

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

King County

Washington · Seattle · FIPS 53033 · Population 2,254,371 ·
Crosodo Index #1339*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
RCW §69.22.010-.040	Good	—	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.

WASHINGTON: KING COUNTY

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King County

Population 2,254,371 · State baseline: RCW §69.22.010-.040 · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (King County operators must obtain a biennial WA State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) cottage food permit before operating. The state permit requires an initial inspection and grants WSDA right of entry to the home during normal business hours. Additionally, WAC 16-149-030(4) requires that operators comply with all applicable county and municipal zoning ordinances and obtain a master business license before permitting. King County Title 21A governs home occupations in unincorporated areas.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No person other than the permittee or persons under their direct supervision may handle cottage food products or be in the kitchen during processing (state baseline).

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (WAC 16-149 requires operators to comply with applicable county/municipal home occupation laws. King County Title 21A.30 regulates home occupations in unincorporated areas. A master business license (from WA Secretary of State) is required statewide before the WSDA permit is issued. For incorporated cities (Seattle, Bellevue, etc.), city-specific home occupation permits may apply.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Biennial inspection required for WSDA permit renewal (initial + biennial). WSDA may also inspect upon complaint or reasonable belief of violation (WAC 16-149-090). King County Public Health does not separately issue cottage food permits.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — King County operators must obtain a biennial WA State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) cottage food permit before operating. The state permit requires an initial inspection and grants WSDA right of entry to the home during normal business hours. Additionally, WAC 16-149-030(4) requires that operators comply with all applicable county and municipal zoning ordinances and obtain a master business license before permitting. King County Title 21A governs home occupations in unincorporated areas.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	No person other than the permittee or persons under their direct supervision may handle cottage food products or be in the kitchen during processing (state baseline).
WATER SUPPLY	State baseline applies; private well users must pass water quality test as part of state permit application
HANDWASHING	State baseline applies
FOOD STORAGE	State baseline applies

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — Biennial inspection required for WSDA permit renewal (initial + biennial). WSDA may also inspect upon complaint or reasonable belief of violation (WAC 16-149-090). King County Public Health does not separately issue cottage food permits.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — WAC 16-149 requires operators to comply with applicable county/ municipal home occupation laws. King County Title 21A.30 regulates home occupations in unincorporated areas. A master business license (from WA Secretary of State) is required statewide before the WSDA permit is issued. For incorporated cities (Seattle, Bellevue, etc.), city-specific home occupation permits may apply.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Yes

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only (no internet/mail order outside the state; no retail establishment sales). Sales must be within Washington State. King County Public Health catering/home-based food service program requires a separate commissary-based permit for catering activities.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	State baseline applies (no non-permittee handling except under direct supervision)

Relevant county code

King County Code Title 21A.30 (Home Occupation standards); WAC 16-149 (WSDA cottage food rules)

RESEARCH NOTES

Washington State is notably more burdensome than most states: biennial permit (\$125 + \$75 public health review fee + \$30 processing fee), annual basic hygiene inspections, right-of-entry requirement. King County operators in unincorporated areas must comply with Title 21A.30 home occupation standards. WAC 16-149-030(4) explicitly requires compliance with all applicable county/ municipal zoning laws and obtaining a master business license before the WSDA permit is issued. Home kitchens cannot be used for catering in King County (requires separate commissary).

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health>

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/permitting-environmental-review.aspx>

<https://kingcounty.gov>

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx/default.aspx?cite=16-149&full=true&pdf=true>

<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dph/certificates-permits-licenses/food-business-permits/catering-home-based-business-permit>

https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/code/24-30_Title_21A.htm

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

State context — Washington cottage food law

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

STATUTE RCW §69.22.010-.040	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes
KITCHEN INSPECTION Yes	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Cottage food products may only be sold directly to the consumer. Internet sales, mail order, and retail sale outside Washington state are explicitly prohibited. Products may not be repackaged, sold, or used as an ingredient by a food processing plant, or sold by a food service establishment.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=69.22.040>

State dept cottage food page: <https://agr.wa.gov/services/business-services/food-safety-and-licensing/cottage-food-operations>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/washington/king-county-discuss>
