



Planning & Development Services

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Memorandum

To: Planning Commission
From: Sarah Ruether, Long Range Planning Manager
Re: Public Outreach Fall of 2022- Agritourism
Date: January 18, 2023

Summary

Planning and Development Services (PDS) is providing this memo in advance of the January 24, 2023, Planning Commission meeting. The purpose of this memo is to present an overview of the public involvement done in the fall of 2022.

Background and Purpose

After receiving multiple requests for agritourism related rezones and code changes, the Board of County Commissioners decided that a more holistic approach was needed. As a result, they requested a broader study to better define agritourism and better understand its opportunities and potential harm. As a result, Skagit County long-range planning staff and BERK consultants conducted a situation assessment in the fall of 2021 to better understand some of these issues specific to Skagit County. They also conducted public outreach in the spring of 2022, but after concerns that not all citizens had an opportunity to comment and participate, the decision was made to continue public outreach into the fall of 2022. The purpose of the public engagement was to gain more input from residents and producers about how to proceed with appropriate policy and code that protects rural character and protects agricultural land while choosing policy that fits for desired agritourism uses.

Public Outreach Fall of 2022

In mid-October 2022 a postcard was mailed to approximately 17,000 households in rural areas of the county advertising an online survey which asked for opinions about various types of agritourism and public meeting opportunities. As of mid-December 2022, Skagit County collected 651 responses to the survey. Over 90% of those who took the survey live in Skagit County and about one third of respondents own or lease farmland. A one-page summary of the results of this survey is attached.

For a more detailed view of the survey results, a full report which includes hundreds of comments attached to each question asked in the survey; the full report of the fall 2022 Agritourism Survey is attached. Also attached is a survey received November 8th by mail to Skagit County. This survey was taken using the March 2022 format so it was not able to be tabulated with the other results and that is why it is instead included as an attachment.

Four public meetings were held to discuss agritourism. Summaries of these events along with pictures and the power point presentation given at these events is attached in the Skagit County Agritourism Event Summaries. Attendance at these events varied from approximately twelve participants at the Agriculture Leadership Lunch to more than fifty in attendance at the Summit Mount Vernon – Agritourism Town Hall event on December 6, 2022. These events were held at different geographic locations – Sedro Woolley, Maple Hall in La Conner and in Mt. Vernon with the intent to be geographically diverse. One event, at the Sedro Woolley Senior Center, was held during the day, the other events were held in the evening.

Next Steps

Review of the survey results and the public input given at the outreach meetings in November and December 2022 will inform the formulation of proposed policy and code changes for agritourism. Policy and code change options based on the public outreach results and discussion with the Planning Commission, will be presented at the upcoming February 28th Planning Commission meeting. Additional public input will be sought when legislative proposals are developed and vetted with the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners in 2023.

Attachment 1 Fall 2022 Agritourism Survey Highlights

Attachment 2 Fall 2022 Agritourism Survey Full Results

Attachment 3 Jensen Correspondence

Attachment 4 Skagit County Agritourism Meeting Summaries



Fall 2022 Agritourism Survey – Highlights

As part of Skagit County’s exploration and analysis of Agritourism about 17,000 postcards were mailed to rural areas of the county advertising an online survey and public meeting opportunities. The postcard was mailed in mid-October 2022. As of mid-December 2022, Skagit County collected 651 responses to the survey, which asked community opinions about different types of agritourism ranging from farm stands and u-pick operations to tasting rooms and weddings as well as special events. Highlights of the survey include:

- **Respondents:** Over 90% live in Skagit County and responded from locations across the county. About one-third own or lease farmland.
- **Agritourism Policy:** Over 80% support agritourism where accessory to a primary agricultural use.
- **Weddings:** About two-thirds felt weddings should not be prohibited (68%), but rather allowed to help keep farmers farming, particularly with some conditions. Most respondents were supportive of allowing weddings by special events and limited in size or frequency and with appropriate infrastructure (67%).
- **Tasting Rooms:** Most agreed to potential allowances for accessory tasting rooms subject to a special use permit with limitations on temporary events and other standards. Two thirds of respondents agreed with having small tasting rooms (65%). About half thought moderate tasting rooms should be allowed (50%). Most did not want to limit small or moderate tasting rooms.
- **Farm Stands and U-Pick:** A large majority of respondents (85%) would make no changes to the code for traditional types of agritourism like farm stands and u picks. Most would also like to simplify the permit process for these activities (81%). More than half (57%) would update the design standards, e.g., for parking and infrastructure.
- **Bed and Breakfasts and Farm Stays:** Over 90% would continue accessory bed and breakfast allowances. More than half (~58%) would allow temporary farm stays (RVs) including if there were limited days/vehicles; more support for the use was found with persons owning farmland than rural residents.
- **Festivals and Events:** A large majority (88%) would continue to have temporary activity regulations for festivals and events, and most would not limit the number or size of them (77% - keep number; 66% keep size). Most would also allow small farm-to-table events (81%).
- **Permits and Procedures:** Most would like to see updated application forms (83%), exemptions for seasonal, low-use/low-impact activities (72%), an annual self-certification form (77%), multi-year programmatic permit (79%), and better code enforcement (64%).

Skagit County will review these survey results as well as the results of meetings and events in November and December 2022 in formulating policies or codes for agritourism. Additional public input will be sought when legislative proposals are developed and vetted with the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in 2023.



Fall 2022 Agritourism Survey

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Details of the survey responses are found below.

Who Responded

Over 91% of respondents live in Skagit County. Most live in zip codes west of Mount Vernon or in the vicinity of Sedro Wooley; however, responses were received from a wide range of rural areas, north, east, south, and west.

1. Do you live or work in Skagit County? (Choose one)

Response	Number	Percent
I live in Skagit County	578	91%
I work in Skagit County	19	3%
I do not live or work in Skagit County	22	3%
Other	15	2%
Sum	634	100%

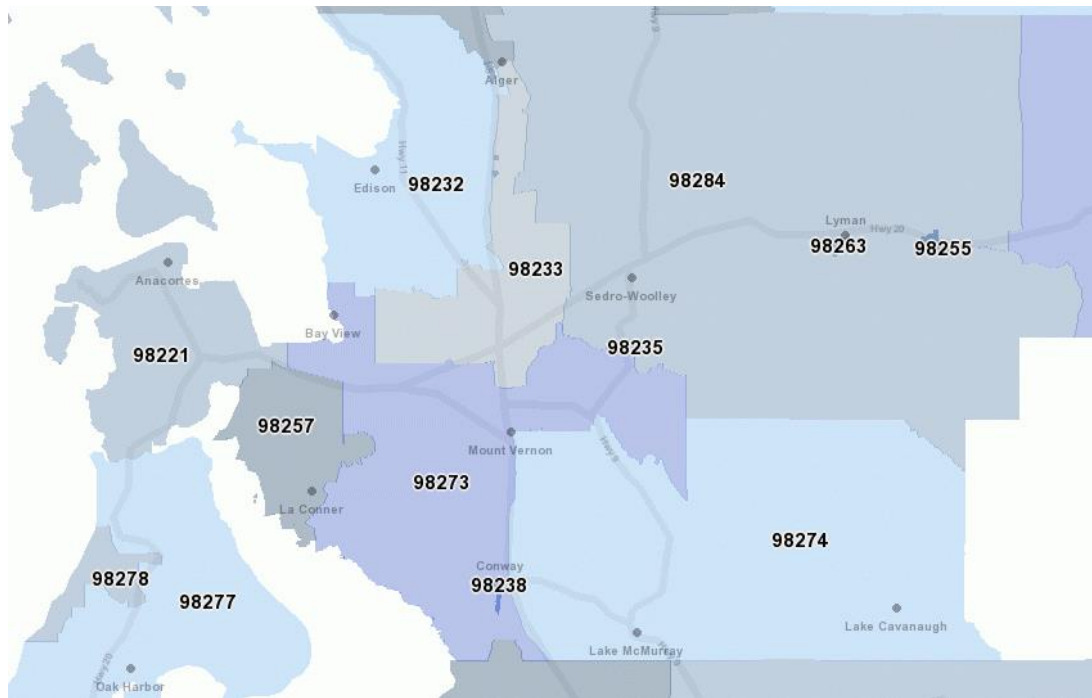
Publicinput.com, BERK 2022.

2. Please share where you live in Skagit County using the zip codes provided below.

Location (General)	Zip Code	Share of Responses	Number
Mount Vernon (west)	98273	26%	165
Sedro Wooley	98284	16%	102
Anacortes	98221	13%	82
Mount Vernon (east)	98274	12%	78
Bow	98232	10%	65
Burlington	98233	7%	42
La Conner	98257	5%	29
Other zip codes:	98241 98263 98235 98267 98255 98833 98238 98283	5%	30
Other Unlisted		5%	32

n=626 respondents
Publicinput.com, BERK 2022.

Zip Code Map



Zipcodes.org

Two thirds of respondents do not lease or own farmland but about one third do.

3. Do you own or lease farmland in Skagit County?

Response	Total	Share
I own farmland	188	29.9%
I lease farmland	17	2.7%
I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	49	7.8%
No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to	374	59.6%
Sum	628	100%

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022.

Agritourism Activities as Accessory Activities

A large majority of respondents support agritourism as an accessory activity to a primary agricultural use. Those who identify as owning or leasing farmland have a lower level of agreement than those who do not own farmland.

4. One main goal of Agritourism has been that any Agritourism activity should be an accessory use to the main agricultural use. The purpose of this goal is to ensure no loss of productive farmland at the expense of agritourism. Do you agree with this goal?

Response	All Respondents	Own Farmland	Lease Farmland	Don't own or lease farmland, but seeking opportunities to do so	Don't own or lease farmland and do not want to
Yes, I agree with the goal that any agritourism activity should be an accessory use to the main agricultural use.	84%	73%	69%	85%	89%
No, I disagree with the goal that any agritourism activity should be an accessory use to the main agricultural use.	13%	22%	15%	15%	8%
Other	3%	5%	15%	0%	2%
Respondents	582	176	13	46	342

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=582 respondents total, with 577 sharing their ownership status

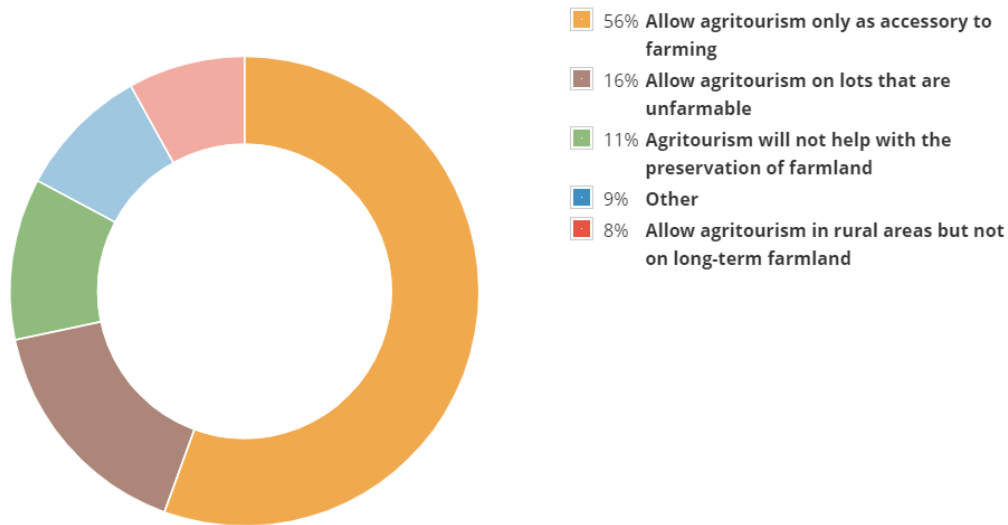
Those that responded "other" shared some rationales or questions. Some wanted accessory activities to be further defined, and some way of considering size/income to support that, while others thought there should be exceptions to the accessory activity goal.

