

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Hanover County

Virginia · Hanover · FIPS 51085 · Population 110,513 · Crosodo Index #964*

STATE BASELINE

Va. Code §3.2-5130; no stated dollar cap for standard cottage foods; \$9,000 cap for pickles/acidified vegetables; no registration; no inspection; direct sales only; non-TCS shelf-stable foods

STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Good	Tiered	HIGH	2026-05-05

IMPORTANT — NOT LEGAL ADVICE

This report compiles publicly-available statutes, regulations, and county zoning rules into a research reference. It is **not legal advice** and is provided **without warranty** as to accuracy, completeness, or current applicability.

Cottage food law changes frequently. Counties may amend zoning, health departments may issue new permits, and state legislatures may update statutes after the publication date shown above.

Always verify rules directly with your state department of health/agriculture and your county health and planning offices before relying on them for any business or regulatory decision. Consult a licensed attorney for advice specific to your situation.

VIRGINIA: HANOVER COUNTY

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QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Virginia allows non-TCS shelf-stable cottage foods with no registration or inspection. Direct sales only. All-caps label required: 'NOT FOR RESALE — PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION.' Hanover County home-based businesses are subject to zoning with home occupation provisions under §26-279.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state prohibition; standard food safety practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Hanover County home-based businesses are regulated under §26-279 of the Hanover County Zoning Ordinance. Home occupations in main buildings and accessory buildings/home craft shops are addressed under this section. Some home businesses may require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Per Hanover County FAQ: 'Some home businesses require a special permit.' Contact Hanover County Planning at hanovercounty.gov for whether cottage food qualifies as permitted by-right or requires CUP.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (Virginia §3.2-5130: Department may inspect upon consumer complaint. No routine inspections.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Virginia allows non-TCS shelf-stable cottage foods with no registration or inspection. Direct sales only. All-caps label required: 'NOT FOR RESALE — PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION.' Hanover County home-based businesses are subject to zoning with home occupation provisions under §26-279.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state prohibition; standard food safety practices apply.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required per state food safety standards.
HANDWASHING	Standard food safety practices; no mandatory certification under Virginia cottage food law.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable products only. Pickles/acidified vegetables with pH ≤4.6 allowed but with \$9,000/year cap.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — Virginia §3.2-5130: Department may inspect upon consumer complaint. No routine inspections.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Hanover County home-based businesses are regulated under §26-279 of the Hanover County Zoning Ordinance. Home occupations in main buildings and accessory buildings/home craft shops are addressed under this section. Some home businesses may require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Per Hanover County FAQ: 'Some home businesses require a special permit.' Contact Hanover County Planning at hanovercounty.gov for whether cottage food qualifies as permitted by-right or requires CUP.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	No
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Virginia allows direct sales only: home, farmers markets, events, online (no resale). Customer pickup permitted subject to Hanover County home occupation conditions.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Hanover County home occupation zoning §26-279 specifies limits; details not retrieved. Contact Hanover County Planning for specifics.

Relevant county code

Hanover County Zoning Ordinance §26-279 (Home Occupations); Va. Code §3.2-5130

RESEARCH NOTES

County-specific data confirmed from official Hanover County government website (hanovercounty.gov). Zoning ordinance §26-279 confirmed to govern home occupations including home craft shops and retail sales conducted as a home occupation. Home businesses may require CUP in some cases per official FAQ. Virginia’s distinctive all-caps label requirement and \$9,000 pickle cap are state baseline features. Hanover County is a northern Richmond suburb, fast-growing. Confidence high: both state law and county zoning requirements confirmed from official .gov and secondary sources.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.hanovercounty.gov>

<https://www.hanovercounty.gov>

<https://www.hanovercounty.gov/m/FAQ>

<https://engage.hanovercounty.gov/w26672>

https://www.zoneomics.com/code/hanover-county-unincorporated-VA/chapter_3

<https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/food-information-for-vendors-and-businesses-home-food-processors.shtml>

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/3.2-5130/>

Questions? Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss your county’s specific zoning rules at <https://crosodo.com/nb/virginia/hanover-county-discuss>

State context — Virginia cottage food law

Hanover County's rules sit on top of Virginia's state cottage food framework. The state law sets the floor — counties can add but cannot remove protections.

STATUTE

Va. Code §3.2-5130

ANNUAL SALES CAP

Tiered

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

No

FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

KITCHEN INSPECTION

No

DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

INDIRECT SALES

No — Products must be sold in person in the Commonwealth to an individual for his own consumption and not for resale or consignment. They cannot be offered for sale to be used in or offered for consumption in retail food establishments. Sales venues are limited to: private home, temporary event (no more than 14 consecutive days), or farmers market. Internet advertising is explicitly permitted but sales must remain in-person and in-state.

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Virginia cottage food law report](#).

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/3.2-5130/>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/food-information-for-vendors-and-businesses-home-food-processors.shtml>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/virginia/>

Questions?

Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss Hanover County's specific zoning rules, permits, and what other home bakers are seeing locally.

<https://crosodo.com/nb/virginia/hanover-county-discuss>
