

First Order Prep Checklist

Use this every time you take a new order — especially for your first!

Ready

BEFORE YOU SAY YES

- ☐ You have your cottage food registration or permit in place
- ☐ You have insurance coverage active
- ☐ You know your pricing formula (not guessing — calculate it)
- ☐ Your minimum order amount is set and you're sticking to it
- ☐ You have a deposit policy (50% upfront is standard)
- ☐ You've confirmed the pickup or delivery date works for your schedule

CONFIRMING THE ORDER

- ☐ Get the order in writing (text, DM, or order form — not just verbal)
- ☐ Confirm: product, quantity, flavor, design details, date, price, deposit
- ☐ Collect your deposit before starting any work
- ☐ Send a confirmation message recapping all details

PRO TIP

A confirmation message protects both of you. If the details are wrong, they'll correct it before you've started anything.

PREPARING YOUR LABELS

- ☐ Product name on label
- ☐ Your business name and address
- ☐ Full ingredient list (in order by weight, largest first)
- ☐ Net weight or count
- ☐ Allergen statement ("Contains: wheat, eggs, dairy, tree nuts" etc.)
- ☐ Required cottage food statement for your state
- ☐ Labels printed and ready before packaging

PRODUCTION DAY

- ☐ Ingredients purchased and portioned
- ☐ Equipment cleaned and sanitized
- ☐ Production timeline written out (when to start, when to finish)
- ☐ Packaging and boxes ready
- ☐ Labels applied correctly
- ☐ Product looks exactly as described and confirmed

HANDOFF

- ☐ Final balance collected before handing over
- ☐ Receipt or confirmation sent
- ☐ Follow-up message sent after delivery/pickup ("Hope you loved it!")
- ☐ Add customer to your contact list for future orders

That follow-up message is where repeat customers are made. A warm, personal note after delivery costs you 30 seconds and earns you loyalty.