Agriculture as accessory use "other"

1. Agritourism activity should be an accessory use to the main agricultural use, if certain criteria are met.	8. I believe it should be accessory to the main use of any land, designated farmland or otherwise
2. Agritourism as it has developed and is allowed is considered on a case by case basis with the goal of conserving prime ag soils being the driving factor in the decisions. Commercial agriculture is still the main economic driver in Skagit County. There is no evidence that agritourism can or will replace commercial agriculture in the Skagit economy. The Growth Management Act requires the identification and protection of Ag-NRLs. That means conversion to uses other than ag, no matter how much a constituent wants the conversion, is a violation of GMA. Skagit County has worked hard to stay in compliance with GMA and the Commissioners should not be influenced by offers of funding or other supposed incentives to change zoning, maps or permit activities that do not comply with GMA.	9. I believe that the way land is viewed can include and expand past the idea of "agricultural use" or "Agritourism" to include many life-enhancing activities in connection with and respect for the land
3. Agritourism is none of the county's business.	10. I think that there might be exceptions
4. Agrotourism is a commercial use; Goal should be that Skagit County will focus development of ag tourism off prime ag soils.	11. I think there is room for exception on a case-by-case basis
5. Depends on land. Some farmland is no longer viable or in coming decades will not be. Why not prioritize putting agrotourism on these lands and save the farmlands that will likely hold up over time. Also, do we really want to add things to the floodplain?	12. I think this is an expense we do not need. Even this survey costs tax dollars that should be spent elsewhere.
6. Don't have enough information to answer at this time	13. No Agritourism beyond what we already have
7. I am uncertain how I feel about this.	14. No preference
	15. Should be case by case.
	16. Small agricultural use should be allowed. Put either a physical size limit or income limit to keep the use small. Small agritourism should be allowed. Establish physical size or revenue limits to keep the use small.
	17. The agritourism activity could be the main agricultural use. Agritourism is agricultural by definition.
	18. There are certain conditions whereby existing agritourism activities do make up the sole, or main income for the farm. I would like to see those entities NOT lose that status but be grandfathered in somehow and then moving forward any new agritourism be limited to accessory income. Or create agritourism zones whereby agritourism, or local producers could sell to educate the public.
	19. Yes, perhaps, to the extent "agritourism" is allowed at all. What exactly is agritourism? What is it not?

There were some different ways that agritourism could be allowed while protecting farmland. Most supported accessory agritourism. Persons leasing farmland or wishing to do so were more open to agritourism on unfarmable lots.

5. In your opinion, how can the county preserve farmland while allowing for agritourism? (Please select one response that best represents your opinion)



558 respondents

Ownership Status	Total*	Allow agritourism only as accessory to farming	Allow agritourism on lots that are unfarmable	Agritourism will not help with the preservation of farmland	Allow agritourism in rural areas but not on long-term farmland	Other
I own farmland	165	52%	14%	15%	7%	13%
I lease farmland	12	42%	25%	8%	8%	17%
I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	43	51%	26%	2%	9%	12%
No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to	332	58%	16%	11%	8%	7%

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

*n=558 respondents total, with 552 sharing their ownership status

How can the county preserve farmland while allowing for agritourism? Other:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Agritourism can help preserve farmland as an economic enhancement allowing farmers to continue. Dairy farmers are an example. It is difficult for them to do well financially on a smaller scale. Some complementary agritourism activities can help them survive. | 5. Agritourism will help to reconnect customers to the land, in itself increasing support and respect for farmland. At its essence this is only a win-win for farmers. Any other concerns can be addressed on the individual business license level. |
| 2. Agritourism can help support farming. Any farm that wants to support agritourism activities appropriate for the site and farm should be able to. | 6. All of the above have merits of conversation. Tourism on long-term farmland must be restricted. |
| 3. Agritourism is none of the county's business. | 7. allow agritourism as an accessory to farming and lots in rural areas that are unfarmable |
| 4. Agritourism should not be allowed to convert farmland to non-farming uses - parking lots, for instance. It should be carefully licensed, rather than becoming an "allowed use" on its own terms, so that the impacts can be annually reviewed, and conditions imposed as needed to protect farming on the land at issue and surrounding farming parcels. | 8. Allow agritourism as an accessory to farming AND allow agritourism on lots that are unfarmable and/or too small to "farm." |
| | 9. Allow agritourism as an accessory to farming. (I deleted ONLY) |
| | 10. Allow agritourism both as an accessory to farmland and in rural areas that can't be used for farmland. |

11.	Allow agritourism both as an accessory use and as a primary use on lots that are not independently viable as commercial farmland.
12.	Allow agritourism in a more open manner. Anything that supports the Skagit identity and "brand" will ultimately benefit all producers and support the long-term goal of preserving farmland
13.	Allow agritourism in AG/NRL. It does not need to be an accessory to farming, as long as it enhances peoples/visitors experience with farms and farmland.
14.	Allow agritourism on all farmland
15.	Allow agritourism on farmland
16.	allow agritourism on farmland
17.	allow agritourism wherever possible. Expand the awareness that Skagit County is a destination for great food and should be preserved and not fall to monied interests seeking million-dollar homes.
18.	Allow agritourism. Encourage agritourism.
19.	Allow agritourism beyond scope of above.
20.	Allow agrotourism on again zoned land that has access to public roads
21.	Allow and encourage agritourism and ecotourism on all of the mentioned land areas so that farming ...on a small scale and multi use is allowed...and encouraged. Less government regulation and more grants to encourage this can be what will bring a more
22.	Allow farmers to diversify income sources in support of maintaining their land
23.	Allow farmstands, farm to table gatherings, farm festival activities to supplement farmers income from farm products or education
24.	Allow it anywhere it can be done without costing others.
25.	any landowner should be able to sell what they produce in a small stand or building. if anything, regulate the size of the building and the amount of land used for such
26.	Be thoughtful about the needs of the farmer and business and work to preserve and grow agritourism at the same time
27.	Considering our main agrotourism crop - tulips, is not for food production and yet sustains many businesses in the valley, agrotourism should be encouraged.
28.	Continuing the way, it is. Tulip time is a prime example.
29.	County and ag industry fight off any use of farmland because it may destroy great ag soils. We don't even want things that are good for the environment on farmland. Yet now we are ok with commercial agritourism on farmland? Does not make sense. The focus should be on soils. Commerce does not need to be on these soils. Farmers markets are main way to cluster commercial
30.	Educate visitors about why and how preserving armband is important no matter what land they visit for tourism.
31.	Encourage agritourism since it adds value to farming
32.	how to incorporate without overcrowding roads and local access to daily activities
33.	I don't know
34.	I don't see these options as necessarily mutually exclusive. Agritourism activities can be used to bring in additional; These options are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Agritourism activities may be used to generate additional income or provide tourists with an understanding of what it takes to be a farmer and provide food for their tables. Some of this could be accomplished on unfarmable land or on long term farmland.

35.	I prefer the 'accessory' answer but parking related to duration of stay are the factors most important to not impacting farmland
36.	I think any governing body can benefit from a wide view of what the land is and what its power is in our lives. I am most interested in the land being viewed as a living partner with us and all our varied interests. I do, however, very much advocate for the maximization of openness in regard to the land, but not that it must be used to its fullest production potential as modern agricultural practices often advocate for. It should be respected and asked for its participation in our desires and not exploited or excavated for its highest productive capacity in terms of yield or high value cropping.
37.	I think folks need to be flexible and allow agritourism where it makes sense. Agrotourism will be a benefit to the economy and in my opinion will not prevent or hinder the preservation of farmland.
38.	If you own it so what you want... just don't build a housing development
39.	I'm concerned about overreach of government and the possibility of taking away property owners rights
40.	It's difficult to see how anyone could answer this question in an informed way. The question presumes agritourism will be allowed and then forces respondents to choose between four separate absolute options. Maybe some forms of agritourism are acceptable on some types of land and some scales and other types and scales are not.
41.	No restrictions should be imposing on agritourism.
42.	Not every acre of long-term farmland is planted/harvested every year could be set-aside for experimental or creative uses when fallow
43.	Only permit farm stays that train quest by having them work on the farm for 6 hours a day.
44.	Options 1 & 3
45.	Prioritize on unfarmable lots but often these lots are wetlands or foodways or some other issue, so may not be good for agrotourism. Agrotourism should be where other development would normally be allowed; Allow where development would be allowed. It is development.
46.	Promote conservation easements
47.	Remove the 35-foot boundaries around tributaries to the Skagit river. I understand that you're trying to cool the river. This is not the problem, however. The problem is our lakes above the dams allow the water to sit in the sunlight and warm, also allowing the ecosystem to start before it normally would in nature.
48.	Small farms have a hard time making ends meet as it is. Less restrictions would enable people to live in rural areas on little farms, instead of having to have "side jobs" and other activities that pull the farmer away from the property and let it get more run down.
49.	Stop all restrictions
50.	The county can STOP creating false choices between experiential and direct to consumer agribusiness and commodity business models. Allow ALL AGRIBUSINESS regardless of whether it's centered in commodity markets or not.
51.	These options should be better explained
52.	unknown
53.	With proper permits and fees, the government will be able to maintain roads, and other expenses that come with showcasing our amazing valley with events
54.	You need to define. direct marketing vs.; You need to define direct marketing vrs agritourism

Weddings

About two-thirds felt weddings should not be prohibited, but rather allowed to help keep farmers farming, particularly with some conditions. A third found weddings should not be allowed.

6. Weddings should not be permitted under any kind of permit in the Ag-NRL zone.

Response	Total Number	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	155	32%	32%	8%	40%	32%
No, I do not agree	327	68%	68%	92%	60%	68%
Total	482	100%	149	13	40	276

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=482 respondents total, with 478 sharing their ownership status

Weddings, please explain

1. "A special building constructed for weddings and events NO but if an offspring wants to get married etc. in dad or grandpa's barn shop , or mom's garden etc. that should be allowed.	14. A onetime wedding is one thing, but if I consistently wanted to have hundreds of drunk people next door to me every weekend, I would have moved to the city.
2. "Hard to explain.... I may not know enough about Ag-NRL zones.	15. Adequate venues already exist. More venues mean more vehicles.
3. "If they are trying to be a wedding venue, they will be investing money in the property and working on the property. The farmer actually being on the property instead of off trying to hustle some side work will be good for the community. Anyone having a wedding venue wants the property to stay nice. Also, regulations for bathrooms and directing parking for more than so many guests are possible, and fees could go to the county.	16. Afraid most people would not respect the area they are at. Need to keep it natural.
4. "No. A wedding is only a 3–5-hour event in one day during late spring, summer & early fall.	17. Ag lands are sometimes wonderful sites for weddings, doesn't mean the farmer needs a business license or permit as a wedding vendor. Such use should be allowed if the landowner desires.
5. "One purpose of exclusive agricultural zoning is to permit higher value economic uses (such as commercial event venues, restaurants, and hotels) from bidding up the cost of agricultural land to such an extent that agricultural operators can no longer acquire agricultural land at prices that make farming profitable. Essentially the goal of exclusive agricultural zoning is to create clear price break in the market for agricultural land as opposed to non-agricultural land. Allowing weddings venues, which are apparently more profitable than farming, on agricultural land will result in an increase in the value of agricultural land.	18. Ag lands are variable by crop, seasonality, mixed uses (timber, conservation areas, etc) and whether a venue would actually impact farming. I don't feel one size fits all in the county.
6. "The owner of the land / facility can set firm limits re number of attendees at a wedding and what behavior is not permitted.	19. Again, TOO much government overreach.
7. "The uses of property should be the decision of	20. Agritourism is none of the county's business.
8. "We need to preserve small/family ranches, homes, farms. If agritourism can help hay growers, Christmas Tree Farms and other family operations to survive I am for it. I see Wedding Venues as a positive way of preservation.	21. Agritourism should be about agriculture. Weddings are simply weddings.
9. "Weddings are a wonderful compliment to family farming, with old Ag barns that can then be preserved for another purpose.	22. Agritourism land use should be allowed
10. "Weddings only on non-farmland	23. Agritourism won't help protect farmland because only 14 large farms actually make money in the Skagit. The others farm for love of farming. Once those farmers are gone, will anyone follow into a business that is for love, not money? The proposed solution of agritourism is bust and boom stuff, unless you farm in a wine area. Agritourism isn't going to save farmland- being absorbed by the big farms will but not one wants to hear that. But, since the small farms are not making any money right now, sure, let them host some weddings in their barns. Probably a pretty limited bunch that will do as very expensive to bring barns up to code for events
11. "Why not?	24. Allow agritourism. Encourage agritourism.
12. : The owner of the land/facility can set firm limits on number of attendees and expected behaviors."	25. Allow farms to have another means of income. Limiting outside activities then just makes corporate farms the only farms
13. A barn should be considered unfarmable land	26. Allow weddings to be located on farmland, barns etc. Agritourism is good for helping revenues for the farmer and/or landowner. Stop trying to govern us.
	27. Allowing wedding venues in the Ag-NRL zone would be a net benefit to the economy of Skagit County.
	28. Allowing weddings brings in tourism & revenue.
	29. Allowing weddings in the Ag-NRL is a slippery slope.
	30. Already too many people wasting valuable resources.

