operations."

— HARVARD FOOD LAW AND POLICY CLINIC, A
DIVISION OF THE CENTER FOR HEALTH LAW AND
POLICY INNOVATION



product businesses. As defined by the law, your business, at least when you start, will be a part-time, small-scale operation operated by you.

Work Your Passion for Food

What do Paula Dean, Martha Stewart and Mrs. Fields have in common? They all started their business from their home. Like you, they share a passion for food and chose careers in the kitchen that they love.

Flash forward to today. Most of the forty-two states that have cottage food laws in place passed these after the Great Recession of 2007; they were viewed as a relatively low-cost option to spur entrepreneurial start-ups. With minimal, if any, inspections or registration processes, cottage food laws can be administered by state agencies for much less than the costly inspections required of full commercial operations.

Because these laws are so new, little information is available regarding the number of cottage food start-ups and their sales. However, during the first year that California's law was in place, more than 1,200 new businesses registered. Arizona is home to more than 2,400 cottage food operators. Data on other states is far more elusive. Ranging in size, sales and product offerings, these businesses would not have legitimately existed be it not for the cottage food laws passed.

Many food entrepreneurs are drawn to the cottage food industry because they love cooking and love the autonomy that comes with minding their own business and being their own boss. Perhaps you share this perspective. Are you tired of punching the clock and would rather punch some dough?

As it turns out, budding home kitchen entrepreneurs come in many persuasions and myriad motivations. Which one best defines you?

- Dream-catcher, eager to fulfill a lifelong dream of running a small food enterprise.
- Home baker, possibly with seasonal specialty items you want to share with your community.
- Stay-at-home mom wanting to earn extra income while keeping an eye on the kids.
- Someone with food sensitivities or allergies, who, after years of struggle, has found delicious recipes that work for you and might work for others, too.

- Dedicated locavore foodie, wanting to make a difference in the local food movement beyond your shopping habits.
- Retiree looking to stay relevant and active, plus make a little extra “fun money.”
- Specialty cake and wedding cake maker looking for a chance to share your artistic talent and creative flair.
- Farmer looking to diversify your business by offering bread and other items at farmers’ markets to boost your revenue.
- Economic survivalist who has found that Plan B, despite a college degree, is the new Plan A.
- Career changer from breadwinner to bread baker, looking to test your food-based dream before you quit your day job.
- Someone between jobs and searching for a quick way to earn some cash to pay the bills.

As we talked with cottage food business owners across the continent, we discovered that launching a small food enterprise could be for anyone and everyone. While our non-scientific sample tended to skew female, there are plenty of men too, and food entrepreneurs are both young and old and come from various ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds. They live in urban, suburban and rural places. All share a passion for the culinary arts.

Starting a food-based enterprise from your kitchen is an incredible opportunity, whether it resulted from politicians feeling the heat to do something as a result of the financial fallout from the Great Recession, was spawned by the “buy local” movement or came about because of pressure from the 99 percent who want to sell items directly to their neighbors and make a little money without wading through government regulations.

To help spur and support home-based food enterprises, many state governments decided to cut the excessive red tape and allow people to get to work and earn some money by becoming small business owners. In other words, they allowed Americans to be what Americans have always been: enterprising, community-focused and hard-working. Forget the unemployment lines, food pantries or minimum-wage McJobs. Make way for the muffin makers!

Perhaps encouraging cottage food businesses makes plain common sense. That’s the way things were done in America for more than a century:

“Lots of people are eyeing their kitchens right now as a way to earn a little extra cash in a bad economy.”

— EMILY MALTBY, CNNMONEY.COM
(JULY 2009)



neighbors selling to neighbors; fellow parishioners selling to fellow parishioners; local businesses selling to local residents. It's how business was done before the age of cheap oil, industrialization and globalization.

First-timer or Seasoned Pro?

We wrote *Homemade for Sale* as a comprehensive and accessible reference guide for home cooks unacquainted with operating a small business, as

Buy Local and Sell Local

Our kitchen is the place we feed those who matter most to us: our family. We do so with love, care and safety in mind. Would we really do anything differently when serving the public?

