

VDACS Information Packet

What is VDACS?

- VDACS or Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is a state agency that is in place to promote economic development of Virginia agriculture, encourage environmental stewardship, and provide consumer protection.
- Our section of VDACS deals with food inspections and consumer complaints.

VDACS Duties

- Food inspections and consumer complaints
- Home operations, convenience stores, supermarkets, warehouses, food and drink manufacturers
- SW Region Office can be contacted at 540/857-7344

Home Operations

Starting a New Food Business

- Section 398.1 of the Virginia Food Laws requires that your firm be inspected prior to starting your food operation.

Starting a New Food Business

- Application is a two step process:
 - Submit required information AND Inspection

Starting a New Food Business

Step One (Required Information)

- Diagram:** Submit a complete diagram of your processing area including location of storage areas, processing equipment, sinks, and location of wells and/or drain field, if applicable.
- Recipe of Your Product:** Submit a list of the exact measurements of ingredients for each product proposed. Include where the raw materials are obtained, i.e., from a supermarket or fresh grown/harvested and indicate the name of the supply source. Please mark this sheet "Trade Secret" if you do not want this information subject to disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.
- A Process Flow Sheet:** Submit a detailed description of the processing steps in sequential order from raw ingredients to finished product, including cooking times and temperatures.
- List of Finished Products:** Submit a list of finished products to include how the finished products are going to be stored, transported and/or displayed (refrigerated or held at room temperature and how packaged) until it reaches the consumer, and where it is to be distributed.
- Labels of Your Product:** Submit samples of your labels. If you have not yet ordered labels, a proposed mock label will suffice. It is recommended that you have your labels reviewed prior to ordering, to avoid financial loss if revision of the labels is required.
- For net weight requirements, please call Office of Weights and Measures at (804) 786-2476. Additional labeling information can be obtained from www.fda.gov. See labeling requirements.
- Nutritional Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) Must be present if a nutritional claim is made, regardless of exemptions. e.g. sugar free
- Exemptions
 - Automatic Exemption < 10,000 units sold and < 10 employees
 - Small Business Exemption <100,000 units sold and <100 employees
 - Exemption forms available at www.cfsan.fda.gov/dms/sbel.html
 - Foods sold for immediate consumption
 - Donated Foods
 - Bulk Shipping
 - Raw Fruits and Vegetables
 - Fish
 - Foods of No Nutritional Significance
- Acidified Foods Only:** If your proposal involves acidified foods (pickled products, salsa, pumpkin/sweet potato butter, barbecue sauces, chow-chow, relishes, hot pepper jelly, hot sauces, etc.), or products containing garlic in oil, your process must be reviewed and approved by a certified processing authority, for safety purposes, and a copy of the approval letter furnished with your application.

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■ A list of process approval sources is available upon request from the Office of Food Safety. Locally, Virginia Tech provides this service free of charge. The contact person is Joell Eifert, who can be reached at (540) 231-8697, or e-mailed at joell.eifert@vt.edu. If your products are deemed acidified then you must attend a Better Process School for certification.

Starting a New Food Business

Step Two (Inspection).

- All foods manufactured, processed, repackaged, and/or distributed by the firm must be labeled with:
 - The name of the product,
 - An ingredient statement, in order of descending predominance (to include the sub ingredients),
 - An accurate net weight statement expressed in both metric and US values (contact the Office of Weights & Measures) at (804) 786-2476
 - The complete name and address of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor.

Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004

- Requires use of common English names for the major food allergens
- Tree nuts must identify specific nut such as “almond,” “pecan,” “walnut”
- Fish/Shellfish must identify species, such as “tuna,” “bass,” “flounder,” “shrimp,” “lobster”

The Big 8 Major Allergens

- Milk
- Egg
- Fish (e.g., bass, flounder)
- Crustacean shellfish (e.g., crab, lobster, or shrimp)
- Tree nuts (e.g., almonds, pecans, or walnuts)
- Wheat
- Peanuts
- Soybeans

PACKET INFORMATION

■ Packet Information should be sent to the following address:

- **Virginia Dept. of Agriculture**
210 Church AVE. – SW – Suite 360
Roanoke, VA 24011
540/857-7344

Starting a New Food Business

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■ Provided the previously mentioned requested material has met proper requirements, a Food Safety Specialist will arrange a visit to your establishment and conduct an inspection based on the applicable laws and regulations.

Starting a New Food Business

Overall Sanitation: Processing, storage, and any adjacent areas will be inspected for general sanitation, including looking for insects, rodents and pets activity in the food preparation area.

■ **Water Sample:** A water sample will be collected by the inspector for bacteriological analysis to determine potability if you are on a private supply, such as a well. If you are on a public (municipal) supply, a sample analysis will not be necessary.