31. Also, there is a significant difference between allowing a farmer or property owner to host a few wedding events each year with no permanent improvements to the property vs. allowing someone to establish a wedding venue with permanent improvements and host a large number of large events each year. The question, as posed, will not generate meaningful feedback since it forces respondents to choose between two binary choices. Either you can be for wedding events, or you have to be against the in all cases. This isn't a fair way to frame the questions.; One purpose of exclusive agricultural zoning is prevent more profitable land uses (such as wedding venues) from bidding up the cost of agricultural land to such an extent that farmers can no longer obtain and farm the land profitably and hastening the conversion of land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses. When effectively implemented exclusive agricultural zoning decouples the market for agricultural land from the market for non-agricultural land and ensures that the value of agricultural land is determined by the lands potential for agricultural output rather than its potential use for non-agricultural purposes. Allowing wedding venues and other commercial activities on agricultural land will undermine the effectiveness of Skagit County's exclusive agricultural zones. "	44. Assuming no additional farmland is taken into wedding use, it seems that farms have plenty of space that can be used for weddings without impacting farm operations if they choose
32. Any barn that can be used as a wedding venue is not being used for agricultural purposes, so it shouldn't be zoned for agricultural use. That is not an agricultural use of the land.	45. But I want residents to have options, because the county can't follow through with rules they set.
33. any legal activity should be allowed as long as it does not take away from farmland.	46. Concerned about traffic and parking
34. As a former farmer, I know it's hard to make enough money producing only food products. As a sideline on an existing farm and as long as it doesn't interrupt the lives of their neighbors, I'd support the right of the farmer to use their property for events.	47. Consider this a low impact activity.
35. As a property owner you have the freedom to enjoy a wedding on your own land	48. Conversion of farm properties to wedding venues requires conversion of farmland to parking and other uses. It also tends to interfere with neighboring farming activities such as moving large equipment, spreading of chemicals and or nutrients on adjacent properties
36. As both a farm owner and a salon owner who used to work on weddings in the past, I feel that SKAGIT is already beyond oversaturated with wedding venues. From personal experience, wedding parties don't come up to SKAGIT to appreciate our farmland.	49. Current law is too restrictive to landowner. Weddings have limited impacts if any on the agricultural land but being needed economic support to the valley.
37. As long as it does not become the only source of revenue for the farm. There is enough parking space for 100+ cars. That it does not take away productive acreage. Environmental impact if set in migratory paths or time of year.	50. destruction of farmland for a short period
38. as long as no new permanent structures are built. Use existing barns, etc. could provide income to the farm hosting the wedding	51. Disagree
39. As long as the site can support the number of guests, weddings and other events should be permitted. The wedding it event should not take higher priority than any farming activities that any neighbor may need to do. For example, the farmer next door needs to get harvest in which will cause dust, noise and farm equipment on the road. The farm holding the event would have no standing to complain about the farming activity.	52. disagree, not all barns are used in modern farming. beautiful old barns get demolished because they aren't right for modern farming but they would be perfect as tasting rooms or wedding venues. There are times of the year that barns are empty, and it could provide a serious income bump for a farmer to use the barn as a venue
40. As long as there is no long-term negative impact, I have no issue with it	53. Disagree. Wedding and other types of short-term entertainment should be considered for permission
41. As long as wedding venues don't take away any usable farmland, I am ok with wedding venues. Hopefully in barns that already exist, not new structures, but remodeled for events is okay.	54. Disagree. Weddings should be permitted if that is what the landowner wants to use their land for.
42. As mentioned above facilities located on farms can provide excellent venues for and weddings tend to support a thriving economy.	55. disagree; Why the heck not?
43. As someone who got married in a barn, I feel that many agricultural spaces can provide spaces for events that accentuate and use the beauty of our county to generate an alternate source of revenue for landowners without causing much harm to the land	56. Disruption of normal farm protocol could be caused, this would compromise the growth and wellbeing of the crops, workers and guest during that time
	57. Do not allow
	58. don't have an opinion
	59. Drawing folks to the valley for a wedding May expose those who aren't aware of the agri-tourism possibilities.
	60. Even with strict limits for permits, the potential risks of non-compliance are great, and enforcement problematic.
	61. Events are a good way to supplement a farmer's income. A 250-person wedding once a year could bring in 5 to 20 thousand dollars depending on the involvement of the farmer of they wanted to cater, set up decorations etc. or just rent the land with zero effort for a couple thousand dollars. The farmers could use that money to upgrade equipment, maintenance, hire people etc. that money would more than likely stay local and provide tax revenue. At the very least it could cushion them in a bad year easing the burden on the taxpayer. Parking, septic and a few other issues would need to be addressed of course. If the requirements for a cottage license could be reevaluated that would be a huge boon as well. Right now, we have the strictest requirements that I know of in any state. Wyoming for example you can make pickles or bake bread and sell them to your neighbor freely even California you can make and sell bread out of your house. There is a lot of opportunities for farms to supplement their income with "city" money by hosting wedding or farm dinners just ease up a bit and let them use what they have to get by. I'm a retired Chef and caterer for over 25 years and events are extremely profitable. This would be very easy with low impact if done correctly especially if a connection between party planners, chef's or event companies is opened up. Attend one wedding show and talk to the planners etc. it's literally that easy to get the ball rolling. Another consideration is a pilot program of a few years with a permit program and permits being limited to X amount per year per property. These events can be disruptive to neighbors or in areas that aren't accustomed to a couple hundred cars every weekend wear and tear. Just my thoughts from growing up in Bow-Edison area and working in Skagit Valley the majority of my life.

62.	Events should be allowed where adequate facilities and parking exist. All facilities should be permitted and require a business license, and there should be a (reasonable) limit on the number and size of events allowed.
63.	Farmers could benefit financially, and local communities could benefit from increased business
64.	Farmers need all the help they can get.
65.	Farmers need to generate income on a steady basis. If agritourism would help even out income esp. when crops fail, it should be allowed. Weddings sound like lower impact to me than other types of use.
66.	Farmers should be able to add additional income with the facilities that they have
67.	Farmland should not be turned into wedding venues. We need productive farmland to feed people
68.	Farms and barns connote tradition - which should be preserved. It does not hurt farming for a barn or farmland to be used for a wedding. In fact, a very good friend of mine was married in a hay field in Goldendale - and it was a VERY special location and day.
69.	Farms can host weddings.
70.	First of all, the question is poorly written. After reading 3 times I think that by clicking no I am not agreeing it shouldn't be allowed. Dang, confusing my mind to write that. Please rewrite. I think temporary wedding events on a farm are fine.
71.	first weddings then what will sooner or later be next. Plenty of other places to have a wedding. hillcrest park for one
72.	Firstly, a barn wedding encourages preservation of the valley's beautiful barns and that is a good thing, secondly thoughtful permitting would regulate the number of weddings for example dis-allowing weddings greater than 50 guests during the tulip festival in the valley in already congested areas. Additionally, we are just a really beautiful place to have thoughtfully produced weddings, a free-for-all? Well, probably not, but enacting regulations that encourage carpooling, use of transit, facilities that keep cars and festivities out of site, entertainment and sound systems that keep the noise restricted to the celebration area and sound waste management practices could all be used to heighten the level of Skagit valleys profile as a first class destination. Keeping in mind these sorts of restrictions also help to keep the gatherings exclusive and puts a value premium on the events themselves.
73.	Focus on farming, not events.
74.	Gray area answer, if on a winery that has a tasting room, I see no reason why not. There probably are other examples. Could, say Roger use the cottage on his Samish Cheese farm to host weddings? I would say yes. Use it as it is fit to use. A doctrine akin to Frank Lloyd Wright's "form follows function"
75.	Great use of old dairy barns and they will be kept from falling down. Why not let them be repurposed into venues. Usually not a lot of close neighbors. Scenery of nicely get farm buildings is so much better than the crumbling buildings we see.
76.	High intensity use of any farmland tends to be irreversible. Loopholes allowing building or parking on farmland for any reason tend to remove that land from farming permanently. The results are obvious with any drive through the valley. There are options such as the Bayview zone and others where high-density usage can be located at the edge of the farmland.
77.	I agree. Weddings led to large scale traffic influx at the expense of driving through farmland or altering farmland into parking lots to support the large influx. Unless this can be mitigated in a reasonable manner. As we have seen with wedding venues on historical farms South of our County, the appearance of the farm has only been maintained as development of these lands increased because they are commercially viable in these environments. Thus, still defeating the long term purpose of farmland preservation.

78.	I am not in favor of any permit change which may threaten our farmland. I think it would be tragic to change parcel size etc. - threatens the integrity of the true farmland; Wedding venues have nothing to do with farming
79.	I believe a wedding venue should be allowed, it's the owner of the land to decide that. It's their land. ; No
80.	I believe if the land is not turned into full commercial property, weddings can be utilized without disturbing farmland or practices
81.	I believe there could be a compromise position that limited the number of guests per event or the number of events to reduce the adverse impact
82.	I believe they could fall into the agritourism route as long as they follow guidelines that allow the preservation of the farmland. Any spur to the local economy is a good one....as long as we respect the farmland for its intentional use.
83.	I believe wedding activities can occur on active farming land if planned appropriately to avoid interference with farms activities.
84.	I believe wedding venues can bring a lot of tourism dollars to the County.
85.	I believe weddings could be allowed on agricultural property as long as usage was strictly controlled in regard to size, frequency, and use of existing buildings.
86.	I believe weddings should be permitted in licensed facilities that have adequate parking options, follow noise ordinances, etc.
87.	I believe weddings using existing facilities and limited by frequency can easily coincide with standard farming practices.
88.	I can think of no compelling argument for why weddings or other party events should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
89.	I disagree, it does not benefit agricultural business to limit their income earning opportunities
90.	I disagree. It seems to me allowing farmers supplemental income helps keep them on the farm.
91.	I do not feel new structures should be erected on virgin land in the zag zone, however repurposing an old barn as a venue should be considered on a case by case basis, assuming adequate sanitary facilities are in place; Only in a repurposed barn or shed. No new building of facilities on Ag land
92.	I do not see how this will take away from farming.
93.	I do not see wedding venues in conflict with farming
94.	I don't see a reason to ban weddings in the Ag-NRL zone. Rural wedding facilities are a great way to preserve historic barns and other outbuildings, provide a good source of income and jobs, and bring people and their tax dollars into Skagit County. I don't see much of a difference between hosting weddings on a farm and having a 6-8 week festival every year celebrating Daffodils and Tulips. And the Tulip festival is a huge attraction to what would otherwise be just another obscure piece of farmland.
95.	I don't see any connection between hosting weddings and hosting agritourism.
96.	I don't see weddings as any part of agritourism. Farmland should be farmed, not changed into a wedding venue.
97.	I don't see why we wouldn't allow rural weddings. One of the things Skagit County has going for it is a diverse economy. I believe there should be rules/guidelines, but I have been to two rural weddings in the County, and they were great.; I don't think we should limit people to economic opportunities, within reason. If other counties have templates we can refer to, that is helpful. ; I disagree. Permitting will help when it comes to accountability for the permittee and provide opportunities for people in those zones.; We shouldn't limit folks in those zones.
98.	I don't think weddings should be banned, depending on the size of event and infrastructure it may be feasible to have wedding events.
99.	I feel any wedding use would be abused

100. I feel that farmers should be able to host permitted weddings on occasion. It has been a good source of income for farms in other counties and across the country.
101. I have worked for catering companies in the side (to provide extra income for my farm) and a lot of these companies will go to farms in Skagit that are called wedding venues but really are remodeled barns. I am not opposed to farms using their existing barns and non-farmable land for income. Done appropriately this income can and does save these farms from bankruptcy and development. The problem I have with it is that there is no enforcement on parking (i.e., tourists parking on other people's fields, lack of toilet facilities, trespassing, etc.) It's a huge problem and I have seen wedding guests walk all over neighboring fields for pictures, allowing their children to cause issues, and trash. I spend way too much time and money cleaning up my own farm from past owners and helping farmer friends clean up their farms to have any tolerance for this. The lack of respect that tourists and guests of large venues have for farmland is deplorable. There should be rules and enforcement of these rules to protect property, equipment, crops, animals, etc. and enforcement of those rules as strong as the rules around salmon and other conservation efforts.
102. I know having grown up on a farm that maintenance of farm structures is expensive. It would be nice for farmers to get supplemental income by renting their buildings. I think it could be a very helpful incentive to maintain historic buildings that might have outlived their usefulness otherwise.
103. I know of several wedding venues that take place in barns (or machine shops) that have not been used for farming purposes in decades. These farms have moved their workspace to different areas, building newer machine shops. The wedding venues use the barn (previously a shop) for weddings. They have not taken away ANY farmland to have weddings/events at their locations. They most definitely should be allowed to continue to use the lovely locations.
104. I live across the street from a very active farm with a large barn. The noise of farming is enough (and I don't mind) that I can't get excited about more noise from events. This is supposed to be rural living.; Lots of truck traffic
105. I see allowing weddings on properties that have room for in an existing barn or other building and room for parking as a good source of income for those trying to maintain and keep agricultural land.
106. I see nothing wrong with permitting such an accessory use as long as it does not impair the primary agricultural use of the site. In fact, I can well imagine that there could be lovely sites for weddings which would not impair the agriculture function if properly located on the land.
107. I think excluding all weddings is severely limiting and extreme. Maybe there can be some explanation of what the concern is around this?
108. I think instances can be found where something of limited size can be accommodated as long as it does not threaten the primary business or become the primary business.
109. I think it could be a valuable asset to the county as long as it is managed well.
110. I think it is an additional source of income for farmers who own large land and there should be guidelines for noise and parking control, but they should be allowed to use their land to make revenue if possible.
111. I think it should be allowed as long as it does not harm current agriculture or production. I do see traffic as an issue that could be a problem with pollution if we get an additional 6,000-13,000 visitors per year. That is a lot of fine particles being released into the environment from car exhaust.
112. I think small weddings are okay but building special facilities just for weddings is not okay.
113. I think some rules need to be made but I think they should be allowed

