

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Buffalo County

Wisconsin · Alma · FIPS 55011 · Population 13,587 · Crosodo
Index #2437*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Wis. Stat. §97.29	Freedom	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.

WISCONSIN: BUFFALO COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2437* · FIPS 55011 · Alma

Buffalo County

Population 13,587 · State baseline: Wis. Stat. §97.29 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Conditional (Wisconsin has a case-law-driven cottage food framework: (1) The statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles and acidified vegetables/fruits (pH 4.6 or lower) sold at community events or farmers markets, capped at \$5,000/year; (2) The Kivirist injunction (2017) prohibits DATCP from enforcing licensing requirements against home bakers of good character who sell nonhazardous shelf-stable baked goods directly to consumers; (3) The 2024 Court of Appeals ruling (2024 WI App 69) confirmed unbaked goods (candies, fudge, chocolates) are NOT covered by the Kivirist exception.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state prohibition for cottage food bakers; standard food safety practices apply.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Buffalo County follows standard Wisconsin local government zoning framework. Home occupation permits may be required under Buffalo County zoning ordinance. No Buffalo County-specific cottage food overlay identified. Alma (county seat) has its own rules within city limits.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (DATCP has declined to enforce against qualifying home bakers per Kivirist injunction; complaint-driven action possible.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Conditional — Wisconsin has a case-law-driven cottage food framework: (1) The statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles and acidified vegetables/fruits (pH 4.6 or lower) sold at community events or farmers markets, capped at \$5,000/year; (2) The Kivirist injunction (2017) prohibits DATCP from enforcing licensing requirements against home bakers of good character who sell nonhazardous shelf-stable baked goods directly to consumers; (3) The 2024 Court of Appeals ruling (2024 WI App 69) confirmed unbaked goods (candies, fudge, chocolates) are NOT covered by the Kivirist exception.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

PET RESTRICTIONS

No specific state prohibition for cottage food bakers; standard food safety practices apply.

WATER SUPPLY

No specific requirement under the Wisconsin cottage food framework.

HANDWASHING

Standard food safety sanitation practices apply.

FOOD STORAGE

Shelf-stable, non-potentially-hazardous baked goods only; proper storage required.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — DATCP has declined to enforce against qualifying home bakers per Kivistik injunction; complaint-driven action possible.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Buffalo County follows standard Wisconsin local government zoning framework. Home occupation permits may be required under Buffalo County zoning ordinance. No Buffalo County-specific cottage food overlay identified. Alma (county seat) has its own rules within city limits.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer only for Kivistik-covered baked goods. Pickle Bill allows farmers market and community event sales only (up to \$5,000/year). No wholesale or retail sales allowed under either exception.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified by state cottage food framework; home occupation zoning rules may apply.

Relevant county code

Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance (home occupation provisions); Wis. Stat. §97.29

RESEARCH NOTES

Buffalo County is a rural western Wisconsin county along the Mississippi River. No county-specific cottage food rules identified. State baseline (Kivistik/Pickle Bill) is operative. Defaulting to state baseline with medium confidence.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.buffalocounty.com>

https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/CottageFoodLaws.aspx

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/97/29>

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

State context — Wisconsin cottage food law

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

STATUTE

Wis. Stat. §97.29

ANNUAL SALES CAP

Tiered

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

No

FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

KITCHEN INSPECTION

No

DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

INDIRECT SALES

No — Home-canned goods must be sold at community or social events or farmers' markets in Wisconsin (§97.29(2)(b)2.b). The Kivist court order applies to direct-to-consumer sales by home bakers. Products cannot be sold to retail food establishments or distributed through wholesale channels without a license.

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/97/29>

State dept cottage food page: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/CottageFoodLaws.aspx

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/wisconsin/buffalo-county-discuss>
