

"THESE PRODUCTS ARE HOMEMADE AND NOT SUBJECT TO STATE INSPECTION."

Cottage Food in MN – An Outbreak Case Study

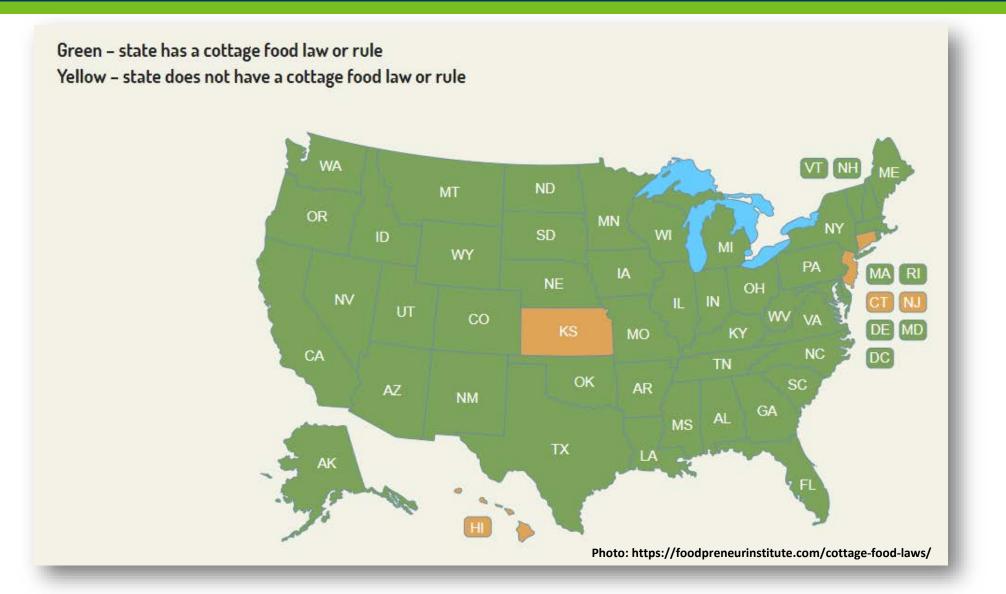
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June 10, 2018



Photos: Left – Olmstead County Public Health; Right – Minnesota Department of Agriculture Licensing ("Cottage Food Guidance")

Cottage Foods in the US



Cottage Foods in Minnesota

- Minnesota Cottage Foods Law went into place on July 1, 2015
- Previously known as the "pickle bill"
- Individuals may register as cottage food producers and cannot make more than \$18,000
- These producers can make nonpotentially-hazardous products at home and sell them directly to the consumer in Minnesota only
- Labeling requirements

Minnesota Cottage Foods Law

MN COTTAGE FOODS LAW

It's the law! As of July 1, 2015, you can make cottage foods in your home kitchen (baked foods, pickled, canned, jams, jellies, etc.) *without* a license BUT you must first take a MDA-approved food safety training and register with the MDA.



HELPFUL COTTAGE FOOD RESOURCES

MFMA Fact Sheet: 2015 MN Cottage Foods Law An explanation of the new law.

MN Revenue Fact Sheet 148: Tax Information on Cottage Foods

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A list of the cottage foods that are taxable in Minnesota.

The Non-Potentially Hazardous Foods List

A list of the foods allowed and not allowed under the Cottage Foods Exemption. MFMA updates this list as needed. The last revision: July 18, 2017.

Cottage Foods Producer Registration Form

This form can be filled online or mailed in.

<u>Detailed Cottage Foods Training YouTube</u> <u>Video</u>

<u>Click here</u> for further MDA information

Photo: Minnesota Farmers' Market Association – Cottage Foods page - <u>https://www.mfma.org/CFL</u>

Cottage Foods in Minnesota

- Tier 1: \$0-\$5,000
- Tier 2: \$5,001-\$18,000
- Both tiers require training
 - Tier 1: online
 - Tier 2: in person
- Tier 2: \$50 registration fee

- Prepare and sell only nonpotentially hazardous food and/or home-canned pickles, vegetables or fruits with a pH of 4.6 or lower ONLY IN MN
- Complete the training every 3 years
- No-nos: animal products, cooked foods, potentiallyhazardous foods (cut melons or tomatoes; garlic or herbbased oil mixtures

The Outbreak

- March 2018, Olmstead County Health Dept. and MN Dept. of Health reported an outbreak of norovirus among attendees of a high school hockey banquet (n=26)
- Banquet catered by local grocery store deli; MDA investigation at the deli did not reveal any practices of concern
- Olmstead County and MDH determined that cookies were also provided at the banquet, sourced from a home bakery