114. I think that any value-added service like weddings, corporate events, farm stands, live performances should be allowed and would help preserve the smaller financially survive.
115. I think there are enough venues in the area to work with the desire for weddings in the area.
116. I think there are plenty of wedding venues in Skagit County and I know that some of them are on former farms. I do not think a wedding venue would mix well with an active farm, but I am aware that such things exist.
117. I think Wedding Venues are a great use of many of the underutilized barns in Skagit.
118. I think weddings can happen with careful land stewardship in order to minimize impact on the environment.
119. I would limit how many guests and year-round activity a venue could have.
120. I would think weddings in existing barns or as temporary uses with limited size and frequency could provide income for the farm and generate additional revenue for the County (lodging, dining, florists, caterers, service staff). Would need to limit amplified sound and hours for neighborly considerations.
121. I'd need more information to make an informed response
122. I'm not sure how I feel about this.
123. If a farmer is ok with renting/leasing use of their property for a theme wedding, what harm is there?
124. If Ag landowner wants to hold an occasional private wedding or other noncommercial celebration that should be their choice without interference from local authorities. Commercial space for Weddings is a different matter and should meet standards to protect Ag lands.
125. If an event is handled correctly, it should bring in some additional revenue for the farm(er)
126. If an unused barn is equipped with all the current building code improvements, then there should not be any reason to prohibit a landowner from profiting from the investment
127. If completed in harmony with the farmland using existing structures.; They should not be restricted if done IN FULL HARMONY with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint.
128. If having weddings helps keep a farmer in business, I think they should be allowed to have weddings!
129. If it can help save a small farmer from having to sell to a farm corporation yes have a wedding venue
130. If it helps the farmers with extra income, I would think they would want that.
131. If it's an accessory use, it would add income and acquaint visitors with agriculture
132. If its damaging, its more money. Or pay for use
133. If properly developed.
134. If someone is willing to have a wedding on barren land and it isn't interfering with any famers, it shouldn't matter
135. If someone wants to have their wedding on farmland it won't hurt that land and sorry, but the government doesn't need to regulate every minute detail of anyone's life outside of an incarcerated person
136. If the farmer does not object, why not?
137. If the farmer would like to have a farm and do weddings on the weekend, they should be able to. They have ample parking and a different option for the scenery. Our farmers could easily supplement income that would allow them to farm during the week and offer additional services on the weekends.
138. If the landowner wants to also be a wedding venue, that is fine as long as it does not impact any neighboring properties.
139. If the owner has a working farm
140. If the permit would follow the above description of what some other counties allow AND if that use does not negatively impact ay agricultural use, the county/citizens would benefit from tax revenue and more visitors spending their dollars here.

141. If the venue doesn't negatively affect neighbors and farm activities, it should be allowed.
142. If the wedding does not interfere with any farm production, local traffic or neighbors' privacy it should be allowed. Events like this also help stimulate the county's hospitality industry.
143. If there is a vacant barn that can be used for activities outside of farming and it does not interfere with farming it could be used temporarily.
144. If there was a way to determine sites by a protective oversight process, there might be some latitude to this.
145. If we are running a beautiful, successful for-profit farming enterprise and we desire to add additional revenue streams, we should be able to do so
146. If weddings are allowed, then farms would possibly get most of the revenue their revenue from hosting weddings and would stop farming. There would need to be a proof of farming to get a permit which seems costly to the county and not worth it. I am still seeing 5-acre plots of land for sale in the flats that are farmable and should not be permitted to have house on them. People are still getting around the building option. https://www.anacortesrealestateguide.com/listing/mlsid/185/propertyid/1997359/ https://www.anacortesrealestateguide.com/listing/mlsid/185/propertyid/1997358/
147. Increase in traffic and pollution; Let's keep the traffic off the roads
148. Increase in traffic, consumption of alcohol, noise
149. Increases revenue, folks have good experience in beautiful wedding venue they'll want to come back to the county to experience same venue or other revenue producing venues. That also supports non-specifically agricultural businesses; I already answered and your program lost it; Increases revenues and out-of-town folks will be back to experience in-season events and others d- helps all businesses.
150. It is not an accessory to Ag and will interfere with current ag production
151. It is not your property. The owners of the lands are the caretakers. I welcome the business this brings to our small businesses.; I don't think it is the counties right to get involved in any aspect of this. First Amendment.
152. It is too restrictive to take away another way for farmers to generate income on some of the most beautiful barns I've ever seen. The character of the Skagit Valley is sooo special. Why not share that with people looking to find a place for their most important day. It'll bring more awareness to this special area and help the commerce in our community.
153. It seems to me that allowing a wedding permit is inviting trouble. I support farmers 100% and would like to see them stay in business. I don't think farmers have enough free time to manage wedding facilities as that is an entirely different business requiring an entirely different set of skills. In my opinion this means employees or "owners" of the wedding facility would NOT be farmers.
154. It will be impossible to limit and monitor, and will detract from farming.; na - same as above and ditto for all comments below: protect farmland; na
155. It's all a matter of degree. I think that many diverse businesses can be a positive thing for the local economy but so much depends on scale. It's hard to answer strictly yes or no to this question.
156. it's beautiful countryside and any opportunity to showcase it should be utilized
157. It's more of a yes-no answer, but for me it's based on the size of the farm and its primary use. If the farm is too small and the yearly visitors result in harm to the soil and production of the farmed item, weddings and events should not be allowed on that farm.
158. It's not open to the public so a wedding feels different than true agritourism events

159. I've been to some farmland weddings and they are beautiful. There seemed to be little impact as the guests were not on the actual farmland.
160. I've lived 22 years in Bay View, right across the street from the community hall (ex-schoolhouse). this is used for receptions picnics etc. 99% of time the events are fine, occasionally loud music late at night but it's rare. not any negatives beyond that.
161. I've worked in the wedding industry here in Skagit County for over 12 years as well as lived here my entire life. My experience has been that the wedding venues in our local area are ran professionally and work alongside with neighboring farmers and have not impacted active farming practices or taken any farmland away. If anything, it is another opportunity to show off our beautiful Skagit Farmland.
162. Just weddings?? and what next?? One thing leads to another...
163. Land owners ought to be able to use their buildings and spaces for multiple purposes, especially because many farm activities are seasonal (early season, mid-season, late season, off season).
164. Large weddings will increase compaction of soil via vehicle parking & people walking to & from their cars.
165. Leave the county rules as they are now
166. Let people get married wherever the hell they want
167. Let's celebrate and promote our Ag business and add accessory uses - farmers markets, farm open-house events, weddings, private events. Introduce families to visit and enjoy/appreciate this historic and cultural group of hard working labor force
168. Limit size n frequency.
169. limited number of permits per year and limited number of guests would be acceptable
170. Limited permitting for weddings on non-farmable land
171. Many of the new agriculture advancements, such as the plastic wrapping of hay, has allowed many barns to remain empty and slowly begin the decay from lack of repairs. If the use was for a wedding, I could see no problem but rather an aid to maintaining the agriculture appearance of Skagit County.
172. Many of the valleys old dairy farm buildings are sitting unused as the dairy industry seems to be moving towards larger dairies. Special event areas offer alternatives for the owners of these building without destroying existing farmland. Why limit the numbers of events. Many people who rent a barn and accompanying buildings have never been in a farm setting. There is history in these facilities that can provide a better appreciation for farming to the non-farmers. When I go to wedding venues located in the valley at some existing farms it is interesting to view the barn style and structures.
173. Most of the historic barns in the valley are lost forever because of the lack of functionality for modern farming, but could be preserved if reutilized for an income that would fund maintenance."
174. Most people planning wedding in Skagit will book/shop/explore the area for event. Guests will also explore, shop and stay in the area. ; .
175. Most wedding venues do not want dust, spray or smells of commercial agriculture. Let's protect large scale commercial agriculture and food production over money and tourist activities. What happened to people getting married in churches? Churches are a great place for people to get married and most of them are in town. ; Weddings detract from large scale commercial agriculture and food production. Skagit County should focus on food production not money and tourists. What ever happened to people getting married in churches? Churches are a great place for people to get married and they are usually in town.
176. my explanation is that they should be allowed.

177. My response does not need additional explanation
178. Ned more info
179. No
180. No
181. no
182. No
183. no
184. No
185. No
186. No because government should not decide everything.
187. no explanation is necessary.
188. No They should be permitted in Farmlands and barns to allow advertisement
189. No- Weddings in beautiful and unique locations encourage people to return, vacation or even move to those locations
190. No weddings. It will disturb the land with cars and parking, deliveries, etc.
191. No, but conversions to wedding venues must be well controlled to protect primary farming interests.
192. No, if there is adequate parking for the wedding venue and it is an accessory to the farming and the venue is on an acre or less that revenue could help preserve the farmland.
193. No, if wedding facilities and use is an accessory to farming, what makes it different than other uses that qualify?
194. No, weddings should be allowed as a sphere of revenue; I believe weddings should be allowed
195. No, weddings should be allowed as a temporary use that may provide extra income to farm owners
196. No.
197. No.
198. No. I think these events should bring good economic success to the county. Visitors will spend at local businesses.
199. No. An existing barn or outdoor area should be an acceptable place to have a wedding. If necessary, limit the total number of events or the total number of guests per year. Farmland owners should be allowed to use their land and buildings as they see fit, so long as it doesn't permanently damage/impact the farmland.
200. no. Farms are not party places!
201. No. I believe this to be a reasonable activity (seeking a wedding in a rural setting) and find it difficult to see downsides as long as regulations exist regarding bathroom facilities to ensure that existing systems are not overwhelmed (such as requiring a certain density of porta potties).
202. No. Does not promote farming per say in our community.
203. No. I believe existing structures should be allowed to host events like weddings. However, I don't think that any new construction should take place on these lands for wedding venues with the exception of replacing/refurbishing existing structures.
204. No. It's not my decision to make where families want to get married.
205. No. The revenue would help farmers and surrounding communities.
206. no. too restrictive and perhaps unfair to farmers when extra income would be welcome
207. No. Weddings are a short term yet high revenue source of income.
208. No. You do not have to build schools or infrastructure for weddings. They make Skagit County a memorable place.
209. Nothing at this time
210. Number of people and timing of events can be controlled.
211. OK at the existing rural event locations, but adding more doesn't seem necessary
212. Old barns converted to wedding venues is genius. It not only preserves the building, it enhances the appearance and allows for the history of the building and farm to stay alive.
213. Once the wedding venue is established, it becomes the main focus of the owner, and any agricultural use is minimized. There are plenty of other places in the county to locate

wedding facilities. They are not consistent with the stated purpose of allowing agritourism.
214. One is free to do and if we don't hurt anybody. A wedding is a consequence of this value.
215. One of our kids was married at a farm in Skagit County. It appeared very low-impact to the environment.; One of our kids was married at a Skagit farm. Very nice and low impact to the environment.
216. Our infrastructure cannot accommodate large events and folks who want a wedding venue have a tendency to not like or understand the reality of farming.
217. Parking could be an issue so I would like to see smaller sized events.
218. People seek unique settings for weddings. One-time or occasional recurrent sites are likely to add to farm revenue. Depending on size (say greater than 25 people present), there could be low impact permitting which addresses things like event parking & sanitation concerns.
219. People should be allowed to use their property as they wish under certain rules and permits in a reasonable way
220. Please continue protecting the rural character of our protected farmlands! There are plenty of spaces where tourism can be implemented on the outskirts and still provide a similar experience
221. Plenty of places to have a wedding - no need to lose more farmland for this purpose.
222. Prohibitions against venues will neither promote the preservation of farmland nor increase the profitability of farmland. What it does is provide a false sense of power to land baron commodity growers that don't like traffic. If the venue files a Schedule F, then it's a farm and the county should PROMOTE not prohibit small businesses that collectively create more living wage jobs than extends off the farm and into the communities that support the infrastructure and tax base that allows us to remain farming in Skagit County.
223. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
224. see below
225. Should be up to the owner of the Farmland, not the government
226. Skagit Farmers are a rare breed: they are small relative to the traditional giant ag business across the nation. Special events could provide badly needed revenue and an opportunity to showcase the gemstone of Skagit county: our farmlands!
227. Small weddings should be allowed
228. Some farms have building/ barns not being used yet for storage during warm weather months. They could rent them out for weddings for extra \$ maybe towards crop animal supplies.
229. Sounds fine
230. Sounds like a significant economic generator that can help a farmer's bottom line. Yes, some common sense is needed to have it exist well with production farming, but we are capable of that.
231. temp. use is not an issue.
232. the amount of disruptive time caused by weddings is far too much for the gains made by neighboring properties
233. The number of visitors is not a high impact and wedding generate a good source of income.
234. The barn wedding industry is likely a fad that will fade.
235. The county and farming community has worked hard to keep farmland, farmland. We even fight off things that help the environment . So now we are ok giving up farmland for tourism? Does not make sense.
236. The current allowed use in 'some counties' should be the allowed use definition for all of 'farmland' in Skagit County. It is a reasonable and responsible compromise that promotes protection of farmland by instilling access and appreciation for preservation and stewardship by its users and promoters

