

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Orange County

Virginia · Orange · FIPS 51137 · Population 38,986 · Crosodo Index #1263*

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: ORANGE COUNTY

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Orange County

Population 38,986 · State baseline: Va. Code §3.2-5130 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Virginia state cottage food exemption (Va. Code §3.2-5130) applies. Orange County uses a home occupation / home enterprise zoning framework. Home occupations (residential or A-zoned under 2 acres) must be conducted entirely within the home; no zoning permit is required, but a free voluntary Certification Form from the Planning & Zoning office is strongly recommended. Home enterprises (A-zoned, 2+ acres) permit use of accessory structures. For the VDACS Home Food Processing permit pathway, written zoning approval is required before VDACS will issue a permit.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

VDACS home food processing permit pathway requires pets excluded from food prep, storage, packaging, and equipment cleaning areas at all times via solid latching doors. Cottage food exemption has no explicit statutory pet restriction.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (No zoning permit is required for a home occupation in Orange County. The county offers a free voluntary Certification Form (strongly recommended for documentation purposes). Orange County has no business license program. Businesses must register with the Virginia Department of Taxation or IRS as applicable. For the VDACS home food processing permit pathway, written zoning approval documentation is required. The certification form is available from Orange County Planning & Zoning Services.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Conditional (VDACS home food processing permit: initial inspection before operation, complaint-based thereafter. Cottage food exemption (§3.2-5130): no routine inspection; VDACS may inspect upon consumer complaint.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Virginia state cottage food exemption (Va. Code §3.2-5130) applies. Orange County uses a home occupation / home enterprise zoning framework. Home occupations (residential or A-zoned under 2 acres) must be conducted entirely within the home; no zoning permit is required, but a free voluntary Certification Form from the Planning & Zoning office is strongly recommended. Home enterprises (A-zoned, 2+ acres) permit use of accessory structures. For the VDACS Home Food Processing permit pathway, written zoning approval is required before VDACS will issue a permit.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	VDACS home food processing permit pathway requires pets excluded from food prep, storage, packaging, and equipment cleaning areas at all times via solid latching doors. Cottage food exemption has no explicit statutory pet restriction.
WATER SUPPLY	Private water supply (well) requires coliform-free water test results if pursuing the VDACS home food processing permit. Cottage food exemption has no stated water testing requirement.
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing required per GMP; documented on VDACS home food processing application for that pathway.
FOOD STORAGE	Proper storage to prevent contamination. Pet-excluded areas required for VDACS permit pathway.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Conditional — VDACS home food processing permit: initial inspection before operation, complaint-based thereafter. Cottage food exemption (§3.2-5130): no routine inspection; VDACS may inspect upon consumer complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — No zoning permit is required for a home occupation in Orange County. The county offers a free voluntary Certification Form (strongly recommended for documentation purposes). Orange County has no business license program. Businesses must register with the Virginia Department of Taxation or IRS as applicable. For the VDACS home food processing permit pathway, written zoning approval documentation is required. The certification form is available from Orange County Planning & Zoning Services.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	No

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Virginia cottage food exemption: direct sales only. Home pickup and local delivery permitted for non-TCS shelf-stable items. Online sales allowed. Home occupation rules limit retail sales to a minor part of business; on-site retail must be incidental. Up to 10 vehicle trips per day allowed. VDACS home food processing permit: statewide distribution permitted with zoning documentation.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Home occupation: no more than 1 non-family employee on-site during business hours. Home enterprise (2+ acres A-zoned): same restriction unless otherwise specified in county code.

Relevant county code

Orange County Zoning Ordinance Sec. 70-1 (definitions) and home occupation/enterprise provisions; Va. Code §3.2-5130 (cottage food exemption); VDACS Home Food Processing regulations

RESEARCH NOTES

Orange County VA has a distinct two-tier home business zoning system: home occupations (residential or A-zoned under 2 acres, in-home only) and home enterprises (A-zoned 2+ acres, can use accessory structures). Notably, no zoning permit is required and there is no business license program at the county level. A free voluntary certification form documents compliance. Home bakeries are explicitly listed as an example of a permitted home occupation. Retail on premises must be incidental. One non-family employee allowed on-site. Cottage food operations under Va. Code §3.2-5130 fit squarely within the home occupation framework. State baseline applies for all food rules. Medium confidence: county zoning rules confirmed from official orangecountyva.gov FAQ and document; food-specific local rules not separately codified beyond zoning.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://orangecountyva.gov/>

<https://orangecountyva.gov/>

<https://orangecountyva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2001>

<https://orangecountyva.gov/FAQ.aspx?QID=67>

<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/orange-county-discuss>

State context — Virginia cottage food law

Orange 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 Orange County's specific zoning rules, permits, and what other home bakers are seeing locally.

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