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INTRODUCED

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7**HOUSE BILL NO. 402**

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 12, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 3.2-5100 and 3.2-5130 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 3.2-5130.1, relating to cottage food laws; sale of certain food over phone and internet; home food processing operation inspection and permit requirements.

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Patron—Callsen

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 3.2-5100 and 3.2-5130 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 3.2-5130.1 as follows:

§ 3.2-5100. Duties of Commissioner.

A. The Commissioner shall inquire into the dairy and food and drink products, and the articles that are food or drinks, or the necessary constituents of the food or drinks, that are manufactured, sold, exposed, or offered for sale in the Commonwealth.

B. The Commissioner may procure samples of the dairy and food products covered by this chapter and may have the samples analyzed.

C. The Commissioner shall issue a permit to any food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment that, after inspection, is determined to be in compliance with all applicable provisions of this chapter and any regulations adopted thereunder. Any person that intends to manufacture, store, sell, or offer for sale an industrial hemp extract, as defined in § 3.2-5145.1, or food containing an industrial hemp extract (i) shall be subject to such permit requirement and (ii) shall indicate the person's intent to manufacture, store, sell, or offer for sale an industrial hemp extract or food containing an industrial hemp extract on its permit application. The Commissioner shall notify any applicant denied a permit of the reason for such denial. Any food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment issued a permit pursuant to this subsection shall be exempt from any other license, permit, or inspection required for the sale, preparation, or handling of food unless such food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment is operating as (a) a restaurant as defined in Title 35.1, as jointly determined by the State Health Commissioner and the Commissioner; (b) a plant that processes and distributes Grade A milk as referenced in this title, as determined by the State Health Commissioner; or (c) a shellfish establishment as defined in Title 28.2, as determined by the State Health Commissioner.

D. The Commissioner shall make a complaint against the manufacturer or vendor of any food or drink or dairy products that are adulterated, impure, or unwholesome, in contravention of the laws of the Commonwealth, and furnish all evidence to obtain a conviction of the offense charged. The Commissioner may make complaint and cause proceedings to be commenced against any person for enforcement of the laws relative to adulteration, impure, or unwholesome food or drink, and in such cases he shall not be obliged to furnish security for costs.

E. The Commissioner may develop criteria to determine if food manufacturers that are operating in a building deemed, in consultation with the Director of the Department of Historic Resources, to be historic are producing food products that are low risk of being adulterated. If, pursuant to such criteria, any such manufacturer is producing food products that are deemed to be low risk, the Commissioner may exempt the food manufacturer from specified provisions of this chapter, or regulations adopted thereunder, that pertain to the structure of the building, provided that the Commissioner determines that such exemption is unlikely to result in the preparation for sale, manufacture, packing, storage, sale, or distribution of any food that is adulterated, as defined in § 3.2-5122.

F. *Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the Commissioner shall not require a food manufacturer operating in a private home to comply with any additional structural, equipment, or facility standards except as provided in § 3.2-5130.1.*

§ 3.2-5130. Inspections required to operate food establishment.

A. It is unlawful to operate as a food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment until (i) such food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment has been inspected by the Commissioner and (ii) the Commissioner has issued a permit pursuant to subsection C of § 3.2-5100 for the operation of the food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment. If the inspection finds no significant health hazards to the public, any food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or retail food establishment may operate until receipt of the permit. Such permit shall be processed within 30 days of the inspection date.

59 B. If the Commissioner determines that conditions exist in a food manufacturer, food storage warehouse,
60 or retail food establishment that would render such entity significantly out of compliance with an applicable
61 provision of this chapter or regulation adopted pursuant to this chapter, the Commissioner may, in accordance
62 with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), deny, suspend, or revoke the permit of such entity.
63 If the Commissioner determines that conditions exist in a food manufacturer, food storage warehouse, or
64 retail food establishment that present a significant and immediate public health hazard, the Commissioner
65 may suspend the permit of such entity and shall seek an expedited informal fact-finding proceeding pursuant
66 to § 2.2-4019.

67 C. The provisions of subsections A and B shall not apply to:

68 1. Food manufacturers operating under a grant of inspection from the Office of Meat and Poultry Services
69 or a permit from the Office of Dairy and Foods in the Department; and Grade A fluid milk manufacturing
70 plants and shellfish and crustacea processing plants operating under a permit from the Virginia Department of
71 Health;

72 2. Nonprofit organizations holding one-day food sales;