We can thank our current industrialized food system for the shift from homemade goodness to factory efficiency and the resulting disconnect from what we put into our mouths. Flash back to our pioneering "Little House on the Prairie" era when life centered on the hearth and home kitchens. You purchased those few staples you didn't raise on your homestead from the Oleson's Mercantile in town, a spot where you knew the shopkeepers, even their irritating daughter, Nellie.

But as our country increasingly modernized, embracing the lure of cheap, factory-made products, food safety lost out. Horrid working conditions and unsafe food products rose to the public's priority list in the early twentieth century with the publication of Upton Sinclair's book *The Jungle*, a classic tale of the horrific conditions in the Chicago meat-packing industry. *The Jungle* influenced the laws that followed to regulate and clamp down on the food industry. While desperately needed at the time, these same laws

have since been amended, expanded and interpreted so broadly that public schools now ban homemade items for classroom birthday treats.

Today's cottage food movement cooperatively supports the burgeoning "buy local" movement across the country. The economic evidence of revitalized local community food systems is coming in. According to the Institute for Local Self Reliance, in a comparison study of local and national chain retailers, the local stores return a total of 52 percent of their revenue to the local economy, compared to just 14 percent for the chain guys. Similarly, local independent restaurants recirculate an average of 79 percent of their revenue locally, compared to only 30 percent for chain eateries.

The same process can happen with cottage food businesses. Buy your ingredients from a locally owned, independent grocery store or food cooperative and sell your products to folks in your neighborhood, then return to the store and buy more flour, butter or canning jars. The money circulates within your community. You're not just a small, home-based chutney-producing business, you're playing a role in changing our economic system, one cookie and neighbor connection at a time.

well as a more detailed book for business-savvy, but first-time, food entrepreneurs. Some of you reading this book may just need a little nudge to hang out your shingle. With you in mind, we’ve created the chapter *Make It Legal: Establish Your Business in 7 Easy Steps*. For more seasoned entrepreneurs, we’ve offered several chapters on marketing, drawing from our experiences over the years in the public relations and advertising fields; we’ve worked at the full-service Leo Burnett Advertising Agency and know a bit about Tony the Tiger and Ronald McDonald. We write press releases for various clients as well as feature articles for national magazines, working both sides of the aisle.

We also include plenty of guidance and resources that should help business owners eager to diversify or expand with new products they can sell to the public by leveraging cottage food laws. Personally, we’re tapping the cottage food law in Wisconsin to sell pickles, preserves and other high-acid canned items to guests staying at our Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast. If all goes as planned and our state’s legislation expands to include baked goods, combined, this could mean a bump of five thousand dollars a year in revenues. In other words, in a business as small as ours, it could be the difference between operating at a profit or a loss. As we explore at length in our other books, *Rural Renaissance*, *ECOpreneuring* and *Farmstead Chef*, we define success in ways far beyond financial wealth or prestigious corner offices or titles.

As a Cottage Food Operator, or CFO, you’re in charge and responsible

Cottage Food Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
<p>Little to no capital needed; you probably have everything you need in your kitchen already.</p> <p>Fast start-up. Most states have a simple, low-cost registration process.</p> <p>May already have a recipe and be experienced in what you want to make.</p> <p>Sell directly to the customer and keep more profit.</p> <p>There’s nothing like the flexibility and freedom of being your own boss — you get to call your own shots.</p> <p>You’re helping build a stronger local economy and community connections.</p> <p>Defining success on your own terms.</p> <p>Opportunity to grow and expand after you prove a successful market.</p>	<p>State regulations limit what products you can make, some more than others.</p> <p>States may also have limitations on where you can sell; some do not allow special orders and restrict sales to farmers’ markets or public events.</p> <p>With any food product, you’re liable for what you make and need to insure yourself for the risk you take.</p> <p>Baking, canning and other food preparation is hard work on your feet, especially if you have to make multiple fresh items at once.</p> <p>Bookkeeping is a must since you’re required to keep track of sales, expenses and inventory. A real chore, if you don’t like crunching numbers.</p> <p>May stir up some negative vibes when viewed as competition by local businesses like an established commercial bakery.</p>

for the outcome of your endeavor. This can be empowering and unnerving, satisfying and trying. It can also be enriching, in every sense of the word. When you operate your home-based food business, you can make some money, do what you want and, maybe, even make a difference in your community.

It's Thyme. Why Now?