237. The current system that allows limited weddings with a special use permit is a good one. It's fine to have a few weddings on a farm, but at the same time we don't need a bunch of "wedding factories."	has always been to maintain the best ag soils. Weddings need parking and space. Lots of it. This is not a best use of ag soils
238. The estimate of visitors is inaccurate. Temporary uses are limited in number and could be limited even more for weddings if there is a concern about the activity interfering with farming activities.; The key to compliance with the GMA is conversion of prime ag soils by ANY activity.	254. There are plenty of locations outside of the AG-NRL zone that would still allow the ag-experience - such as pleasant ridge Bayview ridge. allowing weddings venues results in loss of access for rotational crops to allow for grass for parking and may also impact the soil. it would also lead to scope creep.
239. The facilities should meet building and fire codes.	255. There can be a disruption to local communities if not managed well. Since most farm communities perhaps are early risers and hence late behavior might not be welcome. ; There can be a disruption to local communities if not managed well. Since most farm communities perhaps are early risers and hence late behavior might not be welcome.
240. The income from a wedding facility could keep most of a property's acreage in farmland. If the agrotourism was restricted to a small percentage of the property, it would mean most would have to stay in agriculture, and the small percentage developed for agrotourism could help sustain that farming.	256. There needs to be a balance. Large events provide the opportunity to educate the public on the value of farmland preservation.
241. The parking and other things takes away from farming the farmland. People are disrespectful to other properties and adjoining farms won't be able to farm while weddings are happening almost every weekend in the peak farming times.	257. There's nothing wrong with having weddings on farmland. Stay out of it.
242. The parking for wedding attendees will damage too much productive farmland.	258. There's a lot of emotion around weddings- high stress to have a perfect day. We in Ag cannot pick our day to be working in the fields or on the farm. There WILL be dust, noise, smells, and other activity taking place.
243. The perfect use for an old barn or farm building that is now mostly unused is a wedding or party! This option could bring in significant alternative income to the farm. It is the natural use for this type of structure in Skagit County. And there is currently a shortage of this type of structure available in the County.	259. These are temporary events and if properly permitted should have little or no impact on agriculture.
244. The phrasing of this question is terrible and too restrictive.	260. They have little impact on agriculture
245. The place should be an addition to the already current farming. Limited to just so many per year all the extra traffic and people should be limited. Not let it become a business , but a planned affair with guidelines. All infrastructures should be accessed and to make sure they are safe and can contain all the people who show up and not encroach on neighbor's property to park cars and strict rules about garbage and having food for the event.	261. They should be permitted depending on set limitations that provide farmland protection. Clear expectations and limitations about such events could be possible.
246. the property owner, unless there is a clear danger to the persons involved or the general public"	262. They should be permitted. You can't tell people what they can and can't do with property they own
247. The Skagit Valley is known worldwide for floriculture production. My family makes its living here producing flowers and foliage crops which are sold mainly to service events, such as weddings. Although I do not personally wish to set up a wedding venue, it seems like a logical form of agritourism for the Skagit Valley and could help boost sales for local producers. If adequate facilities such as parking are provided, these types of venues may in fact be less impactful to our roads, etc., because wedding events distribute smaller numbers of visitors across a wider stretch of the calendar than tulip festival, for example.	263. They should not be permitted on productive farmland.
248. The use of existing structures, such as barns, should be allowed as long as the activity doesn't affect the agricultural use of the land.	264. they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
249. The valley needs more large event venues. No one is getting married in the middle of a potato field - let people host in barns and lawns. Local hotels would benefit.	265. This decision should involve the landowner and whether the property can support weddings without damaging the farmland.
250. The wedding venue becomes the focus and not the farming. It's a business of its own. The amt of guests and traffic is not conducive to a rural area that is actively farming with tractors, cows and sheep often on the roadways being moved from area to area. Visitors at a wedding are not necessarily going to be respectful of neighboring farms	266. This is a harmless use of agricultural infrastructure, and the income so generated could help struggling farmers to remain farmers.
251. There are businesses that do this without permits. Why are they allowed. Look at just outside of Conway on Fir Island	267. This Question is loaded for a one-sided answer. Let people use existing buildings for events. As long as it is not taking away from farmable land.
252. There are enough facilities for wedding at present, no need to have more traffic in Ag areas.	268. Too high a people concentration.
253. There are places zoned AG-NRL that are no longer farmable or do not have great soils any longer. So, it depends. Goal is nothing on good viable soils; I understand small scale farmers are trying to find ways to make money, but the fight in Skagit	269. Too many people and cars at one time to be considered "accessory". Too loud for rural ag areas.
	270. Too many people, too commercial, too much damage to land, not a traditional farming activity; Not related to farming
	271. Too many people, too much noise, too much snooping on nearby properties, too much risk for kids and others to be injured on nearby properties; See earlier remarks re noise, interference, etc.; See below
	272. Too much of an impact on active farming equipment noise, smells, dust, equipment movement. Too much traffic.
	273. Too much possibility of influx of "investors" from California or foreign countries to purchase farms for other purposes or venues.
	274. too much traffic and resources impact on neighboring areas.
	275. Too much traffic on small roads
	276. Tourism brings money to our community.
	277. Tourist traffic is a huge problem during planting and harvest. The county should encourage alternate routes during harvest especially
	278. Traffic implications should be carefully considered.
	279. Traffic is already congested enough from the tulip seasons & effected wild life. by pollution. disruption. & Wear. are also concerning & are already a problem. There's no place public that's private anymore unless you are really rich & have your own land to escape too already enough.

280. Unnecessary traffic and congestion of area. Not fitting to farming. Odd, trendy activity. Keep weddings in urban areas.	could be re-purposed without damage to farming. No conversion of land to non-agricultural uses, also.
281. Using a barn for a wedding for the family owning the barn is private property and is probably allowed the same as using your home or yard. But renting it out to outsiders only causes more traffic in the area and more people wanting to live here who will not care about our farmland. The people of the world need our farmland. I am 83 and lived in Skagit County all my life. Please don't give any more of it away for any reason.	293. Wedding venues can be difficult to procure and a few more options would be nice. Being a short term even it could be of little impact on the farming practices. There would have to be some limits and restrictions of course.
282. We have The Vinery at Christianson's. There is a Wedding Venue on Fir Island just after the South Fork Bridge. That was a barn. So, we already have places and don't need any more.	294. wedding venues can provide an additional revenue source for a farm and may even provide a reason to maintain an older barn
283. We believe the outdoor weddings in AG/NRL zones allow people to connect with farmland and create a deeper understanding of rural life. They should be allowed if permitted as a special event and limited number of events and size of events, with proper infrastructure to support a wedding onsite	295. Wedding venues do not contribute to agriculture at all! I have a wedding venue that is contiguous to our farm. and now another wedding venue is built on the other side of our farm. The above statement says that wedding venues are not allow on farm ground. The owners of the venue being next to us said he does not need a permit. They say it is grandfathered in because the previous owner painted mgs at home. They are projecting 60 attendees and have only 4 parking spots. They want to park on our farm ground, and we will not allow it.
284. We have a house built in 1913 on 2-1/2 acres of agricultural zoning. It was broken away from a 200-acre farm, which is still being used in agriculture, so no loss of agriculture. Across the county road (also on the same deed) is riverfront that is zoned agriculture. None of it is able to be used in agriculture. We have snipped the fence between our rural reserve property so our cows can graze on the lawn, so it is used roughly in the zoning, but if we were to sell this parcel or put the parcel back in its residential use, it would not be used in agriculture. Is it possible to change the zoning? We would like to fix this property up and use it as a wedding venue and center for other groups. The planning department stipulated that the deed on this property (riverfront) would be used as nature trails and wildlife viewing platforms. Is this a designated use in agricultural zoning? Please respond to my questions, as I feel this is the ideal time to get answers to this sticky problem.	296. Wedding/event facilities and farming activities are incompatible activities. For example, spreading of manure, spray application of pesticides, and dust from tilling/harvest all are routine activities in ag production that can only be performed in certain weather conditions and specific times of the year, mainly April thru October when most weddings occur. Dust, smells, insects, and noise are all a byproduct of farming activities that are not conducive to a beautiful wedding or event. Farming can only be conducted on ag land, but weddings/events do not require ag land they can be located almost anywhere. In addition, holding events in ag zone will increase traffic on the narrow roads that farmers/workers have to use for moving equipment and accessing their fields.
285. We need to preserve farmland, not open more wedding venues.	297. Weddings - and other events - can be one more piece in having the income for a family to continue farming or simply staying in their home on farmland. Also, I don't see the harm in allowing it. Laws should be least restrictive. Up to 13,000 visitors brings a significant amount of money that could also be used to support our farming community.
286. We want people to come and learn about farming and agriculture and spend the day enjoying it and seeing why it's important to protect. We also want people to come spend the day and night here and shop and leave. Wedding industry supports so many single mothers and people who inherited farms and barns that are not farmers and still lease their land to farmers while supplementing their income with small events.	298. Weddings and events create a much need revenue for Skagit County. If they are held correctly and rules are followed, they will be a positive experience. The people that do not follow the rules should be cited and fined, but those of us that do follow the regulations should be allowed to proceed with the service.
287. Wedding and other similar events need to have some limitations to their size and quantities as they occur in the Ag-NRL zones.	299. Weddings are a chance for attendees to engage in farmlands and, hopefully, are encouraged to become farmland supporters.
288. Wedding events don't only happen at dedicated wedding venues, limiting the use in this way harms any agritourism business.	300. Weddings are a chance to expose unlikely individuals to the reality of farming - in a good way. They can also bring lots of money into the valley. If done right weddings can have minimal impact and also show off the valley.
289. Wedding events should be limited to a limited number of events per year. The events should still have appropriate sewage disposal and need public water. If music band is used needs to meet noise limits so not playing into late night.	301. Weddings are about building families and families are about farming. This will help instill a sense of preservation through the memories, photos, and new visitors to the location who may not have ever visited the site in the first place.
290. Wedding facilities in agricultural lands distract farmers from growing human consumption food crops. Partnerships where farmers supply fresh food to already established wedding facilities is reasonable. Not permitting weddings on working farms stops creeping change of land use.	302. Weddings are an activity that may take place under myriad zones and countless settings already. By calling weddings an acceptable Ag-use or misidentifying weddings as farmer activity is sleight of hand and detracts from focus on using farm land for farm yields.; Weddings can and do take place in myriad zones and settings already. Calling weddings an Ag-use or misidentifying weddings as a farm activity is a slight of hand and is clearly a disingenuous attempt to subvert true Ag-NRL activities into something else, even though profits can be made.; Weddings can and do take place in myriad zones and settings already. Calling weddings an Ag-use or misidentifying weddings as a farm activity is a slight of hand and is clearly a disingenuous attempt to subvert true Ag-NRL activities into something else, even though profits can be made.
291. Wedding facilities/events are inherently not related to agricultural production. The facilities, parking space required, and income generated are threats to commercial agriculture.	
292. Wedding venues are inherently large which makes them inappropriate in farming areas. Parking, again, is of major concern as is the increased traffic. I would modify my opposition if a shuttle system between wedding venues and town were implemented, banning parking otherwise. Under those circumstances, an existing structure such as a barn	

