

Guidelines For Your Home-Based Pet Treat Business



What You Need To Know

Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Office of Product & Industry Standards
Richmond, Virginia 23218
804-786-2476

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR HOME-BASED PET TREAT BUSINESS

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GUIDELINES FOR YOUR HOME-BASED PET TREAT BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of individuals are entering into the business of making pet treats from their home or from a small business kitchen. In Virginia, there are licensing and labeling requirements for these treats for the protection of the purchaser and their pets. These requirements include obtaining the required license, registration of each product, completion of analysis testing and specific package label requirements. Disregarding these requirements can have serious effects on the business including additional fees or penalties and the removal of products from distribution.

Guidelines and laws concerning the manufacture and sale of pet food and treats in Virginia are covered by the Virginia Commercial Feed Law and corresponding regulation. These pet foods and treats are considered as small package commercial feeds under the law. Recommendations from the American Association of Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) are also followed as long as these recommendations are not in conflict with Virginia law.

Staff members in the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Product and Industry Standards are available to assist you with the licensing and product registration requirements and the review of proposed labels for products being developed.

INSPECTIONS

The Virginia Commercial Feed Law does not require an on-site inspection of the processing facility for the production of treats for companion animals and birds. Check with your local health department office to determine if there are any local inspection requirements.

LOCAL LICENSES

Many localities (cities, counties or towns) have additional business license requirements. Check with your local licensing agency (Commissioner of the Revenue, Treasurer's Office, etc.) to determine if a local license is needed.

VIRGINIA COMMERCIAL FEED LICENSE

Before offering your products for sale in the Commonwealth, you must obtain a Virginia Commercial Feed License through the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Product and Industry Standards.

Home-made pet food and pet treats, including dog, cat and horse food and treats, are covered under the definition of a small package commercial feed. The feed license is renewed annually at a cost of \$50.00 and covers the period of January 1 through December 31 of each year. A properly completed license application is included in this booklet for information.

PRODUCT REGISTRATIONS

As mentioned earlier, pet foods and treats are considered small package commercial feeds under the Virginia Commercial Feed Law.

Bulk is defined as offering your products in a loose form similar to items offered in a human-food bakery (i.e., one cupcake, one éclair, etc.) or packaging your items in packages over 10 lbs. If you plan to sell your products in bulk, you will not need to register each product but you will need the annual Virginia Commercial Feed License and will be responsible for paying an annual tonnage fee on your total sales. If you market your products in this manner, labeling and analysis requirements do apply.

If any pet treat product is offered for sale to the consumer in distinct packages (4 oz, 8 oz, 1 lb., 3 each, ½ dozen, dozen, etc.) each one must be registered. Each ‘flavor’ of product that is prepared in a specific size for a specific type of pet is also considered a different product. The annual registration fee for each product is \$50.00.

For example, you are making three flavors of dog treats - beef, chicken and cheese. You want to make them in three sizes - a small-sized biscuit [for little dogs], a medium-sized biscuit [for average size dogs] and a large-sized biscuit [for big dogs], and you want to package them in 8 oz. and 1 lb. packages. You would need to register these as a total of nine (9) products as shown:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Beef Treats for Small Dogs | (4) Chicken Treats for Small Dogs | (7) Cheese Treats for Small Dogs |
| (2) Beef Treats for Medium Dogs | (5) Chicken Treats for Medium Dogs | (8) Cheese Treats for Medium Dogs |
| (3) Beef Treats for Large Dogs | (6) Chicken Treats for Large Dogs | (9) Cheese Treats for Large Dogs |

The total registration fee for the above products would be \$450.00 (9 products @ \$50 each = \$450.00).

A rule of thumb would be “**Different Ingredients = Different Flavors = Different Products**”.

A completed product registration form and sample product label is also included in this booklet.

THE LABELING GUIDELINES

The Virginia Commercial Feed Law and the Model Pet Food Regulations of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) require each package of food, snacks or treats for pets (dogs and cats) or specialty pets (animals normally kept in a cage such as hamsters, parakeets or fish) to have a label printed on or affixed to the package. This includes pet treats produced by a home-based business. The information provided below is the minimum information required on your pet treat labels.

