

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Prince William County

Virginia · Manassas · FIPS 51153 · Population 481,114 ·  
Crosodo Index #1681\*

STATE BASELINE

Va. Code §3.2-5130

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

Tiered

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

LAST VERIFIED

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.

## How to start — 60-second path

Prince William County, Virginia — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

**Yes**

STATE SALES CAP

**Tiered**

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

**Yes**

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

**Conditional**

INSPECTION

**No**

PETS

**No specific state cottage food pet restriction**

### BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under Virginia cottage food rules (county cannot expand a state ban).
- ☐ **2. Pickup & zoning** — Home occupation and porch pickup cells above; HOA/lease may still block customer traffic.
- ☐ **3. Local tax / license** — Business license or sales tax certificate if your city/parish requires it (common even with no state food permit).
- ☐ **4. Training** — Food handler or state registration before market day.
- ☐ **5. Labels** — Disclaimer, allergens, ingredients, net quantity, producer info.
- ☐ **6. Call if unclear** — County health and planning for your exact address.

### LABEL FIELDS TO INCLUDE

- ☐ Product name · producer name · address (or allowed alternative)
- ☐ Ingredients by weight · major allergens · net weight/quantity
- ☐ Virginia home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

### CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Virginia label one-pager →](#)

[Print labels for your first market →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

Planning path only — not legal advice. Rules change. Always verify with state and local offices before selling.

## VIRGINIA: PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1681\* · FIPS 51153 · Manassas

## Prince William County

Population 481,114 · State baseline: Va. Code §3.2-5130 · **HIGH**

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

## HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Two tiers: (1) Non-acidified cottage foods (baked goods, candy, etc.) — no registration required, direct sales only, limited venues. (2) Acidified foods (jams, pickles, sauces) — registration with VDACS required. No annual sales cap. No inspection required at state level.)

## SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

## PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state cottage food pet restriction

## HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes (Prince William County requires a Home Occupation Certificate (HOC1) for home-based businesses per Zoning Ordinance Section 32-300.07. Home occupation is business conducted entirely within dwelling by residents, clearly incidental to residential use, no exterior evidence, no customers coming to home, no non-resident employees. Apply in person at Development Services Building (703-792-6830; zoningcounters@pwcgov.org). Must also obtain Trade Name Registration from Prince William County Judicial Center. Business License from Prince William County Finance Department may be required (703-792-6710).)

## ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

## INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (No routine inspection required at state level)

## Home kitchen rules

## HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Yes — Two tiers: (1) Non-acidified cottage foods (baked goods, candy, etc.) — no registration required, direct sales only, limited venues. (2) Acidified foods (jams, pickles, sauces) — registration with VDACS required. No annual sales cap. No inspection required at state level.

## SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

## PET RESTRICTIONS

No specific state cottage food pet restriction

## WATER SUPPLY

No specific water testing requirement in state cottage food law

## HANDWASHING

No specific requirement in state cottage food law

## FOOD STORAGE

Standard home kitchen storage for approved non-TCS foods

## Inspection &amp; permitting

## INSPECTION REQUIRED

No — No routine inspection required at state level

## HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT

Yes — Prince William County requires a Home Occupation Certificate (HOC1) for home-based businesses per Zoning Ordinance Section 32-300.07. Home occupation is business conducted entirely within dwelling by residents, clearly incidental to residential use, no exterior evidence, no customers coming to home, no non-resident employees. Apply in person at Development Services Building (703-792-6830; zoningcounters@pwcgov.org). Must also obtain Trade Name Registration from Prince William County Judicial Center. Business License from Prince William County Finance Department may be required (703-792-6710).

## LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE

Yes

**Customer-facing rules**

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP | Conditional                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE         | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES | Virginia state law: direct sales to consumers at farmers markets, events, from home. Indirect sales through third-party retailers allowed with VDACS registration for acidified foods. No annual sales cap. Online sales permitted. |
| MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME   | Prince William County Home Occupation: no non-resident employees allowed (only residents of dwelling unit)                                                                                                                          |

**Relevant county code**

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance Section 32-300.07 (Home Occupation Certificate), Va. Code §3.2-5130.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Prince William County Home Occupation Certificate page retrieved directly from pwcva.gov. Zoning Ordinance Section 32-300.07 governs: business within dwelling, incidental to residential use, no exterior evidence, no customers at home, no non-resident employees. HOC1 application filed in person. Business License from Finance Department may be required. Virginia state cottage food (Va. Code §3.2-5130) has two tiers: non-acidified (no registration) and acidified (VDACS registration required). NOTE: Prince William County HOC explicitly says 'Home occupation is less intense than home employment and does not have customers coming to the home' — cottage food pickup at home may require special attention or the Home Employment permit instead. Confidence high: official county source retrieved.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.pwcva.gov>