From Buy Local to Small Business Saturdays, from slow food to fancy food, from farm-to-fork to handmade artisan breads, more people than ever are demanding real food made by real people — not by machines in factories, the same way they make cars and computers.

The growth of farmers' markets, specialty food products and farm-to-table restaurants that source their foods directly from farmers, fisherman or food artisans reflects this hunger for foods with ingredients we can pronounce, made by people who live at places we could visit, maybe even in our home town. Below are a few more trends worth considering:

- Organics are growing 9 percent annually. More than 81 percent of US families say they are trying to buy some things organic, according to the Organic Trade Association.
- The specialty food business grew more than 22 percent between 2010 and 2012, according to the Specialty Food Association. The two most likely characteristics of new products include gluten-free food (38 percent) and convenient/easy-to-prepare items (37 percent).
- Farmers' markets continue to grow, with a 3.6 percent increase from 2012 to 2013, totaling 8,144 markets in the US, according to the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.
- The cake and bakery market continues to rise at an average annual rate of nearly 5 percent, according to the industry research firm IBISWorld. The reason we're eating so many cupcakes? While disposable income dropped during the recession, perhaps people turn to these luxury food items as an inexpensive way to indulge.

Let's be real. As more research findings surface on the improved health, nutrition and taste of products made from real ingredients, the greater the demand for these products made with no preservatives, artificial flavors or colors or mystery ingredients courtesy of the science lab. While laws

labeling ingredients or products as containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have remained elusive, retailers are demanding transparency when federal and state governments do not. Whole Foods Market, for example, declared that by 2018, all products they sell must state whether they contain GMOs or not.

Added to this are the growing issues more Americans have with respect to what they eat. Allergies or sensitivities to peanuts, soybeans, gluten and dairy products have exploded. More on this in Chapter 2.

Cottage food enterprises address these growing trends, solving problems and meeting customer needs like few large corporations ever could. As a result, these micro enterprises often have a competitive advantage — beyond minimal regulations of the cottage food laws themselves. Their small size, direct connection and responsiveness to customer needs and attentive detail to each and every product are beyond large food companies.

While food products from most corporations are designed for shelf life, transportability, uniformity and profitability, cottage foods, by their very nature, are small batch, fresh and specialized. Fewer and fewer Americans are being fooled by mega-food producers' product labels that read fresh from the oven, all-natural, homemade goodness, artisanal. And more of us have discovered that Betty Crocker is a make-believe person created by the marketing department of General Mills.

Do you laugh when you hear Duncan Hines claim their cookie mixes are "Chewy, gooey, homemade good"? Or General Foods Corporation proclaiming "like grandma's, only more so"? While these mega-corporations feel the need to create an image of homespun goodness, your venture, by default, is authentic, transparent and real. In our murky world where distrust runs rampant, the idea that someone can buy direct from someone they trust has a deep emotional appeal. It's much easier and simpler to trust the food you put in your body when you're on a first-name basis with the person who made it.

It's probably illegal, or practically impossible, to ever visit most animal-processing facilities, commercial farming operations or processing factories, where the vast majority of the food Americans eat is currently made. By selling to neighbors, co-workers or community members, cottage food enterprises promise to usher in a new era of accountability and transparency not seen since the days of *Little House on the Prairie*.

"The food industry is more crowded than ever with new players entering the field every day. In order to be successful you must differentiate yourself by having a clear value proposition and a strong story that resonates with your consumers. As a small business your greatest asset is your ability to connect on a human level with your customers. That is something the larger brands simply can't do in an authentic manner and something that many food entrepreneurs overlook. Focus on building strong connections with your customers and engage them in conversation be it at the farmers' market, at the side of your food truck, or online via social media. Invite them to be part of your food business journey and they will reward you with their loyalty."

— 2014 PLATE OF THE UNION REPORT,
SMALL FOOD BUSINESS (SMALLFOODBIZ.COM)

"Avoid food products containing ingredients that are (A) unfamiliar (B) unpronounceable (C) more than five in number or that include (D) high-fructose corn syrup."

— MICHAEL POLLAN, *IN DEFENSE OF FOOD:
AN EATER'S MANIFESTO*





Left:
Slow Rise Organic Bakery,
Gabriola Island, Canada.
MARY JANE JESSEN



Right: *Rolls on a conveyor*
system. iSTOCK: © WICKI58

Key Elements of Cottage Food Laws

By their very nature, most cottage food businesses are:

- small-scale, grossing under \$2,000 in revenue, at least starting out;
- independent and family-run, usually by only one person;
- home-based and use the equipment they already own in the kitchen.