- Brand Name of product (such as Bucky’s Biscuit Bits, Krazy Kitty Krunchies, etc.)
- The kind of pet (dog, cat, horse, etc.) the treat is made for must be in words on the front of the label if the kind of pet is not a part of the brand name. A picture is **not** sufficient to meet this requirement.
- The quantity statement must be expressed as weight for solid products or volume for liquid products in U.S. measures followed by the metric equivalent. Example: Net weight 8 oz. (227 g). For treats, the quantity may be expressed by count (example: 4 bones, 6 cakes, ½ dozen biscuits, etc.)
- Under the heading “Ingredients”, list the name of each ingredient using the name of the ingredient adopted by AAFCO. Ingredients shall be listed in descending order of predominance. If there is no designated name adopted by AAFCO, use the common name of the product such as ‘sugar’, ‘butter’, etc.
- The guaranteed analysis statement must have the proper heading, consist of at least the following, and be stated as and in the order listed below:
Guaranteed Analysis:
 - Crude protein (minimum) --- XX%;
 - Crude fat (minimum) --- XX%;
 - [Crude fat (maximum) – if product labeled as ‘low’ or ‘reduced’ fat. --- XX%];
 - Crude fiber (maximum) --- XX%;
 - Moisture (maximum) --- XX%.
- Voluntary guarantees for individual minerals and vitamins shall follow moisture in the “Guaranteed Analysis” if claimed.
- If the product is clearly identified on the principal display panel as a snack or treat, a nutrition statement or purpose statement is not required.
- The name and mailing address of the manufacturer or guarantor of the product is required to be displayed on the label. For safety reasons, the street address is not required if the business is listed in a local telephone directory. In that case, only the business name, city, state and zip are required for contact information.

GUARANTEED ANALYSIS TESTING

It is your responsibility to contact a private laboratory for testing costs and submission procedures. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services does not endorse one facility over another as to the testing capabilities or quality of service.

To meet the label requirement for a guaranteed analysis, each treat must be submitted to a private laboratory for testing. Private laboratories are listed in most local telephone directories.

REFERENCES

There are numerous resources available through the internet that will assist you in beginning and expanding your new business.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has several information bulletins on their website at www.fda.gov. A couple that would be of particular help in pet treat rules and regulations would be <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/market.htm> (Information on Marketing a Pet Food Product) and <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/petlabel.htm> (Interpreting Pet Food Labels).

EXAMPLES

The following pages have an example of a properly completed Virginia Commercial Feed License application, a properly completed Registration of Commercial Feed and Animal Remedy form.

Finally, we have included a product label that has all of the required information for home-made pet treats.

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
OFFICE OF PRODUCT AND INDUSTRY STANDARDS**

P O Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218

Phone: 804-371-2667 Fax: 804-786-1571 www.vdacs.virginia.gov
Revised November 2007

