



County of San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND QUALITY FOOD AND HOUSING DIVISION

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HOME KITCHEN OPERATION RESOURCES

FOOD SAFETY TRAINING:

The operator of a MEHKO needs to successfully pass an approved and accredited food safety manager course and any individual, other than the operator, who is involved with the preparation, storage, or service of food in a MEHKO must also obtain a food handler card through an approved food handler course. A person who prepares or packages Cottage Food products has three options: complete a food safety manager course, a food handler course, or a food processor course.

FOOD SAFETY MANAGER COURSE (FSM CERT) – Required for MEHKO operator. Option 1 of 3 for CFO.

There are currently six approved exams that meet the state-required food safety certification requirement. Please contact them directly for course locations and information. Food safety manager certificates are **valid for five years**. https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications_fhsm860.pdf

FOOD HANDLER COURSE – Required for any additional individual assisting the MEHKO operator. Option 2 of 3 for CFO.

The Food Handler Courses are taught by food handler training schools that are authorized by the County of San Diego. The County monitors the training schools for course content and consistency. Please contact the food handler schools directly for course locations and information. Food handler cards are **valid for three years**. https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications_fhschools860.pdf

FOOD PROCESSOR COURSE – Option 3 of 3 for CFO.

The food processor courses are approved by California Department of Public Health. You can access a list of state approved food processor training courses through the California Department of Public Health Cottage Food website. The food processor certificates are **valid for three years**.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/CottageFood/CFOperatorTraining.pdf>

POTABLE WATER REQUIREMENTS:

An approved source of potable water is required for all home kitchen operations. If the water will be provided by a regulated water district or small water system where water quality analysis is performed on a routine basis to ensure the water supply meets minimum bacterial and chemical standards, no further action is necessary. If the water will be provided by a private well, initial and annual testing will be required.

If testing is needed, **REQUIREMENTS AND LABORATORY OPTIONS** can be found at:
<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/homekitchenpotablewater.pdf>

A list of approved water sample providers can be found at:
<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/lwqd/Water%20Sampling%20Provider%20List.pdf>

For additional educational resources, visit <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/deh/fhd/food/homekitchenoperations.html>