So with your only expenses being a license or two and perhaps a few safety checks, depending on your state, you may be able to get going with an investment of less than a couple of hundred dollars. Producers operating under cottage food legislation save costs and enjoy the ease and convenience of working from home rather than having to rent or build a commercial kitchen, as required in commercial food-processing regulations.

As well as some licensing steps, your state cottage food laws will specify what kind of sales, sales venues and types of foods are permitted. Plus, your state will tell you exactly how much you can earn with your business.

Nationally, this sales cap ranges from five thousand dollars on the very low end to the majority of states with unlimited caps where you could earn as much as you want from the comfort of your home. There are more than a dozen states with extremely open-ended laws that not only have no sales caps but also allow sales both direct to the customer and indirect (or wholesale) to places like retailers or restaurants.

Organization of this Book

Homemade for Sale is broken into four sections. In the first section, What's Cooking?, we address in greater detail what cottage food laws allow, help you evaluate your goals and offer tools to navigate your state's regulations and get you going with refining your ideas and recipes. Cottage food regulations vary tremendously from state to state in terms of what you can produce, where and how you can sell it and how much gross income you can bring in. There's a patchwork of rules and regulations, and not all states have laws in place. This section will sort this all out, helping you focus on the ideas with the biggest potential. If you live in Canada, where no cottage food laws exist other than specific provincial exemptions related to farmers selling non-hazardous food products made in their home kitchens at farmers' markets, skip to the fourth section, Scaling Up, to see if you want to go directly to some form of commercial kitchen setup.

The second section, Selling Your Story: Marketing, covers everything from developing your product, its packaging and label to sharing the story you create around it on a website or with your co-workers in the form of a flyer. While the tendency is to focus on the product, say your family's favorite salsa recipe, when you're selling to the public, what you sell must ultimately satisfy the needs of your customers, aka "the market." Good marketing will increase your likelihood of success, which is why this section of the book is the most detailed.

The next section, Organizing, Planning and Managing the Business, gets into the nitty-gritty of setting up your business, putting together a simple plan, organizing your kitchen and putting together any production or operational systems you'll need to keep your business in good shape, including legally and personally.

Finally, we'll close with a section that addresses if, or when, the time comes to expand your business beyond your kitchen headquarters. In



Scaling Up, we'll examine what to do if your amazing products appear to be the Powerball of the cottage food lottery, with sales growing to the point that they hit the gross sales cap for cottage food enterprises or are simply too high for your kitchen space to handle. You'll have to decide whether you want to keep it cottage-food-small or expand your enterprise. We'll explore scaling up your operations along a continuum, from a modest investment to a tens-of-thousands-of-dollars commitment.

If you think you have the kind of products that can be sold nationally — and have the financing, research and personal interest to take it to the next level — we'll briefly cover some potential next steps and point you toward resources and books that focus on these large-scale, full-time food enterprises. If all goes as planned and you get a little bit of luck along the way, your product may end up on the shelves of Costco or Hannaford, the largest certified-organic supermarket in the Northeast.

For the majority of *Homemade for Sale* readers, however, keeping things small and home-based will be the recipe for success: a perfect blend of an independent, entrepreneurial enterprise that shares a love for cooking with their local community.

Since there's such a patchwork of state laws and diversity of home-based food entrepreneurs, *Homemade for Sale* features ten inspiring “story profiles” of cottage food start-ups and the people behind them. The people profiled address real-life challenges while sharing practical advice and opportunities about starting the business. Every major direct sales channel and cottage food category is represented, including decorative cookies, wedding cakes, pickles, breads, preserves, candy, cupcakes, shrubs, tomato marinara sauce and salsas. In many cases, the profiles reveal specific financial, legal and operational issues often absent in other start-up books.

The cottage food movement represents more than an income source or a fun new project. You're helping to grow the local food movement in your community by providing “direct-to-the-food artisan” connections. *Homemade for Sale* celebrates this and, as you read further, provides a pragmatic blueprint for success as you launch your dream food venture — right from your home kitchen!

Finally, “homemade” and “fresh from the oven” mean exactly what's written.