

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Nelson County

Virginia · Lovingson · FIPS 51125 · Population 14,766 ·  
Crosodo Index #1320\*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Va. Code §3.2-5130	Good	Tiered	MEDIUM	2026-05-06

**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: NELSON COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1320\* · FIPS 51125 · Lovington

# Nelson County

Population 14,766 · State baseline: Va. Code §3.2-5130 · **MEDIUM**

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?**

Yes (Virginia Home Kitchen Food Processing Exemption (Va. Code §3.2-5130) permits direct-to-consumer sale of non-TCS shelf-stable foods from a private home. No state permit, registration, or inspection required. No general sales cap; pickles and acidified vegetables (pH 4.6 or lower) capped at \$9,000/year. Sales must be direct to consumers at home, farmers markets, or temporary events (14 consecutive days or fewer). Online sales/ordering prohibited. All products must bear required label including 'NOT FOR RESALE — PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION.')

**SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?**

No

**PETS ALLOWED?**

No specific state cottage food pet restriction.

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?**

Varies (Virginia state cottage food law requires no permit. Nelson County may require a local business license. Contact Nelson County administrator for local requirements.)

**ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?**

Yes

**INSPECTION REQUIRED?**

No (VDACS may inspect upon consumer complaint.)

## Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** Yes — Virginia Home Kitchen Food Processing Exemption (Va. Code §3.2-5130) permits direct-to-consumer sale of non-TCS shelf-stable foods from a private home. No state permit, registration, or inspection required. No general sales cap; pickles and acidified vegetables (pH 4.6 or lower) capped at \$9,000/year. Sales must be direct to consumers at home, farmers markets, or temporary events (14 consecutive days or fewer). Online sales/ordering prohibited. All products must bear required label including 'NOT FOR RESALE — PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION.'

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN** No

**PET RESTRICTIONS** No specific state cottage food pet restriction.

**WATER SUPPLY** No specific state cottage food water testing requirement.

**HANDWASHING** No specific state cottage food handwashing mandate.

**FOOD STORAGE** Non-TCS shelf-stable foods only.

## Inspection & permitting

**INSPECTION REQUIRED** No — VDACS may inspect upon consumer complaint.

**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT** Varies — Virginia state cottage food law requires no permit. Nelson County may require a local business license. Contact Nelson County administrator for local requirements.

**LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE** Likely

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales only at home, farmers markets, or temporary events (up to 14 consecutive days). No online ordering, no shipping, no wholesale.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

### Relevant county code

No Nelson County-specific cottage food ordinance identified. State law governs.

#### RESEARCH NOTES

Nelson County is a Blue Ridge foothills county near Charlottesville known for wineries and orchards. State cottage food law governs. No county-specific cottage food ordinance found.

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#### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.nelsoncounty.com>

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

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

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

## State context — Virginia cottage food law

Nelson 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.

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### 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.

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

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### 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/>

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## Questions?

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

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

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