

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Vilas County

Wisconsin · Eagle River · FIPS 55125 · Population 22,227 ·
Crosodo Index #2383*

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: VILAS COUNTY

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Vilas County

Population 22,227 · 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 (Vilas County is in the Northwoods of Wisconsin with extensive lakes (Eagle River Chain of Lakes) and tourism economy. Local zoning is administered at the town level; home occupation permit requirements vary by individual town ordinance. The county has shoreland/floodplain zoning. 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 — Vilas County is in the Northwoods of Wisconsin with extensive lakes (Eagle River Chain of Lakes) and tourism economy. Local zoning is administered at the town level; home occupation permit requirements vary by individual town ordinance. The county has shoreland/floodplain zoning. 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. Pickle Bill allows farmers market/community event sales only. No wholesale, retail, or online resale.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified; home occupation rules may apply under local town zoning.

Relevant county code

Vilas County Zoning Ordinance; 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. Vilas County is Northwoods/lake-resort county. Farmers markets and community events in summer tourism season provide cottage food sales opportunities. No county-specific cottage food rules identified. State baseline is the operative framework.

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/vilas-county-discuss>

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Vilas County	Forest County	Iron County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state prohibition for cottage food bakers; standard food safety practices apply.	No specific state prohibition for cottage food bakers; standard food safety practices apply.	No specific state prohibition for cottage food bakers; standard food safety practices apply.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	No	No
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct-to-consumer only for Kivist-covered baked goods. Pickle Bill allows farmers market/community event sales only. No wholesale, retail...	Direct-to-consumer only for Kivist-covered baked goods. Pickle Bill allows farmers market and community event sales only (up to \$5,000/ye...	Direct-to-consumer only for Kivist-covered baked goods. Pickle Bill allows farmers market and community event sales only (up to \$5,000/ye...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	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 has a case-law-driven cottage food framework: (1) The statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles and acid...	Wisconsin has a case-law-driven cottage food framework: (1) The statutory 'Pickle Bill' (§97.29(2)(b)2) allows home-canned pickles and acid...
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable, non-hazardous baked goods only; proper storage required.	Shelf-stable, non-potentially-hazardous baked goods only; proper storage required.	Shelf-stable, non-potentially-hazardous baked goods only; proper storage required.
POPULATION	22,227	9,004	5,786

State context — Wisconsin cottage food law

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

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