

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Rhode Island

A comprehensive guide to the cottage food statute, sales rules, and county-level zoning and health-department overlays for home bakers operating under R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2.

STATUTE	TIER	IJ GRADE	COUNTIES COVERED
R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2	Poor	D+	5

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.

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Executive summary

This report covers the Rhode Island cottage food framework — the state statute, the regulatory body administering it, what producers can and cannot sell, and county-level rules layered on top of state law for the 5 Rhode Island counties included in this dataset.

ANNUAL SALES CAP

50000

FOOD HANDLER CERTIFICATION

yes

DIRECT SALES ONLY

yes

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

yes

KITCHEN INSPECTION

yes

INDIRECT SALES (RETAIL/ONLINE/WHOLESALE)

no — No wholesale or consignment sales permitted. Sales to grocery stores, restaurants, long-term care facilities, group homes, daycare facilities, and schools are prohibited. Internet/mail/phone sales are permissible but the operator or designee must personally deliver within the state. Farmers market and temporary event sales require an additional retail food peddler license.

RESEARCH NOTES

Verbatim excerpt is from the RI Legislature's official webserver (webserver.rilegislature.gov). Note the input batch cited §21-27-6.1 but the active cottage food manufacture statute is §21-27-6.2, enacted P.L. 2022, ch. 231, art. 9, §2 (effective June 27, 2022) and amended P.L. 2024, ch. 403, art. 2, §6 (effective June 26, 2024). Section 21-27-6.1 is a related but different provision. The \$65 registration fee (payable to General Treasurer, State of RI) is required with proof of completed food handler training, a notarized affidavit, and kitchen sketch. The DOH may inspect at any time for compliance. This is among the most restrictive cottage food laws in the nation.

Rhode Island General Laws, Title 21 – Food and Drugs, Chapter 27 – Sanitation in Food Establishments, Section 21-27-6.2 (Cottage Food Manufacture)

CITATION

R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2

ENACTED

2022

LAST AMENDED

2024

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

Allowed foods

Only non-refrigerated baked goods are allowed, including double crust pies, yeast breads, biscuits, brownies, cookies, muffins, and cakes that do not require refrigeration. No time/temperature control for safety (TCS) foods are permitted. The law is limited in scope compared to most states.

Prohibited foods

Any food requiring refrigeration or temperature control for safety (TCS foods) is prohibited. Wholesale/consignment sales and sales to grocery stores, restaurants, long-term-care facilities, group homes, daycare facilities, and schools are all prohibited. Products may not be sold outside Rhode Island.

Labeling requirements

Labels must include: name, address, and telephone number; ingredients in descending order of predominance by weight or volume; allergen information per federal and state requirements; and the statement 'Made by a Cottage Food Business Registrant that is not Subject to Routine Government Food Safety Inspection' in at least 10-point type in a clear and conspicuous manner (unless produced in a licensed commercial kitchen).

Statutory text — verbatim excerpt

Statute excerpt — verbatim

§21-27-6.2. Cottage food manufacture. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this chapter, the department of health shall register cottage food manufacture and the sale of the products of cottage food manufacture direct to consumers whether by pickup or delivery within the state, provided that the requirements of this section are met. (3) Cottage food manufacture shall be limited to the production of baked goods that do not require refrigeration or time/temperature control for safety, including but not limited to: (i) Double crust pies; (ii) Yeast breads; (iii) Biscuits, brownies, cookies, muffins; and (iv) Cakes that do not require refrigeration or temperature-controlled environment; and (v) Other goods as defined by the department. (4) Each cottage food manufacturer shall be registered with the department of health and shall require a notarized affidavit of compliance, in any form that the department may require, from the applicant that the requirements of this section have been met and the operation of the kitchen shall be in conformity with the requirements of this section. Prior to the initial registration, each cottage food manufacturer is required to successfully complete a Food Safety Manager Course, any American Standards Institute approved food handler course, or any other course approved by the department. (5) No such operation shall engage in consignment or wholesale sales. The following additional locational sales by any such cottage food operation shall be prohibited: (i) Grocery stores; (ii) Restaurants; (iii) Long-term-care facilities; (iv) Group homes; (v) Daycare facilities; and (vi) Schools. Advertising and sales by internet, mail, and phone are permissible, provided the cottage food licensee or their designee shall deliver, in person, to the customer within the state. (6) Total annual gross sales for a cottage food operation shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per calendar year.

Source: <https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE21/21-27/21-27-6.2.htm>

Official sources

Statute <http://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE21/21-27/21-27-6.1.htm>

State dept page <https://health.ri.gov/licenses/detail.php?id=257>

Registration <https://health.ri.gov/food-safety/cottage-foods>

Extension service <https://web.uri.edu/coopext/>

Forrager.com <https://forrager.com/law/rhode-island/>

State dept of agriculture / health: Rhode Island Department of Health

County-level rules

The state statute above sets the floor. Each county may add a home-occupation permit, business license, or zoning rule on top of state law. The 5 Rhode Island counties below are sorted by population (largest first).