303. Weddings are an important component of agritourism. It builds a stronger emotional connection within the broader community and should be encourage. Interface issues are an obvious concern (spray applications, dust, noise, parking, etc.) - these issues could be mitigated with a stronger communication protocol and permission structure with neighboring operations. The freedom to farm needs to be protected on adjacent properties, but weddings should not be eliminated outright due to the potential for negative scenarios to unfold.
304. Weddings are compatible with agricultural lands used, as long as traffic, parking is managed and kept out of the way of farming uses. I am assuming that private events on farmland do not depend on re-development of farmland or farm supporting properties.
305. Weddings are fine. They offer the opportunity for owners to invest in restoring old barns.
306. Weddings are just another of life's events. Birthdays, wakes, bar mitzvahs, graduations are also examples of the celebrations of life. Do we go down a path of prohibiting life's celebrations? Or do we just "discriminate" against weddings? What if the participants don't call it a wedding, but a commitment ceremony? Ummm - enforcement!
307. Weddings are none of the county's business.
308. Weddings are not agricultural. They can be held in many, many places. Indoors or out. Allowing them will be difficult to enforce, and land on a particular farm would increasingly be taken away from agricultural uses.
309. Weddings are not held to celebrate farmland or rural living. All those guests are not coming to support what makes Skagit livable. An extra 6,000-13,000 people benefits the venue but not farmers.
310. Weddings are similar to other non-wedding gatherings that may have the same issues as size of event and available parking.
311. Weddings are very popular in barns etc. and would bring in more money. Plenty of parking usually too.
312. Weddings bring in a lot of revenue to the county
313. Weddings can be a fairly low impact way of generating income for an area. It should help reduce the amount of land sold for other purposes in order to make ends meet
314. Weddings can be a great revenue driver for farms. Maybe I put a limit to 4-6 weddings per year to reduce farmland impact
315. Weddings can be disruptive to the environment. Not all weddings. However there are some where guests and the wedding parties are careless. Noise, trash, traffic etc.
316. Weddings can provide much needed extra farm income which will allow farmers to keep their land. If farming becomes untenable in Skagit County, or if other potential uses become more profitable, there will be strong political pressure to change land use regulations to allow sub-division.
317. Weddings could be considered as agritourism and hence an accessory to the main farmland.
318. Weddings could be controlled use for agritourism under some conditional permits.
319. Weddings could be permitted under strictly controlled conditions designed to protect affected land from degradation by parking, reception areas, tents, etc..
320. Weddings could help to supplement income and preserve farmland
321. Weddings do not interfere with the goal of keeping Skagit rural/ag oriented.
322. Weddings held in farm/barn venues could potentially bring in more tourists/ travel/agritourism.
323. Weddings incorporate buildings on properties that would otherwise have to be demolished and provide income to help maintain farmland and keep spaces looking beautiful. People who attend weddings require local accommodations which help support local businesses.

324. Weddings may be a permitted use under some circumstances, depending on the main agri use and the agritourism direction. I would not eliminate weddings out of hand as the question implies.
325. Weddings may bring additional income to farmers
326. Weddings may provide revenue for ag landowners in seasons or situations when farming isn't a viable revenue source. Weddings may also supplement revenue during a season when traditional ag use is occurring
327. Weddings need to be in a church or at the courthouse!
328. Weddings often bring in too many people, requiring parking, sanitary facilities and other services not compatible with our rural county.
329. Weddings should be allowed
330. Weddings should be allowed
331. weddings should be allowed. they bring people to our farms and county. hopefully spending money and helping our economy
332. Weddings should be allowed as long as it doesn't interfere with the farming
333. weddings should be allowed as long as primary use remains farming
334. Weddings should be allowed at all locations to the extent that it does not increase the venues footprint at the expense of arable and farmable property.
335. Weddings should be allowed under special permit.
336. Weddings should be allowed, as long as they're conducted in compliance with the prevailing laws and do not illegally impede neighbors' legal use of surrounding property.
337. Weddings should be permitted as it can be an additional income for the owner and additional tourism money for the county.
338. weddings should only be permitted with the landowners' approval
339. Weddings, as stated w/in 1 acre is agreeable.
340. Well planned weddings, with adequate parking/transportation planning (i.e. carpooling to minimize the # of vehicles) should be allowed.; Well-planned weddings should be allowed, with a focus on carpooling to minimize the # of vehicles and parking needed.
341. What a person does with his/her property should be their business, and if they want to have a wedding, they should be able to; however, parking, road impact, etc. must be addressed as I have seen many examples of congestion/delays with county roads from other farm events. The local residents should not be inconvenienced just for a money grab by landowners.
342. What would be the value of restricting the use as a wedding venue? Allowing it under permit would ensure that proper sanitation measures are in place such as Porta potties et . also, with the rising costs of farming, feed, fuel, seed, labor these augmented income streams help keep small family farms viable. This helps limit large corporate farming, monoculture, and unsustainable farming practices.
343. What's a wedding hurt
344. White dresses and tractor dust don't mix
345. Why not?
346. Why not?
347. x
348. Yes
349. yes
350. Yes
351. Yes
352. Yes
353. Yes
354. Yes- but could be allowed in rural areas with some farming such as flowers.
355. Yes, and what next? Rock concerts?? Vehicle show weekends? Baby showers? Political Party shindigs? Or any other festivals that have nothing to do with agriculture??

356. Yes, it is the property owner's land, and they should be able to do with it as they see fit. Is a great opportunity to get additional money for the property owner and expose the public to the beautiful farmlands of Skagit County.
357. Yes, it was zoned this way for a reason. Keep it that way. Weddings bring traffic, trespassers, and litter. Nothing good comes if it.
358. Yes, leave as is.
359. Yes, the wedding industry is huge and there is a lot of money in it. We could lose valuable farmland and valuable farms from outsiders coming in and purchasing ground to put up wedding venues.
360. Yes. Agriculture should be the main focus. One cannot do ag and weddings. They are different from each other. It would draw attention from food production to humoring brides (who can rarely be humored on their wedding day). Having said that, I was not a perfectionist bride, but it is all too

common to have things perfect and farms aren't the place for that).
361. Yes. It impacts the farming schedule in a negative way. If a farmer needs to spread fertilizer, they should not be working it around a neighboring venue. It is the primary role of this valley. Furthermore, sound impacts of wedding music on Friday and Saturday nights all summer are not wanted. The sound travels so far across the flats it's unreal. We have a real issue with this— we had an ongoing issue of sound travel from produce lane that could be heard all the way to Bradshaw and down to Avon Allen and beavermarsh by the way it Carries across the flats.
362. Yes. don't want more traffic and people in the county.
363. Yes, these events have nothing to do with agriculture. Only a "nature setting" is desired; this can be had in different ways.

More respondents were supportive of allowing weddings by special events and limited in size and with appropriate infrastructure, especially those who do not own farmland. There was a majority of those owning farmland (nearly two thirds) that felt it was an appropriate direction.

7. Weddings should be allowed if permitted as a special event and limited in number of events and size of events, and proper infrastructure to support a wedding is onsite.

Response	Total Number	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	312	67%	63%	58%	85%	68%
No, I do not agree	152	33%	37%	42%	15%	32%
Total	464	100%	144	12	39	265

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=464 respondents total, with 460 sharing their ownership status

Weddings, Special Event, please explain:

1. "Designated wedding sites only - set up to handle the number of guests and vehicles / waste so it does not interfere with farming	8. "Proper infrastructure" needs to be existing, not allow new facilities/infrastructure added that consume valuable farmland.
2. "I don't understand your statement. to me it negates the previous question. Is the county now requiring a costly permit to have a wedding or event? How is this going to be controlled?	9. "Same as above
3. "I think weddings should be allowed on someone's property and they should not be limited in number or size of the events. If the County is really concerned about not losing farmland to wedding facilities then maybe one bit of regulation that makes sense would be not allowing weddings in empty fields over 10 or 20 acres. If there is a barn and some outbuildings next to a person's house that they want to use to host weddings that should be fine.	10. "That is exactly what I was thinking.
4. "It cannot be the primary purpose of the farm.;	11. A private wedding held on private property is of no business of the local authorities to regulate. Commercial for hire wedding venues should be regulated to ensure no long-term impacts on Ag land status.
5. "Many farms in the county have ""excess"" buildings or infrastructure that is used intermittently for farm operations. These can often be used for events on a part time or occasional basis. Perhaps a periodical site-survey and event use plan update could ease the process so owners know they can handle X-sized events y number of times a year.	12. above."
6. "No explanation needed, see the explanation	13. ABSOLUTELY UNNECESSARY USE
7. "Number" and "size" are way too vague.	14. Adding weddings would be a good addition to current agri-business, but there should be limits on the number of venues.
	15. Again, this type of event should not be governed.
	16. Again you would limit small family farms from additional income to survive then only corporate farms would be in Skagit; Again you would limit small farms from other income streams. Only corporate farms would exist In Skagit
	17. again, i think there are enough venues to support the need.
	18. Again, I'm confused by what to click for my answer if I think it's fine if the farmer's daughter wants to hold a wedding on the farm, and I'm not in favor of needing a lot of special permits and "proper infrastructure to support".
	19. Again, scale and scope are everything. Generally, I believe that farmland should be preserved - there is plenty of other land around to support agri-related ventures.

20.	again, they should be allowed. i do not agree with using this format to set limits or regulations re: the events. that should be a collaborative discussion with stake holders and regulators.
21.	Again, they should do what they like with their property
22.	Again, use of existing buildings. Limited number of party and follows a noise ordinance.; Again, using existing building for event, doesn't take away any farmland, maximum guest number adhered to, follows noise ordinance
23.	Again, weddings if done properly, are a happy event that would open people's eyes to the beauty of the Skagit Valley. All those attending will be spending money in the Skagit coming and going from the wedding.
24.	again, with permission of owner
25.	Agree
26.	Agree have control on size of venue make sure everything is in order
27.	Agree, need proper infrastructure to support. I.e., public water, sufficient wastewater disposal, etc.
28.	Already did with the question before answers. They both are asking the same question.
29.	Although it would be great if the county kept its nose out of landowners' business!
30.	As a taxpayer I wish to use my land as I wish without permits.
31.	As above.
32.	As long as there are permits that protect the farmers it should be ok.
33.	As stated above if the event does not negatively impact the surrounding area.
34.	Big events require adequate water and restrooms proportional to the number of guests. I'm of mixed mind about legislated limitations on event frequency. On the one hand, too frequent events may be noisome to neighbors. On the other, I think that government is to some extent a self-promoting enterprise that seeks to add ever more complexity to the law and is ever more intrusive into the lives of citizens.
35.	but why all the limitations? Let them have weddings.
36.	Currently, no enforcement of "special permits" exists. Once the gate is open, there's no closing it. There are a variety of illegally converted properties all over the county, continuing to provide avenues for conversion of farmland is not acceptable
37.	Do not allow
38.	don't have an opinion
39.	Duh
40.	Guidelines for safety needed
41.	Helps build appreciation for rural farming areas. Open to school groups expands education
42.	I agree that all sites should be mindful of neighbors, but I think existing rules (all tulip parking used to be street only!) are adequate, and the tendency for government to overregulate would discourage entrepreneurship.
43.	I agree that permits should be required for larger events, but also feel that small private weddings that are equivalent in scale to other types of private gatherings should be allowed without any special permitting.
44.	I agree that size should have limitations, but I don't agree in limiting the number of events.
45.	I agree that weddings should be allowed to both supplement farm income and encourage the understanding of farming by the general public.
46.	I agree with the statement
47.	I agree. There needs to be proper permitting and licensing to host these kinds of events. A lack of oversight could create serious issues.
48.	I assume that the weddings are not being hosted on Ag-NRL zoned property.
49.	I believe "scope creep, or "exceptions" to the rule may occur