■ Raw Materials:

- The raw materials storage areas will be inspected to ensure that the raw materials are adequately protected from possible contamination.
- The Food Safety Specialist will also check raw ingredients for wholesomeness.

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- For operation from a home kitchen, it is recommended that separate storage for commercial raw ingredients from domestic or personal use ingredients be provided.
- Raw ingredients that are capable of supporting the rapid and progressive growth of microorganisms (potentially hazardous foods, such as meats, eggs, dairy products, and seafood) will need to be maintained at an internal temperature of 45°F or below.

■Holding/Storing Temperatures:

- hot foods must be held at an internal temperature of 140° Fahrenheit or greater,
- refrigerated/cold foods must be held at 40° Fahrenheit or below, and
- frozen foods must be held at 0° Fahrenheit or below.

■**Refrigeration:** Domestic use of your home refrigerator along with the added burden of commercial use often overloads the cooling capacity of the unit so that it is unable to render rapid and complete cooling, therefore, a separate refrigerator of adequate capacity is often the best solution for the home processor. The refrigerator you use should be equipped with an accurate thermometer for monitoring holding temperatures of food products, and such thermometers may be purchased at most hardware stores.

■**Utensil/Equipment Storage:** Cleaning and sanitizing your equipment and utensils prior to using them is recommended. In addition, we recommend a separate storage area for those utensils and equipment you plan to use for your home business from those you would use in your personal kitchen. .

■**Processing Control:** The Food Safety Specialist may watch you as you process your foods. This will enable him/her to detect places in the process where the safety of the product might be compromised and suggest corrections.

■These may include:

- cross contamination;
- time/temperature abuses of potentially hazardous foods;
- improper thawing;
- failure to rapidly cool cooked potentially hazardous foods;
- failure to properly sanitize equipment and utensils;
- failure to wear the proper attire;
- failure to properly process or seal finished product; etc.

■Plumbing:

- Food manufacturing operations must be properly plumbed with hot and cold water under pressure and have adequate facilities for cleaning equipment.
- For proper sanitization, a 3-compartment sink is recommended, although, a 2-compartment sink can suffice.
- A conveniently located hand washing sink and a toilet facility of sanitary design is also required.

■Send additional recipes and labels to your area VDACS office for submission prior to processing and selling new products.

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Retail Inspectional Components

- Overall cleanliness
- Ensure equipment and utensils cleaned and sanitized
- No evidence of rodent/insect activity
- Proper employee practices
- Ensure foods are properly labeled
- Proper temperatures and no cross contamination
- Firm in good repair and properly plumbed

Adopted Regulations

- Good Manufacturing Practices (21 CFR 110)
- Bottled Water Regulations (21 CFR 103)
- Low Acid & Acidified Foods Regs (21 CFR 113, 114)
- Labeling Regulations (21 CFR 101)

QUESTIONS/CONTACTS

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Virginia Dept. of Agriculture
Office of Weights & Measures
804/786-2476

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Virginia Department Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDAC's) application is a two step process.

1. application and required information
2. Inspection

To begin the process, fill out the information below and compile the required information listed on the back of this form. Submit the complete packet to:

Linda Skiles, Operations Manager
Open Kitchen
lrs@openkitchen-dcmetro.com
703-334-1504

Please Print Clearly.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Business Name: _____ Fax Number: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Hours Of Operation

Day of Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Hours or Operation							

Totally smoke-free facility: Yes No

Water Supply: Public - _____ Other: _____

Sewage: Public - _____ Other: _____

What language would you like would you like to see your quarterly newsletter translated into?

I/We attest to the accuracy of the information provided, affirm to comply with the Food Regulations and will allow the regulatory authority access to the establishment during any reasonable time to inspect, conduct tests or collect samples as required.

Applicants Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Applicants Name (printed): _____

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Required Information(see “What is VDACS” for instructions)

_____Diagram

_____A Process Flow Sheet

_____Labels of Your Product(s)

_____Acidified Foods Only

_____ Attach approval letter from certified Processing Authority.

_____ Certification for acidified products.(if applicable)

_____Recipe(s) of Your Product(s)

_____List of Finished Products

Pre-Opening Inspection

Provided the previously mentioned requested material has met proper requirements, a Food Safety Specialist will contact you to arrange a visit with at the OPEN KITCHEN facility and conduct an inspection based on the applicable laws and regulations.

Labeling

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■Overall Sanitation:

■Water Sample

■Raw Materials

■Holding/Storing Temperatures

■Refrigeration:

■Utensil/Equipment Storage

■Processing Control

■Plumbing:

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- Virginia Dept. of Agriculture, Office of Weights & Measures , 804/786-2476