73 3. Private homes where the resident processes and prepares candies, jams, and jellies not considered to be
74 low-acid or acidified low-acid food products, dried fruits, dry herbs, dry seasonings, dry mixtures, coated and
75 uncoated nuts, vinegars and flavored vinegars, popcorn, popcorn balls, cotton candy, dried pasta, dry baking
76 mixes, roasted coffee, dried tea, cereals, trail mixes, granola, and baked goods if such products are (i) those
77 that do not require time or temperature control after preparation; (ii) sold in person ~~in the Commonwealth at
any location or sold through the internet or by phone and delivered in person, through an agency, or by mail~~ to an individual for his own consumption ~~and not or sold~~ for resale or consignment by a third-party vendor if
78 such vendor displays the products separately from a licensed food establishment's food and clearly indicates
79 the information required in clause (iii) of this subdivision; (iii) sold at the private home, at a temporary event
80 that operates for a period of ~~no more than~~ 14 consecutive days, or at a farmers market; (iv) not offered for
81 sale to be used in or offered for consumption in retail food establishments; and (v) and (iii) affixed with a
82 label placed on the principal display panel or, for a product in packaging not large enough to bear such a
83 label, offered for sale with a sign displaying the name, physical address, and telephone number of the person
84 preparing the food product, the date the food product was processed, and the statement "NOT FOR RESALE
85 — PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION." Nothing in this subdivision shall
86 create or diminish the authority of the Commissioner under § 3.2-5102 or shall prohibit a resident selling a
87 food product in accordance with this subdivision from advertising such food product on the Internet;

88 4. Private homes where the resident processes and prepares pickles and other acidified vegetables that
89 have an equilibrium pH value of 4.6 or lower if such products are (i) sold in person ~~in the Commonwealth at
any location or sold through the internet or by phone and delivered in person, through an agency, or by mail~~ to an individual for his own consumption ~~and not or sold~~ for resale or consignment by a third-party vendor if
90 such vendor displays the products separately from a licensed food establishment's food and clearly indicates
91 the information required in clause (ii) of this subdivision; (ii) sold at the private home, at a temporary event
92 that operates for a period of ~~no more than~~ 14 consecutive days, or at a farmers market; (iii) not offered for
93 sale to be used in or offered for consumption in retail food establishments; (iv) and (ii) affixed with a label
94 placed on the principal display panel displaying the name, physical address, and telephone number of the person
95 preparing the food product, the date the food product was processed, and the statement "NOT FOR RESALE
96 — PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION"; and (v) not exceeding
97 \$9,000 in gross sales in a calendar year." Nothing in this subdivision shall create or diminish the authority of the
98 Commissioner under § 3.2-5102 or shall prohibit a resident selling a food product in accordance with this
99 subdivision from advertising such food product on the Internet;

100 5. Private homes where the resident processes and prepares honey produced by his own hives, if: (i) the
101 resident sells less than 250 gallons of honey annually; (ii) the resident does not process and sell other food
102 products in addition to honey, except as allowed by subdivisions 3 and 4; (iii) the product complies with the
103 other provisions of this chapter; and (iv) the product is labeled "PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT
104 STATE INSPECTION. WARNING: Do Not Feed Honey to Infants Under One Year Old." Nothing in this
105 subdivision shall increase or diminish the authority of the Commissioner under § 3.2-5102; and

106 6. Retail establishments that (i) do not prepare or serve food; (ii) sell only food or beverages that are
107 sealed in packaging by the manufacturer and have been officially inspected in the manufacturing process; (iii)
108 do not sell infant formulas; (iv) do not sell salvaged foods; and (v) certify to the Department that they meet
109 the provisions of this subdivision.

110 D. Nonprofit organizations, private homes, and retail establishments that qualify for an exception under
111 subsection C shall be exempt from the permit and inspection requirements of this chapter and the inspection
112 fees. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Department from inspecting any nonprofit organization, private
113 home, or retail establishment if a consumer complaint is received.

114 E. Any person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

115 **§ 3.2-5130.1. Home food processing operations; permitting and inspection requirements.**

116 A. As used in this section, "home food processing operator" means a food manufacturer that prepares,

121 processes, or stores food, including perishable foods, for sale in a private residence that serves as such
122 manufacturer's primary domestic residence.

123 B. The Commissioner or his designee shall issue a permit to a home food processing operator following
124 an initial inspection if the Commissioner determines such home food processing operator has complied with
125 the provisions of this section. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to exempt a home food processing
126 operator from complying with generally applicable local zoning laws.

127 C. The Department shall not require a home food processing operator to (i) submit any pre-operational
128 plan review, zoning approval, or equipment certification; (ii) comply with commercial-grade structural,
129 plumbing, ventilation, or equipment standards beyond those imposed on a private residence; or (iii) remodel,
130 upgrade, or install any commercial-grade appliances or otherwise provide any physical alterations to a
131 private residence.

132 D. A home food processing operator may produce, store, and sell any food regardless of whether the food
133 requires time or temperature control after preparation, provided that:

134 1. All foods that are subject to time or temperature restrictions for safety are maintained at the
135 appropriate temperature during preparation, storage, and distribution;

136 2. Any specialized processes requiring additional controls, such as acidification, reduced oxygen
137 packaging, or curing, are conducted in accordance with the Department's regulations; and

138 3. The home food processing operator maintains the records necessary to demonstrate compliance upon
139 request of the Commissioner.

140 E. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Commissioner from conducting inspections to
141 investigate consumer complaints or to verify that the home food processing operator has complied with the
142 provisions of this section following the issuance of a permit.

143 F. No locality shall adopt or enforce any ordinance, resolution, zoning requirement, or other regulation
144 that conflicts or interferes with, or has the effect of prohibiting, the production or sale of food products
145 authorized under this chapter by a home food processing operator or a person operating pursuant to
146 subdivisions C 3, 4, or 5 of § 3.2-5130.