

Conditional Use Permit – Project Description

Rock River Valley Gourmet Mushrooms (RRVM), founded in 2023, is a Watertown-based agricultural business specializing in the cultivation of gourmet mushrooms and the production of value-added mushroom products.

The company currently distributes its products through five retail locations across Wisconsin, including:

- Kraemer Wisconsin Cheese – Watertown
- Kraemer Wisconsin Cheese – Arkansas
- Pine Hill Farm – Watertown
- Pine Hill Farm – Lake Geneva
- Stapel's Farm Market – Cedar Grove

RRVM also maintains a strong presence at regional farmers markets, including Watertown, Oconomowoc, and Sun Prairie. In addition to its existing retail and farmers market sales channels, the company is actively preparing to launch online ordering and direct-to-consumer sales in the coming months as part of its continued growth strategy.

RRVM currently produces four varieties of gourmet mushroom crackers:

- 5-Year Aged Cheddar
- Parmesan Shiitake
- Miso Sesame
- Red Pepper Honey

As part of the company's continued growth and product expansion, two additional flavors are scheduled for release later this year:

- Smoked Gouda Shiitake
- Everything Bagel

RRVM's mushroom crackers are made using mushrooms grown by the company in Watertown and ingredients sourced from local and Wisconsin-based businesses whenever possible. Key supplier partnerships include **Kraemer Wisconsin Cheese** and **Annie B Acres**, both located in Watertown. Supporting local suppliers, strengthening relationships with Watertown and Wisconsin businesses, and creating value-added products from

locally grown agricultural products are central to RRVM's mission and long-term growth strategy.

Currently, RRVM's crackers are produced in a licensed commercial kitchen in Waterloo, Wisconsin. RRVM is proposing to convert an existing attached residential garage at **1415 Center Street** into a licensed commercial kitchen to support the continued growth of the business. The proposed commercial kitchen would allow the company to bring both mushroom cultivation and value-added product manufacturing together in Watertown, keeping more of the production process within the community while further supporting local agriculture, local businesses, and the Watertown economy.

Proposed Commercial Kitchen (see floor plan attached)

The commercial kitchen will be used exclusively for the manufacturing, processing, and packaging of value-added food products, including:

- Gourmet mushroom crackers
- Dehydrated mushrooms
- Mushroom-based seasonings and spice blends
- Other shelf-stable mushroom products

The facility will **not** operate as a restaurant, retail store, or food service establishment.

Operational Characteristics

The proposed operation is designed to have minimal impact on the surrounding neighborhood:

- No retail sales will occur on-site
- No customer visits or public access are planned
- No employee parking beyond normal residential use is anticipated
- No freight deliveries are expected beyond standard parcel service (UPS, FedEx, USPS)
- The business owner will serve as the primary operator

Traffic, noise, and utility demands are expected to remain comparable to those of a typical home-based business.

Existing Structure and Improvements

The project will utilize approximately **270 square feet (18' x 15')** of the existing attached garage. The structure is already well suited for conversion and includes:

- Existing R-19 wall insulation
- Vapor barrier installation
- Fire-rated ceiling assembly
- Existing concrete floor

Following commercial kitchen and State and Watertown Health Department requirements, the following improvements will be completed:

- Installation of food preparation and packaging work areas
- Commercial handwashing, ware-washing, and food preparation areas
- Commercial refrigeration equipment
- Commercial baking and food processing equipment
- Installation of washable, non-porous wall surfaces such as dairy board or similar approved materials
- Refinishing and upgrading of the existing concrete floor as required for sanitation compliance

No significant exterior modifications are anticipated other than those necessary to comply with applicable building, health, and safety codes.

Community and Agricultural Benefits

The proposed kitchen will allow RRVM to:

- Expand production capacity
- Improve operational efficiency
- Meet increasing customer demand

- Increase the use of Wisconsin-grown and Wisconsin-produced ingredients
- Create additional value-added agricultural products
- Strengthen partnerships with local farms and food producers

Compatibility with the Neighborhood

The project preserves the residential character of the property while providing space for small-scale agricultural processing. Because the operation is limited to food manufacturing and packaging, with no retail activity or customer traffic, it is expected to remain fully compatible with surrounding residential uses.

Approval of this Conditional Use Permit will enable Rock River Valley Gourmet Mushrooms to continue supporting local agriculture through value-added processing while maintaining a low-impact operation that is consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL KITCHEN LAYOUT

Rock River Valley Gourmet Mushrooms, LLC
1415 Center Street

SPACE OVERVIEW

- Existing attached garage
- Dimensions: 18' (North-South) x 15' (East-West)
- Total Area: 270 sq ft
- Intended Use: Food production and packaging
- No public access - Owner operated
- Minimal impact on surrounding area

KEY FEATURES

- Efficient workflow layout designed for food safety
- Dedicated handwashing and 3-compartment sink
- Ample stainless steel prep and work surfaces
- Commercial refrigeration and baking equipment
- Concrete floor to be refinished to meet commercial kitchen standards
- Walls to be covered with non-porous dairy board and insulated with R19 insulation, vapor barrier, and fire-rated ceiling

EQUIPMENT & FIXTURES

- NORTH WALL (18')**
 - Recessed 3' x 2' section for handwashing sink and mop sink (left of bump-out)
 - 8' x 2' bump-out (cinder block)
 - 3-Basin Sink (Wash - Rinse - Sterilize) (right of bump-out)

EAST WALL (15')

- 3' x 3' Electric Convection Oven on 6' Stainless Steel Table
- 2' x 2' Cooling Rack (on wheels)

SOUTH WALL (18')

- 6' Refrigerated Prep Table with Mixer Top
- Standard Size Reach-In Refrigerator
- ~15 cu ft Reach-In Refrigerator

CENTER OF ROOM

- 6' x 30" Stainless Steel Prep Table

WEST WALL (15')

- Garage Door

