Food Products Allowed for Sale:

The food products allowed for sale include food that is not potentially hazardous such as baked goods, including breads, cookies, pies, pastries. Only high acid fruit pies that use the following fruits are allowed: apple, apricot, grape, peach, plum, quince, orange, nectarine, tangerine, blackberry, raspberry, blueberry, boysenberry, cherry, cranberry, strawberry, red currants or a combination of these fruits. Fruit pies not listed may be produced if the cottage food operator’s recipe has been tested and documented by a commercial laboratory (at the expense of the cottage food operation) as being not potentially hazardous, containing a pH equilibrium of less than 4.6. The Jams, Jellies and Preserves allowed include: apple, apricot, grape, peach, plum, quince, orange, nectarine, tangerine, blackberry, raspberry, blueberry, boysenberry, cherry, cranberry, strawberry, red currants or a combination of these fruits. The presence of low sugar or sugar substitute in jams, jellies and preserved, can make a difference in the shelf stability of the product. With lower sugar and pectin levels, spoilage organisms are more likely to survive the cooking process.

The best practice for low sugar jams and jellies is that they be processed only in a boiling water canner for a minimum of ten minutes and not by any other method unless water activity is determined by a commercial lab to be less than 0.85. The following fruit butters are allowed: apple, apricot, grape, peach, plum, quince, and prune. Fruit butters not listed may be produced if the cottage food operator’s recipe has been tested and documented by a commercial laboratory (at the expense of the cottage food operation) as being not potentially hazardous, containing a pH equilibrium of less than 4.6. Dried foods: include dried herbs, dried herb blends or dry tea blends.

Prohibited Items Include: Pumpkin pie, sweet potato pie, cheesecake, custard pies and cream pies, as well as pastries with potentially hazardous fillings or toppings. Pumpkin, banana and pear butters are not allowed. Also rhubarb, tomato, pepper and watermelon jellies or jams are not allowed.
Registration of a Cottage Food Establishment

Each person who wishes to operate a Cottage Food Establishment must possess a valid registration issued to him by the St. Clair County Health Department, if the food items are prepared in St. Clair County.

The Cottage Food operator must comply with all the requirements for a Cottage Food Operation to receive and retain their registration.

The fee for Registration of a Cottage Food Industry shall be based on the fee charged for a permitted seasonal food service operation, which is one half of the annual fee for a seasonal retail category R-1.

Definitions:
A Farmers Market — means a common facility or area where farmers gather to sell a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and other locally produced farm and food products directly to consumers.
A Cottage Food Operation means a person who produces or packages non-potentially hazardous food in a kitchen of that person’s primary residence for direct sale to customers at farmers markets. They may not be sold to retail stores, restaurants, over the internet, by mail order, or to wholesalers, brokers or other food distributors who resell food.

LABELING REQUIREMENTS
The labeling requirements include:
1. The name and address of the cottage food operation
2. The common or usual name of the food product
3. All ingredients including colors, artificial flavors, preservatives, listed in decreasing order of prominence by weight.
4. Statement “This product was produced in a home kitchen not subject to public health inspection that may also process common food allergens.”
5. The date the product was processed.
6. Allergen labeling as specified in federal labeling requirements.

- The person preparing and selling items as a cottage food operation must have a valid Illinois Food Service Sanitation Manager Certification. 410 ILCS 4 (b) (6).
- The operator must agree to allow the local health department to conduct an inspection of the Cottage Food Operation’s primary domestic residence in the event of a consumer complaint or food-borne illness outbreak.

REQUIREMENTS
Completion of the Application for Cottage Industry Registration.
- This application includes the products that the individual makes and sells. The only foods that may be produced are “not potentially hazardous”.
- The foods must be produced in the kitchen of the person’s primary residence for direct sale to customers at farmers markets.
- The sale at the farmers market is to be completed by the owner or the family member to customers at the farmers market. They may not be sold to retail stores, restaurants, over the internet, by mail order, or to wholesalers, brokers or other food distributors who resell food.
- The cottage food operation must comply with the labeling requirement of the Illinois Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Foods for sale at a Farmers Market