RANK 101 · FIPS 44007 · Providence

Providence County

Population 657,984 · State baseline: R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2 · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Kitchen must meet housing code standards; must have adequate sinks, nonabsorbent surfaces, drainage, pest controls, and separation from bathrooms/laundry. Private well water requires annual coliform/E. coli/nitrate testing. Pets must be excluded from food prep/storage areas. Commercial kitchen may be used as alternative.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets must be kept out of food preparation and storage areas during production
WATER SUPPLY	Municipal or private well; private well requires annual testing for total coliform, E. coli, and nitrates before registration
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required per RI Food Code kitchen standards
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored in the primary residence following safe food handling guidelines

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — RIDOH may inspect home kitchens at any time to ensure compliance; inspection authority is ongoing not just upon complaint
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HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT conditional — State law does not preempt local ordinances. Producers should check with their city/town planning or zoning office. Some municipalities in Providence County may require a home occupation permit or zoning approval. HOA/lease restrictions may also apply.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct sales within Rhode Island only. Pickup at residence and delivery by registrant or designee are allowed. Online and mail order permitted within state. Selling at farmers markets and temporary events requires a separate Retail Food Peddler License (\$65/yr, covers all events statewide).

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified in state cottage food law; residence-based operation by registrant

Relevant county code

No county-level code found; Providence County is largely governed by constituent municipalities. State law at R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2.

RESEARCH NOTES

Rhode Island enacted H. 7123 in June 2022 creating its first non-farmer cottage food program (R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2). Registration with RIDOH required (\$65 fee); food handler training or food safety certification required; notarized affidavit required; \$50,000 annual sales cap; direct sales only within RI. RIDOH has ongoing inspection authority. State law does NOT preempt local ordinances, so Providence County municipalities may impose additional home occupation requirements. Providence County has no county government per se — it is administered through its 39 municipalities. Confidence medium because no specific municipality-level zoning code was retrieved for unincorporated areas (Rhode Island has no true unincorporated county areas).

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.providenceri.gov>

<https://health.ri.gov/food-safety/cottage-foods>

<https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food-seller/rhode-island/>

<https://web.uri.edu/risbdc/wp-content/uploads/sites/987/Cottage-Foods-101.pdf>

RANK 385 · FIPS 44003 · East Greenwich

Kent County

Population 170,168 · State baseline: R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2 · MEDIUM

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Only non-refrigerated baked goods allowed (double crust pies, yeast breads, biscuits, brownies, cookies, muffins, cakes that do not require refrigeration). Registration required (\$65 fee). 8-hour food handler training required. Notarized affidavit and kitchen sketch required. Annual sales cap \$50,000. DOH may inspect at any time. Direct sales only within Rhode Island; no wholesale, no grocery stores, no restaurants, no schools, no long-term care facilities.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	DOH inspection applies; pets likely required away from food prep areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required; assessed during registration.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-refrigerated shelf-stable baked goods stored properly.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — DOH may inspect at any time for compliance. No routine scheduled inspections but DOH retains right to inspect.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Rhode Island counties are administrative only and do not have county government; municipalities govern local rules. Kent County municipalities (e.g., Warwick, Cranston, West Warwick) each have their own zoning rules for home-based businesses. County URLs were blank in input. Home occupation permits typically required by municipalities.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct sales only within Rhode Island. Products may not be sold outside the state.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME No state restriction specified; household operation implied.

Relevant county code

R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2; municipal zoning ordinances (Kent County municipalities)

RESEARCH NOTES

Rhode Island has one of the most restrictive cottage food laws nationally (tier 'Poor'). County seat was blank in input — East Greenwich is the county seat of Kent County, RI. Rhode Island counties have no county government; municipalities govern local rules. The operative statute is §21-27-6.2 (enacted P.L. 2022, amended P.L. 2024), not §21-27-6.1 as listed in the input. Registration fee is \$65 payable to General Treasurer, State of RI.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.ri.gov/licenses/detail.php?id=257>

<https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE21/21-27/21-27-6.1.htm>

RANK 489 · FIPS 44009 · —

Washington County

Population 129,998 · State baseline: R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2 · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED yes — One of the most restrictive cottage food laws in the US. Only non-refrigerated baked goods allowed (double crust pies, yeast breads, biscuits, brownies, cookies, muffins, cakes that don't require refrigeration). Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Registration required (\$65 fee). Food handler training required. Home kitchen inspection required. Direct sales only.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN no

PET RESTRICTIONS Not specified; kitchen sanitation required.

WATER SUPPLY Potable water required; private well users face additional testing requirements.

HANDWASHING Required; inspected during home kitchen inspection.

