

THE STATE OF TEXAS

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COUNTY OF FORT BEND

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF TEXAS SENATE BILL 541 (SB541)
RELATING TO COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTION OPERATIONS**

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County has a thriving and diverse entrepreneurial community that benefits from expanded economic opportunities, particularly in the cottage food industry, which allows individuals to generate income while preserving cultural culinary traditions; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Bend County recognizes the growing popularity and economic potential of a cottage food production operation, which allows the sale of foods that are prepared in residential homes, as long as gross sales do not exceed the current threshold amount of \$50,000 annually; and

WHEREAS, Texas has previously taken steps to allow the sale of homemade foods with appropriate health and safety regulations, enabling entrepreneurs to thrive and consumers to access locally made products; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County supports the passage of Texas Senate Bill 541 which seeks to expand these opportunities by reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens, increasing the variety of allowed homemade goods, and ensuring fair access to markets for small-scale food producers; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County understands that while cottage food production provides opportunities for small-scale producers and contributes to local economies, there are inherent safety risks associated with unregulated food production, including the potential for foodborne illnesses; and

WHEREAS, current regulations may not adequately address the unique challenges presented by cottage food production and sales, particularly concerning food safety, labeling, and consumer protection; and

WHEREAS, public health experts recommend implementing additional oversight and regulation to ensure that cottage foods are produced and sold in a manner that prioritizes consumer safety while still supporting small businesses; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County supports the modification of existing legislation to include provisions for the safe production, labeling, and vending of cottage foods can help mitigate these risks, enhance consumer confidence, and promote a healthier food environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Fort Bend County supports Texas Senate Bill 541 with the following provisions to enhance food safety and consumer protection while fostering economic growth:

1. **Establish Clear Guidelines:** Develop clear definitions and guidelines for cottage food products, specifically on the food products that would be added to cottage food producers to prepare.
2. **Mandatory Training:** Require cottage food vendors to complete food safety training to ensure they understand safe food handling practices.
3. **Labeling Requirements:** Implement a more comprehensive labeling requirements that inform consumers about the product's ingredients, allergens, and specific hot and cold hold instructions.
4. **Inspection Protocols:** Allow local regulators to establish a framework for periodic inspections of cottage food vendors to ensure compliance with proper food safety standards.
5. **Consumer Education:** Promote public awareness campaigns about the risks associated with cottage foods and the importance of purchasing from regulated sources.
6. **Support for Producers:** Provide resources and support for cottage food producers to help them understand and comply with regulations while fostering entrepreneurship.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court:

ENCOURAGES THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF THESE REGULATIONS ON THE COTTAGE FOOD INDUSTRY AND OVERALL PUBLIC HEALTH, AND TO ENSURE THAT BOTH CONSUMER SAFETY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL PRODUCERS ARE BALANCED EFFECTIVELY.

PASSED AND APPROVED, this the _____ day of _____, 2025.

KP George, County Judge

Vincent Morales, Commissioner Precinct 1 Grady Prestage, Commissioner Precinct 2

Andy Meyers, Commissioner Precinct 3 Dexter L. McCoy, Commissioner Precinct 4
Attest:

Laura Richard, County Clerk

(SEAL)