Cottage Food Operations
How do I operate under this new law?

To operate under the Cottage Food Operation law, please follow these steps:

Step 1) Obtain an Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) approved food service sanitation management certificate (FSSMC).

If you are not already certified, you may view upcoming courses by visiting the following IDPH website, which allows you to search FSSMC courses by region:

http://dph.illinois.gov/fssmccourses/

Please be aware the classroom-based certification training currently requires a total of 15 hours and is usually conducted over two to three days, followed by an exam.

Beginning on July 1st 2014, the training hour requirement for FSSMC courses is being reduced from 15 hours down to 8 hours, including an exam. There are fees associated with the certification training. After successfully passing the exam, and paying a $35 certificate fee to the Illinois Department of Public Health, your five-year certificate will be issued. It may take up to four weeks to obtain your certificate from the State.

Step 2) Register with the Clay County Health Department

You will next need to complete and submit a registration form to the Clay County Health Department after you have received your FSSMC issued to you by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Your certification number and expiration date are required to submit a registration form.

After your submitted form is reviewed, registration confirmation will be provided to you. You may need to take the registration confirmation with you to other counties. There is currently no fee for registration in Clay County to operate under the Cottage Food Operations law. Registration is required annually.

Step 3) Follow all other requirements in the law.

You are responsible for all other provisions in the law including but not limited to:

- Product packaging,
- Product labeling,
- Displaying a placard with the required language,
- Not exceeding gross receipts of $25,000 in a calendar year from the sale of food exempted under this law, and
- Selling allowed foods only at farmers’ markets in Illinois.