50.	I can think of no compelling argument for why weddings or other party events should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
51.	I do agree proper infrastructure should be a thing for public safety,; I do agree there should be some consideration for proper infrastructure in order to keep the public safe.
52.	I don't believe there should be a limit. I think there should be no restrictions and allowed
53.	I don't agree with special event and limited number and size of events. I do agree that there should be a requirement for proper facilities (kitchen, bathrooms, etc.) but not arbitrary requirements (chapel, dance floor, or other traditional but not required aspects of wedding ceremonies)
54.	I don't fully understand the implications of being 'permitted', but I believe managing the quantity/size of events makes sense. I do not support the idea that extensive and very detailed permitting requirements are necessary.
55.	I don't know why the number of events and size of events needs to be limited.
56.	I don't like the idea but realize that this will likely be approved. Strict, enforceable limits should be put in place, limiting size, duration, sanitation, access (vehicle and other) and impact on neighboring properties.
57.	I don't think farmland should be converted to parking lots for special events such as weddings. Limiting size is one way to control that.
58.	i don't think the county should limit any wedding venues
59.	I feel any wedding use would be abused
60.	I fully support the first portion of this statement. However, I would want more detail on the definition of 'Proper infrastructure'
61.	I have already attended several special events held on Farms (fundraisers, EDASC, etc.). Literally a blessing.
62.	I suppose weddings could be permitted as a onetime event with restrictions on size and if adequate parking and access were in place.
63.	I think it's important to limit number of events if neighboring properties are affected by the noise, traffic, etc.
64.	I think those requirements can be reasonable.
65.	I think weddings should be allowed without these restrictions
66.	I why am this necessary
67.	I would valet park cars at a wedding in Skagit & help out. It's noisy for neighbors. people would get drunk & through trash everywhere. even cigarettes in the pond. unimaginable. Lots of carbon to breath too from all the vehicles close to the venue or neighbors.
68.	I'm almost afraid to say yes, but I did. Traffic is a big issue as well. The County has done a poor job of follow through on traffic flow issues. Just look what was done at the Amazon distribution facility. Where's the road from there out to Higgins Airport Road that was in the original plan? The tiny turn lane added on Peterson is totally inadequate.
69.	I'm ok with this, as long as it is local folks who live and work in the local community
70.	If a farmer has property infrastructure, like parking, I think it could benefit all.
71.	If other places are constrained by the issues of permitting, why is this does not apply to not all made to use the permitting for all.
72.	I'm not sure what is meant by ""proper infrastructure"" as stated in this question but if you mean septic systems to accommodate large events, I don't think that is necessary as long as port-a-potties are available. "
73.	In general, I would agree with this but still this wording allows for open ended opportunities to develop the infrastructure under the flag of limited venue and support.
74.	Increase of traffic, consumption of alcohol, noise
75.	It seems like a good idea to offer weddings on permit basis; I can understand occasional family weddings, but there needs

to be a process to make sure they don't become a business that takes over farmland
76. It's all about being a good neighbor and not a problem to the farming community. A lot would depend on if this is an infrequent family/friend ceremony or as an ongoing business, and how travel to and from and event noise would affect the neighboring properties. If you allow weddings, then the farmers become a "nuisance" to the wedding facility THAT is a problem as farmers and farm zoning was there first. Farmers need to be able to farm period. I also understand that helping farmers financially with side businesses can also help them survive. There isn't a set answer for this.
77. It's opening up a Pandora's box for non-farming industry.
78. Just help protect the rural feel of Skagit
79. Keep farmland farmland -its precious
80. Landowners ought to be able to use their buildings as often as they are able to, since the spaces may already be for multiple purposes, especially because many farm activities are seasonal (early season, mid-season, late season, off season).
81. Landowners should be able to use their barn for events under special circumstances (friend/family/community events) but not for regular income as a venue.
82. Leave the current regulations as they are.
83. Let people get married wherever the hell they want
84. let the businesses decide what they can or cannot handle.
85. Let the property owner make that decision.
86. Let's keep weddings, concerts etc. to specifically designated venues.
87. Limiting the number of events seems unnecessary and difficult and expensive to control. Proper infrastructure is appropriate
88. Limiting the scope to infrastructure helps manage local expectations.
89. Limits reduce potential issues with farmland
90. Low impact activity.
91. maybe a yearly permit, no size or number restrictions
92. Mostly agree. Not sure it would be easy to usefully define what as "special event" is, so instead think a better approach is limiting some combination based on number of events and size of events.
93. New agriculture developments have allowed the plastic wrapping of hay, to make the barns formerly used, to remain empty. Instead of the slow rot of a barn unused to a barn shiny and bright, because it would be used for an auction or for a wedding.
94. No
95. No
96. No
97. No business of the government.
98. No comment
99. No explanation needed
100. No government should not interfere with business at this level
101. No limit
102. No limits. It's expensive to maintain building. Keep it more affordable for attendees when they can host as many as they can.
103. No weddings allowed on actively farmed lands.; Only on unfarmable land should weddings be permitted.
104. No weddings on agricultural zoned parcels.
105. NO WEDDONG VENUES!
106. No, it will eventually lead to bigger and not better.... the bride will complain about the smell, the groom will complain about the parking, the family will complain about the dust or mud....
107. No, we have already had these rules set in place and no one follows them. For example, Maplehurst, salt barn, etc.
108. No. Weddings can be at churches, parks and other venues but let's leave the farms out of that. Unless the farm owner wants to do it for their own family. No revenue.

109. No. don't want more traffic and people.
110. Nope. Same as above; Same reason as above...no
111. not an agricultural use
112. Not farming related activity; Not related to farming
113. Not too big or too often in deference to the neighbors unless on a remote part of property
114. Nothing at this time
115. Obviously, I think use of farmland for weddings is a bad idea, but I can conceive of restrictions that could minimize negative impact and allow farm owners the option
116. One purpose of exclusive agricultural zoning is preventing more profitable land uses (such as wedding venues) from bidding up the cost of agricultural land to such an extent that farmers can no longer obtain and farm the land profitably and hastening the conversion of land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses. When effectively implemented exclusive agricultural zoning decouples the market for agricultural land from the market for non-agricultural land and ensures that the value of agricultural land is determined by the land's potential for agricultural output rather than its potential use for non-agricultural purposes. Allowing wedding venues and other commercial activities on agricultural land will undermine the effectiveness of Skagit County's exclusive agricultural zones.
117. only if they are incidental - infrequent- very very limited. I oppose the creation of a "wedding venue" for profit in the Ag zone.
118. Over-saturation already.
119. Parking is a priority concern. Parking vehicles contaminates the soil so a limited and designated parking space must be required.
120. Part of me says yes and part of me says no. What type of permits? Would there be a yearly permit fee, or would it be a one-time permit such as a building permit? Parking would not be a problem and the impact on the neighborhood would be minimal. I would think that the amount of money we would have to invest in this would be its own regulator.; Part of me says yes, and part of me says no. What do the permits look like, a one-time type like a building permit or a yearly permit. I would think that the amount of money we would have to invest in this project would be its own deterrent. The parking would not be a problem and the impact on the community would be minimal. There are two houses on Pressentin Rd, ours and the house in question. Pressentin Rd is a dead-end road, not a through street and it is paved passed both houses and then turns into gravel.
121. permits with restrictions
122. Please see my comment to the preceding question.
123. Poorly worded question!!! I agree that weddings should be allowed, and I do not agree that there should be these restrictions.
124. Proper infrastructure for a wedding could lead to large structures, access, parking
125. Properly regulated, weddings should not pose a problem. But a free for all would be disruptive on country roads.
126. Restrictions only on the capacity of the property, not the number of events.
127. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
128. Rules around size, frequency, and infrastructure for wedding would ensure things are handled responsibly and impacts are considered.
129. Same as above response
130. Same as above.
131. Same as above...as long as wedding venues do not adversely impact neighbors.
132. Same as explanation to pervious question. Permitting process could be easily abused.
133. Same as my answer to previous question.

134. Same response as above. I would support a max of 10 events per year and max size of 75 people, but I know that would never be approved as the limit, so no.
135. Same response, let's keep the focus on the farming and help farmers to survive by farming their land
136. Same to the previous comment. If the wedding/event is regulated by the county to ensure the farm is able to still act as a working farm, then I feel it is a safe option for a form of agritourism.
137. see above
138. See above
139. see above
140. see above -
141. See above answer; See comment above.
142. See above comment about conversion of land and traffic.
143. See above comment.
144. See above comment. Only limit if the number of birthday parties, etc. are limited. If weddings are considered an absolute scourge on a community, then why not birthday parties? What is the difference? Graduation parties - wow - they can be bigger than weddings.
145. See above comment. Thoughtfully regulated this would become a revenue stream that largely operates outside the sight of most valley residents. The main impact I would expect to see is more patrons at restaurants and wine tasting rooms. This may require venues to offer shuttles and or improved public transit. Drinking while intoxicated must be actively discouraged.
146. See above comments.
147. See above.... how about give a certain amount of the profit made from having a wedding on ag land go to farmland conservation??
148. See answer above
149. See prior response
150. See response above
151. See response to prior question.
152. should be accessory to the ag use and should not remove land from ag to accommodate the weddings
153. Should be allowed as long as the farmable land is still being used for production farming. No need for Temporary or special event permits.
154. size and frequency are important. Enforcement of the rules will be necessary!
155. Size limitations and proper infrastructure are likely a good idea, but I don't see why limiting the number of events is, given that the other two are fulfilled.
156. Some regulation is necessary.
157. Sounds fine
158. Special Events including Weddings are a way for a local farm or business to show off what they do. Farm to Table events have become particularly more interesting as you can see where your food come from. This will create LIFELONG relationships between consumer and business. In the end supporting the business for a lifetime, and the guest spread the word, which is the best kind of marketing!
159. Specific guidelines are important and should be allowed.
160. the advantage of weddings in the farmland is not a good practice for agritourism
161. The choice should be the wedding party
162. The County already permits weddings as temporary events. Additional criteria can be added to limit duration, hours of activities, size in area and in visitor size, parking, infrastructure requirements (porta-potties, water, etc.), or other services needed to NOT infringe on any commercial farming activity. Use existing temporary criteria and make them respond better to the needs of farming activities. Ask farmers what they do and do not want to have happen in their neighborhoods and make it possible to revise or delete these permissions if there is interference or conflicts with the changes.

163. The county can't even keep dairy farms from becoming landscaping businesses or asphalt recycling yards. If someone says they have the infrastructure, and their customers agree then let the economics, weather, and the market decide the size and number of events allowed.
164. The details of size and number should primarily be worked out between neighbors. Regulatory language that anticipates all potential issues and concerns is not possible. If neighbors agree, permit restrictions should not be an obstacle.
165. The farm is primarily a farm, and the wedding business should not interfere with the main function of the property. Vast renovations rendering farmed land no longer used for farming should not be permitted.
166. The landowner should have the right to decide what site can support.
167. The venue needs to be adequate to serve the event, and reduce the environmental impact that event could have
168. There are already enough wedding venues in the county and limits need to be placed on them as well as any new venues receiving a permit.
169. There are plenty of wedding venues already. This permitting will either cost the county a great deal to process and regulate or it will have such poor oversight that the requirement will be laughable.
170. There is always someone who will take advantage of a policy and restrictions should be clear.
171. There needs to be a protective oversight process to protect agriculture operations occurring in the area.
172. There should be no limit on the number of events allowed
173. There should be reasonable limits so that farm workers don't have to contend with weddings every weekend. Also, weddings should not disrupt farming activities that may be smelly is require the space.
174. They are a special event and should be treated as such and they need to have the infrastructure to be able to perform the duties to the public.
175. They should be allowed as an accessory to a profitable agricultural enterprise
176. They should not be restricted if done IN FULL HARMONY with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint.
177. they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
178. This can be a supplemental income for farmers and as long as there is not any disruption to the farmland itself, it's neighbors or wild habitat it can be more affordable for some people. There would have to be a limit of guests and they would need to abide by noise bylaws; Yes
179. This could open the door for unknown increased amounts of people and over-use of resources. Who would get to make these choices? I'll bet it would not be me or my neighbors.
180. This depends on location and venue management.; Permitting events has no effect on my ability to run my farm as I need. The objection to venues is their ability to impede farming activities, permits don't solve this.
181. This doesn't really sound ag related, just using land for a beautiful space.
182. This is a year-round business. I do not understand why you want to limit the events. Business owners know what is right and what works for their location. If they are not responsible and do not have the 'proper infrastructure' in place, their business will fail, and I guess they will learn a lesson. But give them a chance to succeed.
183. This should adequately protect the farmland function as mentioned in my comments to the previous question.
184. Under no circumstances should weddings be permitted, same reasons as above.; na
185. Unfortunately, proper infrastructure is interpreted differently throughout our population. If someone wants to provide a

wedding venue with porta potties and yurts, then so be it. When the County decides to get involved and require utility installs "water availability - which runs damn short in this county thanks to the Swinomish", Development Applications, Roads built via Road Standards, Engineering and Consultants - it will be unlikely, to many landowners want to take on the challenge.
186. We don't need wedding venues on farms; I am unclear of the connection between farming and weddings
187. We don't want the same lot having a wedding every other day our rural roads aren't meant to handle that kind of traffic
188. We should not limit the number of weddings because each wedding provides an income opportunity to maintain the property.
189. Wedding and Event venues should be allowed in all areas of Skagit County and be held to the same standards and regulations.
190. Wedding and other similar events need to have some limitations to their size and quantities as they occur in the Ag-NRL zones.
191. Wedding planners can find other outside venues in parks, lakes, and family private homes. Farmland is not necessary.
192. Weddings (and other events) are a wonderful opportunity for people both from within Skagit County and from outside our area to experience the beauty of this area. Events are also an excellent way to supplement income for small and mid-sized farms, and help keep ag land viable.
193. Weddings are only one of numerous possibly large, high intensity uses that need not use farmland. Farmland is too valuable to be converted to other uses. There are plenty of appropriate spaces that don't consume farmland.
194. Weddings are revenue that attract people to our valley. This benefits many businesses in the area. Hotels, restaurants, retail. But some control on size and number of events could help with overcrowding of rural areas.
195. Weddings are similar to other events that are allowed
196. Weddings as low-impact to the environment are OK.
197. Weddings as well as other venues for reunions, family gatherings, etc. should be allowed if not building additional non farming structures or reducing farmland capability to accommodate.
198. Weddings can and do take place in myriad zones and settings already. Calling weddings an Ag-use or misidentifying weddings as a farm activity is a slight of hand and is clearly a disingenuous attempt to subvert true Ag-NRL activities into something else, even though profits can be made.
199. weddings can be done for example at hillcrest park
200. Weddings can be very simple and not need infrastructure to provide setting that may be desired by the couple.; Infrastructure in not necessarily needed if desired by the couple.
201. Weddings must be planned in such a way as not to infringe upon the operations of neighboring farms or rural homes.
202. Weddings should be allowed - with reasonable life/health requirements. Not limited to number/size.; Weddings should be allowed with little restrictions. If a wedding venue doesn't do a good job, their business will fail. Let the market decide how successful a business is.
203. Weddings should be allowed anywhere at any time.
204. Weddings should be allowed at locations to the extent that it does not increase the venues footprint at the expense of arable and farmable property.
205. Weddings should be allowed if it has oversight.
206. weddings should be allowed. not permitted or restricted n size or quantity
207. Weddings should be an acceptable use of ag land as long as the the support infrastructure is either permanently installed or brought in as a per event basis.
208. Weddings should not be allowed on agricultural zoned land, period.