**LICENSE APPLICATION
MANUFACTURER or DISTRIBUTOR of FEEDS**

Please Print Clearly

Company Name: Bucky's Bakery Federal ID Number: 54-1234567

Division or c/o: _____

Mailing Address: 123987 Munchie Street

City: Barkville State: VA Zip: 12345-6789

Phone (include area code): 804-123-4567 Fax (include area code): 804-890-1234

Authorized Representative: D. O. Gee Signature: _____

E-mail address: buckedog@e-mail.net

Circle all categories that apply

	License Category	Description
1	COMMERCIAL (Includes all MEDICATED FEED) Tonnage Fee Applies	Firm manufactures or distributes materials or combination of materials which are distributed or intended for distribution for use as feed for animals or for mixing in feed.
2	CONTRACT Tonnage Fee Applies	Firm manufactures or distributes feed on a contract basis to a contract feeder.
3	INGREDIENTS, PREMIXES, CONCENTRATES OR SUPPLEMENTS Tonnage Fee Applies	Firm manufactures or distributes a commercial feed other than a feed intended to be fed undiluted. This includes both medicated and non-medicated feeds.
4	SMALL PACKAGE COMMERCIAL FEED (Includes pet food, treats & supplements)	Firm manufactures or distributes non-medicated commercial feeds offered in distinct packages of 10 pounds and less.
5	CANNED ANIMAL FOOD	Firm manufactures or distributes any canned food that is intended for use as feed for animals.
6	SPECIALTY PET FOOD Specialty pets include animals normally maintained in a cage or tank (i.e. gerbils, hamsters, birds, fish, and reptiles. Dogs, cats, horses, rabbits or wild birds are NOT specialty pets).	Firm manufactures or distributes any commercial food prepared for consumption by specialty pets.

For license categories 1, 2 and 3, indicate the animal species below if known. Check all that apply.

Cattle	Equine	Goats	Poultry	Sheep	Swine
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

License fee \$50.00. Make check payable to **Treasurer of Virginia.**

Mail check and completed application to:

Virginia Department of Agriculture &
Consumer Services
P. O. Box 526
Richmond, VA 23218-0526

For office use only

License fee: 885-02202

Late fee (if applicable): 885-02452

License No. _____

Contact Keying Codes 0 1 2 3

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OFFICE OF PRODUCT AND INDUSTRY STANDARDS**

P O Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218
Phone: 804-371-2667 Fax: 804-786-1571
www.vdacs.virginia.gov

Revised November 2007

COMMERCIAL FEED AND ANIMAL REMEDY PRODUCT REGISTRATIONS

Current VA License: YES # _____ NO (If no, license application & fee must accompany registrations)

Please Print Clearly

Company Name: Bucky's Bakery Federal ID Number: 54-1234567

Division or c/o: _____

Mailing Address: 123987 Munchie Street

City: Barkville State: VA Zip: 12345-6789

Phone (include area code): 804-123-4567 Fax (include area code): 804-890-1234

Authorized Representative: D. O. Gee Signature: _____

E-mail address: buckedog@email.net

Category	# of Products	Per Product Fee	Total	Finance Code
Medicated Feed		\$50.00		885-02201
*Small Package Commercial Feed	1	\$50.00	\$50	
Canned Animal Food		\$50.00		
**Specialty Pet Foods (Over 1#)		\$50.00		
**Specialty Pet Foods (1# & less)		\$35.00 (max fee - \$700)		
Animal Remedies		\$25.00		885-02212
TOTAL PRODUCT REGISTRATION FEES			\$50	

*Small Package Feeds include food, treats, vitamins & supplements for dogs, cats & rabbits & supplements for other livestock species packaged 10# and less.

Specialty Pet Foods include food, vitamins & supplements for animals normally maintained in a cage or tank such as ferrets, gerbils, hamsters, fish, reptiles & birds. **Dog and cat food and/or treats are not classified as specialty foods.

Registration will not be considered without label. Include original label for all products to be registered

VA No. (Office Only)	Product Name on Label	Package Size(s)	Crude Protein Min %	Crude Fat Min %	Crude Fiber Max %	Moisture Max %
	Bucky's Biscuit Bits - Liver & Beef Dog Treats for Small Dogs	8 oz., 1 lb.	12	6	3	10

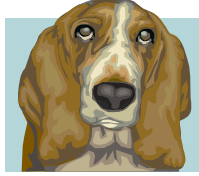
Attach continuation sheets as needed for product registrations.

Make check payable to **Treasurer of Virginia.**
Mail check, original labels and completed application to:

Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
P. O. Box 526
Richmond, VA 23218-0526

Bucky's Biscuit Bits

A howlin' good treat for your best friend



Liver & Beef Flavored Dog Treats For Small Dogs

Ingredients: Whole wheat flour, freeze dried liver, beef broth.

*Guaranteed analysis: Crude Protein (min) 12%; Crude Fat (min) 6%;
Crude Fiber (max) 3%; Moisture 10%.*

Keep refrigerated to maintain freshness for up to two weeks.

Net wt: 8 oz (227 g)

Bucky's Bakery, Barkville, VA 12345-6789 buckedog@email.net

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