

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Rock County

Wisconsin · Janesville · FIPS 55105 · Population 163,817 ·
Crosodo Index #2451*

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

WISCONSIN: ROCK COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2451* · FIPS 55105 · Janesville

Rock County

Population 163,817 · State baseline: Wis. Stat. §97.29 · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Conditional (Wisconsin has an unusual framework: (1) the statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles/acidified vegetables at community events or farmers markets, capped at \$5,000/year; (2) the Kivirist court order (2017) allows home bakers of good character to sell nonhazardous shelf-stable baked goods direct-to-consumer at low volume without a license — no stated dollar cap. The 2024 Court of Appeals ruling (2024 WI App 69) confirmed unbaked goods (candies, fudge, chocolates) are NOT covered by the Kivirist exception and require a food processing plant license.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

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

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Rock County follows standard Wisconsin local government rules. Home occupation permits may be required under local zoning ordinances. No county-specific cottage food overlay identified.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

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

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Conditional — Wisconsin has an unusual framework: (1) the statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles/acidified vegetables at community events or farmers markets, capped at \$5,000/year; (2) the Kivirist court order (2017) allows home bakers of good character to sell nonhazardous shelf-stable baked goods direct-to-consumer at low volume without a license — no stated dollar cap. The 2024 Court of Appeals ruling (2024 WI App 69) confirmed unbaked goods (candies, fudge, chocolates) are NOT covered by the Kivirist exception and require a food processing plant license.
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 cottage food framework.
HANDWASHING	Standard food safety sanitation practices apply.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-hazardous baked goods only; proper storage required.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — DATCP has declined to enforce against home bakers per Kivirist injunction; complaint-driven action possible.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Rock County follows standard Wisconsin local government rules. Home occupation permits may be required under local zoning ordinances. No county-specific cottage food overlay identified.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer only for Kivirist-covered baked goods. No wholesale, retail, or online sales allowed under the baked goods exception. Pickle Bill allows farmers market/ community event sales only.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; home occupation rules may apply under local zoning.

Relevant county code

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

RESEARCH NOTES

Pattern county. Wisconsin cottage food is case-law driven. Kivirist injunction (2017) allows home-baked goods; 2024 WI App 69 limits unbaked confections. No Rock County-specific cottage food rules identified. State baseline is the operative framework. County govt URL listed as 'Freedom' in input data — appears to be a data entry error.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

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/rock-county-discuss>

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Rock County	Walworth County	Jefferson County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Conditional	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state prohibition for cottage food bakers; standard food safety practices apply.	No specific state restriction.	Kitchen hygiene must not be in question per Kivirist conditions.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	No	No
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct-to-consumer only for Kivirist-covered baked goods. No wholesale, retail, or online sales allowed under the baked goods exception. Pi...	Baked goods: direct-to-consumer, any channel, low volume. Pickles: community events and farmers markets only, \$5,000/year cap. Unbaked good...	Kivirist exception: direct-to-consumer sales only; no wholesale. Pickle Bill: community events and farmers markets only up to \$5,000/year.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Conditional	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Wisconsin has an unusual framework: (1) the statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles/acidified vegetables at comm...	Wisconsin's cottage food landscape is shaped by statute and case law: (1) §97.29(2)(b)2: home-canned pickles/acidified vegetables (pH 4.6 o...	Same as all Wisconsin counties: Kivirist court order allows home bakers selling non-PHF baked goods directly to consumers without a DATCP l...
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-hazardous baked goods only; proper storage required.	Baked goods only under Kivirist. Pickles/acidified vegetables under Pickle Bill. Unbaked goods (candy, chocolate, fudge) require DATCP food...	No specific statutory requirement beyond general sanitation.
POPULATION	163,817	105,127	85,932

State context — Wisconsin cottage food law

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

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