



Marion County
OREGON

Agri-Tourism



Regulations for obtaining a permit to hold events and activities in rural Marion County

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What is “Agri-Tourism”?

Marion County Code 17.120.090(G) defines agri-tourism as “...a common, farm-dependent activity that promotes agriculture, any income from which is incidental and subordinate to the income of a working farm operation. Such activities may include hay rides, corn mazes and other similar uses that are directly related to on-site agriculture. Any assembly of persons shall be for the purpose of taking part in agriculturally based activities such as animal or crop care, tasting farm products or learning about farm or ranch operations. Agri-tourism may include farm-to-plate meals and similarly small, farm-themed parties. Regularly occurring celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agri-tourism.”

Is this countywide?

Yes, but only in farm zones – Exclusive Farm Use, Special Agriculture, and Farm/Timber. The agri-tourism events must be related to and supportive of the working farm operation on the property.

What is allowed in other zones?

Citizens can hold “personal” events on their property, regardless of the zone, including family weddings, reunions, celebratory parties, etc. Property owners can hold non-personal events on their property, regardless of the zone, provided they are not charging or collecting a fee or compensated in any way. For example, a property owner can allow a friend to have a wedding or family reunion on his/her property as long as they do not charge the friend a fee or collect a fee from attendees. When a property owner collects a fee or other

compensation for holding an event on his/her property, it is considered a business. This includes only being compensated for expenses the property owner incurred from the event.

What is the difference between an agri-tourism permit and a mass gathering permit?

The County’s Outdoor Mass Gathering Permit is required for events with over 750 attendees and allowed in any zone subject to certain standards and regulations. The agri-tourism events are only for property in the agricultural zones.

Is there an Agri-Tourism Permit?

There are three types of agri-tourism permits processed under Marion County Code, Chapter 17.120.090, Specific Conditional Uses. In summary:

A Single Event Conditional Use Permit: a farming operation is allowed a single event in a calendar year. In addition:

- The event shall not exceed 72 hours.
- Maximum attendance at the event shall not exceed 500 people.
- Maximum number of motor vehicles parked at the site for the event shall not exceed 250.
- The event shall be incidental and subordinate to the existing farm use on the tract; and
- The event shall occur outdoors, in temporary structures, or existing permitted structures subject to fire life safety requirements. Temporary structures shall be removed at end of the event; and
- The event shall cause no alteration to land including grading, filling or paving.

Up to Six Events Conditional Use Permit: a farming operation is allowed up to six events in a calendar year. In addition:

- The events shall be incidental and subordinate to the existing farm use on the tract.
- Each event shall not exceed 72 hours.
- The events shall not involve the construction or use of new permanent structures.
- The events shall not, in combination with other agri-tourism or other commercial events authorized in the area, materially alter the stability of the land use pattern of the area.
- The events shall cause no alteration to land including, but not limited to, grading, filling or paving.
- The permit is valid for two years and may be renewed subject to review.

Up to 18 Events Conditional Use Permit: a farming operation is allowed up to 18 events in a calendar year. In addition:

- Events shall be incidental and subordinate to existing commercial farm use of the tract and are necessary to support the commercial farm uses or the commercial agricultural enterprises in the area.
- Events shall not involve the construction or use of new permanent structure.
- Events shall not, in combination with other agri-tourism or other commercial events or activities authorized in the area, materially alter the stability of the land use pattern of the area.
- The event shall cause no alteration to land including grading, filling or paving.

- The lot or parcel that the event takes place on shall comply with the minimum lot size of that zone (80 acres for agricultural zones).
- Permits are valid for two years and may be renewed for an additional two years subject to review. After four years, the applicant must reapply for a new permit.

How does Planning staff determine “...must be incidental and subordinate to existing farm use on the parcel”?

Generally speaking, the act of holding events on the parcel should be secondary or subsidiary to the farm use of the parcel. In addition, the property must be receiving farm deferral through the Assessor’s Office. Review will occur on a case-by-case basis, as are all Conditional Use applications.

What happens if the owner isn’t actively farming the property?

As noted above, if the property is not in farm deferral the events would not be “incidental and subordinate to existing farm use on the parcel” and the request would be denied.

How do I obtain an agri-tourism permit?

Marion County Planning Division issues the Conditional Use Agri-tourism Permits. You can download an application from our website or obtain one from the office.

Once a complete application is received, the Planning Division will request comments from other County departments and affected agencies. Staff will then review the application for compliance with various land use regulations. In 30-45 days a decision will be issued approving, conditionally approving, or denying the request. A copy is sent to the

applicant and property owners within 1500 feet of the subject property. There is a 15-day appeal period in which the applicant or any interested person who disagrees with the decision may appeal the decision to a Marion County hearings officer.

How much do these permits cost?

Single-event Conditional Use Permit - \$375.
“Up to Six” or “Up to Eighteen” event Conditional Use Permits are \$640.

For more information, contact Planning staff at (503) 588-5038; email planning@co.marion.or.us or <http://www.co.marion.or.us/PW/Planning/default.htm>.