FOOD STORAGE Only non-refrigerated baked goods. Stored in food-safe containers.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED yes — Home kitchen inspection required before registration. RI DOH may inspect at any time for compliance.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT varies — Washington County (RI) municipalities (South Kingstown, North Kingstown, Narragansett, Westerly, etc.) have their own zoning ordinances and home occupation rules. RI counties do not have county-level governments; all governance is through the state and municipalities. No specific state-level preemption of local zoning for cottage food.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES Direct sales only. No wholesale/consignment. No sales to grocery stores, restaurants, long-term care facilities, group homes, daycares, or schools. Products may not be sold outside Rhode Island.

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME Not specified.

Relevant county code

R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2. Note: Washington County RI (also called South County) has no county government; all governance is municipal.

RESEARCH NOTES

State baseline (RI) confirmed: R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2, \$65 registration, \$50,000 cap, baked goods only, kitchen inspection required. Washington County RI (often called South County) has no actual county government — all zoning and permits are handled at the municipal level (South Kingstown, North Kingstown, Narragansett, Westerly, etc.). County seat field is blank in input data. Confidence medium — applying state baseline; no county-level governance to research.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.ri.gov/licenses/detail.php?id=257>

<http://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE21/21-27/21-27-6.1.htm>

RANK 668 · FIPS 44005 · —

Newport County

Population 85,442 · State baseline: R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2 · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Rhode Island has one of the most restrictive cottage food laws in the US. Only non-refrigerated baked goods are allowed (double crust pies, yeast breads, biscuits, brownies, cookies, muffins, cakes not requiring refrigeration). Registration required (\$65 fee). Kitchen inspection required before license. Food handler training completion required. Only direct sales permitted (no wholesale, grocery stores, restaurants). Products may not leave Rhode Island.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Kitchen inspection will evaluate conditions; no specific statutory statement on pets.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required (well water test or utility bill).
HANDWASHING	Kitchen inspection covers food safety infrastructure including handwashing.
FOOD STORAGE	No specific statutory storage requirements beyond what is evaluated in inspection.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Initial kitchen inspection required before license. DOH may inspect at any time for compliance.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Rhode Island has no county government structure; municipalities (Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth, Jamestown, Tiverton, Little Compton, Bristol, Warren) govern locally. Newport County is a geographic designation only. Each municipality may have home occupation permits. Newport City and other Newport County municipalities should be consulted for local zoning and business permit requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales only within Rhode Island. No wholesale, no grocery store/ restaurant sales, no sales to long-term care facilities, group homes, daycares, or schools. Products may not leave Rhode Island.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law.

Relevant county code

Rhode Island has no county government. Municipal zoning applies. R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2 governs at state level.

RESEARCH NOTES

Newport County, RI is a geographic county without county government. Rhode Island's cottage food law (§21-27-6.2, enacted 2022, amended 2024) is among the most restrictive in the nation: baked goods only, inspection, registration, direct sales only, no out-of-state sales. Newport County residents are subject to state law and their specific municipality's ordinances. No county-level rules to apply. Confidence is medium: state law confirmed from RI Legislature official source; municipal-level rules not verified.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.ri.gov/licenses/detail.php?id=257>

<http://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE21/21-27/21-27-6.1.htm>

RANK 975 · FIPS 44001 · Bristol

Bristol County

Population 50,658 · State baseline: R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2 · **MEDIUM**

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	conditional — Rhode Island allows only non-refrigerated baked goods (double crust pies, yeast breads, biscuits, brownies, cookies, muffins, cakes that do not require refrigeration). Annual sales cap \$50,000. Must register with RI DOH (\$65 fee). Food handler training required. Kitchen inspection required before registration. Direct-to-consumer sales only within Rhode Island.
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SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified in state law, but GMP requirements apply during inspection.
WATER SUPPLY	Proof of water potability required (private well test or utility bill).
HANDWASHING	Required as part of kitchen inspection compliance.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must not require refrigeration.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	yes — Initial kitchen inspection required before registration issued. DOH may inspect at any time for compliance.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Bristol County consists of three towns (Bristol, Barrington, Warren) each with their own town councils and zoning. Rhode Island cottage food operations require registration with state DOH including local zoning board confirmation that residential use is permitted. Recommend verifying with the relevant town planning office.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales only within Rhode Island. No wholesale, consignment, or sales to grocery stores, restaurants, long-term care facilities, group homes, daycare facilities, or schools.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state law.

Relevant county code

R.I. Gen. Laws §21-27-6.2; N.J.A.C. 8:24-11 (reference for comparison); Bristol County town zoning codes

RESEARCH NOTES

Rhode Island is among the most restrictive cottage food states, allowing only non-refrigerated baked goods (no other food categories). Registration fee \$65. Kitchen inspection required. Annual cap \$50,000. Bristol County is RI's smallest county by area, containing three coastal towns. Note: RI does not have county governments with regulatory authority; the three towns in Bristol County govern their own zoning. County_seat field was blank in input; county seat/shire town is Bristol.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.ri.gov/licenses/detail.php?id=257>

<http://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE21/21-27/21-27-6.1.htm>

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