<https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/zoning-administration/home-occupation-certificate-office-within-residence>

<https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/dairy-kitchen-food-services-businesses.shtml>

**Questions about this county?** Local notes and a place to leave a question: [crosodo.com/nb/virginia/prince-william-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/virginia/prince-william-county-discuss)

## Prince William County and nearby places

| Regulation                 | Prince William County                                                                                                                          | Loudoun County                                                                                                                                 | Stafford County                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED       | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Conditional                                                                                                                                     |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                              |
| PETS ALLOWED               | No specific state cottage food pet restriction                                                                                                 | No specific state restriction; standard food safety practices apply.                                                                           | If pets are present, food processing and storage areas must be completely enclosed/ separated from the rest of the home with a solid hinged ... |
| INSPECTION REQUIRED        | No                                                                                                                                             | Upon-complaint                                                                                                                                 | Upon-complaint                                                                                                                                  |
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP    | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | Yes                                                                                                                                             |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE            | No                                                                                                                                             | No                                                                                                                                             | Conditional                                                                                                                                     |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP          | Virginia state law: direct sales to consumers at farmers markets, events, from home. Indirect sales through third-party retailers allowed w... | Direct-to-consumer sales only. No resale, consignment, or sales to retail food establishments. Sales at farmers markets, roadside stands, h... | Under §3.2-5130 exemption: direct-to-consumer sales only; no resale to food establishments. Under VDACS permit: direct sales and some whole...  |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT     | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                             |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE     | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                            | Yes                                                                                                                                             |
| RESTRICTIONS               | Two tiers: (1) Non-acidified cottage foods (baked goods, candy, etc.) — no registration required, direct sales only, limited venues. (2) Ac... | Virginia cottage food law (Va. Code §3.2-5130) exempts non-TCS shelf-stable foods from licensing and inspection. Permitted items: candies, ... | Virginia has two pathways: (1) Va. Code §3.2-5130 cottage food exemption — no registration or inspection for direct-to-consumer sales of no...  |
| FOOD STORAGE               | Standard home kitchen storage for approved non-TCS foods                                                                                       | Non-TCS shelf-stable products. No TCS foods permitted.                                                                                         | Non-TCS shelf-stable foods only under cottage food exemption. Proper storage to prevent contamination.                                          |
| POPULATION                 | 481,114                                                                                                                                        | 420,773                                                                                                                                        | 157,606                                                                                                                                         |

## State context — Virginia cottage food law

Prince William 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 (HB 402 / 2026 c. 605)

### ANNUAL SALES CAP

Tiered

### REGISTRATION REQUIRED

No

### FOOD HANDLER CERT

No

### KITCHEN INSPECTION

No

### DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

### INDIRECT SALES

No — As amended by HB 402 (Acts of Assembly 2026 Ch. 605), effective July 1, 2026: exempt foods may be sold at any location, through the internet, or by phone to an individual in Virginia for their own consumption, and delivered in person, by mail, or by delivery service in Virginia. Still no resale, consignment, restaurants, retail food establishments, or out-of-state sales. Local zoning still applies. The VDACS home-food-processor FAQ PDF is stale (still says no online sales); the statute controls. <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/2026/HB402>

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Virginia cottage food law report](#) on Crosodo, or open the live guide: [crosodo.com/states/virginia](https://crosodo.com/states/virginia).

### STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title3.2/chapter51/section3.2-5130/>

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 about Prince William County?** Local notes and a place to leave a question are on Crosodo. We monitor new threads — start with zoning, permits, or porch pickup.

[crosodo.com/nb/virginia/prince-william-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/virginia/prince-william-county-discuss)

## Classifieds

Resources for cottage food & home bakers · [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

### NATIONAL

#### SUPPLIES

##### Advertise here — Supplies

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### COURSES

##### Advertise here — Courses

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### INSURANCE

##### Advertise here — Insurance

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

### LOCAL

#### Advertise here

Reach home bakers in Prince William County, Virginia. Supply stores, farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and bakery services welcome.

[crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### Your business here

Local cottage food listings, kitchen rentals, co-packer referrals, and community events — post yours on Crosodo.

[crosodo.com/nb/virginia/prince-william-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/virginia/prince-william-county-discuss)

#### Free ad space available

Let us know if you're a non-profit or community organization. Farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and cottage food events near you welcome.

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