The Outbreak

- Home bakery was a "Tier 1" MN cottage food producer (<\$5,000 sales per year)
- Specialty hand-decorated cookies
- Case-control study conducted determined the cookies were the only significant exposure
- Two ill cases did not attend banquet, but ate cookies brought home from the banquet

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> Photo: Minnesota Department of Agriculture Licensing ("Cottage Food Guidance")

The Culprits: Hockey Jersey Cookies

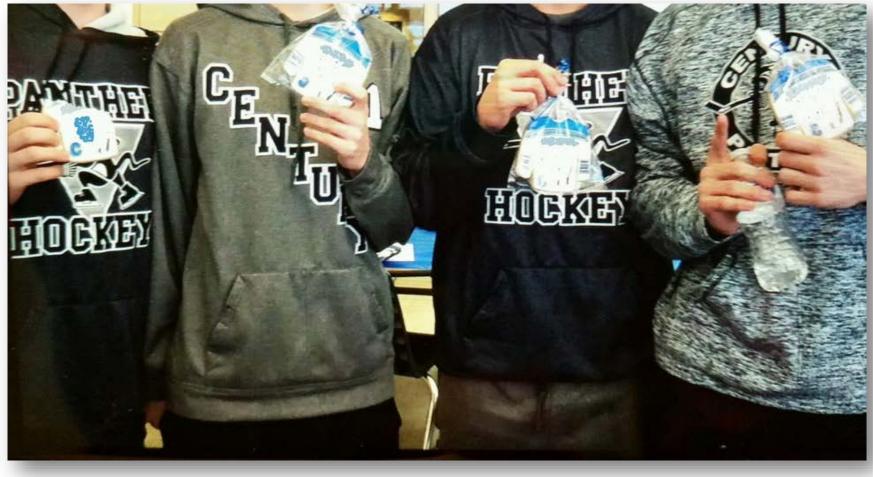
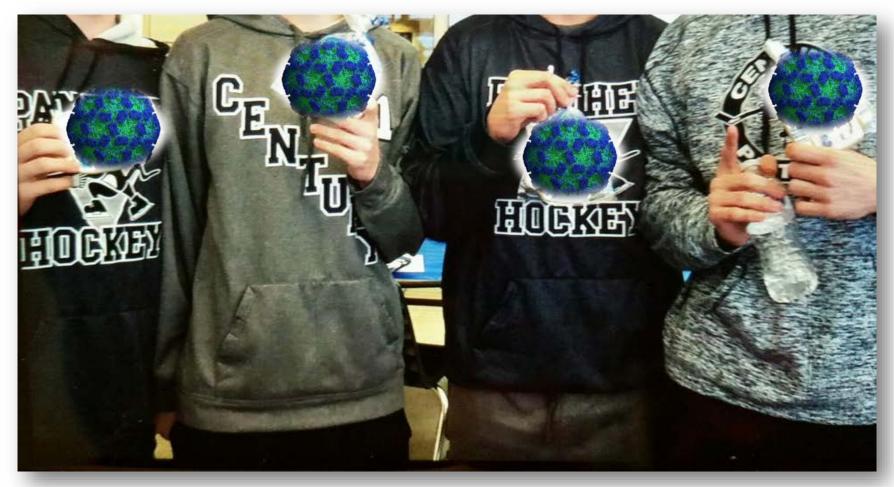


Photo: Collected by Olmstead County Public Health

The Culprits: What we saw when we got this picture



Hockey boys photo: Collected by Olmstead County Public Health Norovirus photos: http://www.foodsafetynews.com/files/2015/12/norovirus.jpg

First In-Home Cottage Food Outbreak Follow-up

- Inspector set up meeting with producer
- Producer stated she had been ill with diarrhea and vomiting but had avoided food handling for 24 hours after her illness was resolved
- Also revealed her son was ill at the same time and had vomited in the bathroom downstairs – cleaning took place, but no sanitation
- All equipment for producing cookies stored separate from personal use kitchen items on a cart in the dining room

"That's A Good Question": Outcomes of the Discussion

- Tier 1 training slide: "Clean and sanitize sinks, equipment and countertops before, during, and after food preparation."
 - How? With what type of cleaner? Sanitizer?
 - Producer requested vomit/diarrhea clean-up procedures
- Illness exclusion not discussed on slides
 - Producer familiar with 24-hour rule
 - Consider 72-hour rule?
 - Illness in any household member (not just producer)?

Lessons Learned

- Our cottage foods producers need more information on Norovirus!
- Working on improvements to the cottage food training for Tier 1 producers
 - Additional details about cleaning and sanitizing
 - What kills norovirus?
 - Expanded exclusion recommendations
 - 72 hours
 - For any illness in the household



Thank you!

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