209. Weddings should only be allowed for family members of the owners, and should be limited in scope to fit the stated use of agribusiness.
210. Weddings would bring additional income to farmers
211. What would be the proper infrastructure? Would it put farming in conflict?
212. When I type my explanation, and click comment, it disappears.
213. Why a special permit. The devil is in the details, whether it's allowed through a special permit or not.
214. Why are we only talking about weddings? Why are we not talking about conventions, funerals, graduation parties?
215. Why put a limit on the number of weddings? Those who have taken the time and money to develop such venues should not be restricted to the number of events that they can provide.
216. Why would you limit the number of events? I fail to see the correlation between weddings and farm production. I do, however, agree that proper infrastructure be available...including access for disabled people and senior citizens (reasonable accommodation only)
217. Will be too difficult to control where people park and impact on farmland.
218. With some control weddings can bring in revenue for Ag-business as well as be a great form of tourism
219. x
220. Yes
221. yes
222. Yes
223. Yes
224. Yes
225. yes
226. yes
227. Yes
228. Yes
229. Yes
230. Yes
231. Yes
232. yes
233. Yes
234. Yes
235. yes
236. Yes
237. Yes
238. Yes Again they should be permitted in Farmlands and Barns to allow advertisement
239. Yes however there is a lot of flood land as farmland here and new facilities should not be built on farmlands to allow for it. Our family has had built and break down weddings in fields using tents generator etc. that didn't require special buildings.; Farmlands that flood(correction)
240. Yes, limited to size of location
241. Yes, as long as the facilities used are an accessory to farming.
242. Yes, as stated above
243. Yes, but that tents and porta-potties are deemed proper infrastructure. I feel that a property owner's rights exceed the governments policing powers if they do not pose any danger or threats of danger. A middle ground is needed now in all aspects of relationships between government and the populous.
244. Yes, I agree, the additional source of revenue may help support small farms
245. Yes, I agree. The venue should be licensed and have the appropriate sanitary and safety rules. I do not think that there should be a limit on the number and size of the events.
246. Yes, let people gather in rustic spaces but no construction of permanent structures for events.
247. Yes, this kind of limitation is needed to protect agricultural use.

248. Yes, weddings should be allowed as a temp use to provided extra income to farm owners
249. Yes. Maybe we could have a requirement at every event explaining the goals of Skagit county with respect to the designated agriculture lands that visitors could read. It could explain how we want to keep the land for farming and that many help promote consumers buying produce from our valley which is a win win.
250. Yes. No reason why a wedding shouldn't be able to take place in a farm.
251. yes. reasonable parameters to protect the main purpose of the land - farming
252. Yes. Additional income for the property owners and surrounding communities.
253. Yes. An excellent business opportunity for the county.
254. Yes. I agree. I think neighbors should be protected from complaints associated w farming. And have some protections from burdens such as noise and traffic
255. Yes. If all in the wedding party agree.

256. Yes. If all the rules are followed then weddings should be allowed.
257. Yes. Limiting the number helps preserve farmland while allowing farmers to gain revenue.
258. Yes. Please see my remarks to the preceding question.
259. Yes. Similar answer as above.
260. Yes; Shouldn't need a permit, someone's land, they should be able to have a get together, no matter if someone is getting married or not. We aren't talking about Woodstock here, we talking about a family getting together.
261. You should not even ask for a permit. The First Amendment prohibits government from abridging "the right of the people peaceably to assemble." ; The First Amendment prohibits government from abridging "the right of the people peaceably to assemble."
262. You wouldn't limit how many customers a la Conner restaurant could have so why do it with weddings? It's unfair to target a specific industry.

Tasting Rooms and Restaurants

There was a slight majority of respondents that wanted to continue policies that do not allow tasting rooms or restaurants on agricultural or rural lands.

8. Skagit County should continue its current policies and codes that do not allow tasting rooms or restaurants on land zoned for agricultural or rural residential purposes.

Response	Total Number	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	245	54%	53%	36%	56%	54%
No, I do not agree	209	46%	47%	64%	44%	46%
Total	454	100%	140	11	39	259

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=454 respondents total, with 449 sharing their ownership status

Tasting Rooms/Restaurants, explain

1. " winery's with a tasting room . does not take up any more farm land and can help the business survive.
2. "A huge burden to farmers, brewers even fishermen is the cost of getting their product to the customer. More direct sales means more money to the owners, the tax base and possibly to a savings to the customer. In a world taken over by corporations the little guy can't compete on cost especially with tiered pricing and tax subsidies undercutting the little guy. All they have is their story and the sincerity and honesty of a hand crafted product. The more the customer gets to experience that the better sales will be. It's one of the greatest marketing tools the little guy has left to compete with since pricing is almost always out of reach unless they can keep the middle men out of it. Just an example a salmon fisherman may get a dollar a pound for his salmon from the distributors by the time it goes through all the middle men you are looking at 30 dollars a pound at Hagens. Now imagine if that same fisherman could get ten or fifteen dollars a pound? Small companies reinvest locally through hiring, expansion, upgrading equipment etc. that money has a much higher chance of staying local.
3. "Grape growers, wineries and brewers on a farm should be able to profit without tasting rooms or restaurants. Or use land that is not

4. "I think tasting rooms for crops grown on the farmers land should be allowed. What better marketing?
5. "keep them out of the rural areas
6. "Same as above
7. "The above is not true. I have attended weddings, restaurant dinners, and wine tasting, etc.
8. "Yes, preservation of arable soil is the focus for agriculture.
9. "You have a policy in place. Leave it alone
10. .
11. A tasting room isn't a restaurant. There should be a policy to allow reasonable uses where they make sense (for example, a vineyard should be allowed some sort of tasting space to sample the product that comes from their grapes. A dairy should be allowed a space where milk, cheese, ice cream, etc. could be purchased and consumed.)
12. Again - might be managed with restrictions on size, hours or dates of operation.
13. Again, a diverse economy is important. I don't want to live in a tourist trap, but we aren't talking about resorts, amusement parks, or entertainment here like you find on a commercial strip near amusement parks or a coastal community with a nice public beach. All that said, I am a strong supporting of maintaining farmlands and commercial ag production. I just see value in having a variety of tourist driven activities/events

	that locals can benefit from too in many ways. The rural weddings I have attended were both for lifelong Skagit County residents. ; I don't think we should limit folks who live in ag resource or rural zones.
14.	Again, drawing customers from neighboring counties to a vineyard with tasting room and restaurant sounds like a good way to increase agri-tourism.
15.	Again, if they are following guidelines, they should be allowed to use their property to make revenue.
16.	Again, it's not taking away farmland to do these activities in a barn. With the wheat and micro beer economy this could be great to draw visitors.
17.	again, small ones are fine but realize this is boom and bust
18.	again, these are further revenue streams for existing farms
19.	Agree, save the farmland at all costs!
20.	Agree. no real need for tasting rooms on ag. land
21.	Agriculture lands are important to preserve and tasting rooms or restaurants can have a huge negative infrastructure impact on farmland.
22.	Allow agritourism. Encourage agritourism.
23.	allow as long as it doesn't take away from farm land.
24.	Allowing restaurants and tasting rooms would allow rural agricultural producers and landowners to sell their product and have more flexibility to diversify their income and profit more from their land.
25.	Allowing tasting rooms and restaurants on land zoned for agricultural or rural residential purposes is inconsistent with goals to protect agricultural land.
26.	Allowing these is a gateway to more parking lots, buildings and loss of agricultural land.
27.	An agriculture zoned land that produces say grapes should be able to have a tasting room for a winery.
28.	As long as neighbors are not impacted, it should be allowed. Noise, parking, traffic, waste management, etc. must be part of the venue responsibility. If it doesn't adversely impact neighbors or livestock, restaurant and/or tasting rooms should be allowed.
29.	As long as temporary/accessory tasting rooms are allowed and permits for those aren't too difficult to obtain.
30.	As long as you are using food from your farm it should be allot
31.	As new younger farmers try to start a businesses connected to the land, I want to ensure they have tools to be profitable and share their products with the public. The public is looking for experiences where they can connect with farmers.
32.	Avoid the Woodinville problem-dozens of ""fronts"" for eastern Washington vineyards.
33.	Bringing people to the farms allows them to spend money in our community.
34.	Build the connection between customers and their source for food. Convert them to repeat customers who return to the valley.
35.	But, produce tasing (e.g. cheese or berry) of short duration within existing structures and parking should be ok.
36.	can't lose any more farmland
37.	Continue to protect farmland as current policy states.
38.	count the wine growers on Skagit farmlands /ZERO
39.	Crowds, parking issues, lack of sanitary facilities.
40.	Curious under what circumstances the tasting room at Eagle Haven Winery is allowed to exist? That would seem an acceptable use.
41.	Currently the code is very shortsighted. Allow these uses. It diversifies income streams.
42.	Dining and tasting destinations attract an entirely different clientele. They are repeat customers, wedding parties and guests are not
43.	disagree, I believe that tasting rooms and restaurants can exist while not taking away ag land
44.	Disagree. This sounds to me a little old-fashioned and based on precedent rather than informed on current societal trends. If someone wants to have a tasting room or restaurant on

	their farm then what is the problem? I think it would be a very small minority that would ever undertake such a thing.
45.	Disagree. Orchards, vineyards, grains and dairy for example should be highlighted as a reason to maintain a vibrant ag community.; No.
46.	Disagree. Tasting rooms could be on agriculture in a percentage to the land so that the majority of the land is ag. For example room for 25 wine tasters on XX acres would be good. Sip wine where the grapes grow. But it should be in proportion to the acreage. I.e. The wine tasting room is not dominant - the grapes growing is the major focus.
47.	Disagree. Tasting rooms should be allowed on farms where food is produced, but in a limited way.
48.	do not know enough to respond
49.	Don't become a Woodinville
50.	Don't encourage drinking
51.	Don't dilute the code
52.	Each location is different, and each brewery or restaurant could potentially be a farmer. Each situation should be evaluated according to the location the business is seeking to build in, and what the plan for the use of the property is.
53.	Exemption is Too broad - rural residential is not the same as ag land.
54.	expand it, the current ones fit well with communities. I live in a RR zone, Bay View.
55.	Farmers should be allowed to sample and sell their own products and produced on their farmland.
56.	Farmland and farmers need income. It is not at all clear to me that allowing tasting rooms or restaurants on agricultural land is incompatible with the goal to preserve farmland. As long as there remains a commitment to keep the lands productive for farming, I do not see why Tasking or Restaurants would result in less farmland.
57.	farmland for these endeavors."
58.	Farmland is not necessary for non-farm activities. There is plenty of space nearby that does not consume farmland. It would also be good to eliminate the loopholes for such structures as residential or ag related.
59.	Farm-to-table restaurants and tasting rooms allow visitors a unique opportunity to see where their food and beverages come from and to appreciate the natural beauty of the land that we're seeking to preserve. Restaurants and tasting rooms that do not have any direct ties to the land should not be allowed, but to prohibit those that serve to preserve and protect the land would be highly detrimental to that goal.
60.	For fear of a county becoming overrun, I personally enjoy Skagit and its current position with the food and wine industries. The townsfolk of Skagit are who they are because Skagit is what it is. Don't change that.
61.	Frequent use of tasting areas and/or restaurants would chip away at the agricultural land and surrounding roads and neighborhood. Eventually there could be a push to expand such tasting rooms and/or restaurants.
62.	From Napa Valley and watched determination of wineries into amusement parks.
63.	Grape-growing lands, for example, sometimes have tasting rooms. Food would be a reasonable accompaniment. Food, beverage facilities would need permits for public safety.
64.	Growing food crops and eating them are separable activities and not usually compatible.
65.	How ironic that Garden Path Fermentation wanted to move their operation to some of the best farmland in the world, only to advocate for its demise. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation. Tasting rooms and restaurants are the antithesis to soil conservation.
66.	I agree with below.; If farmers are required to have the proper infrastructure and do not impede other farmers ability to do their jobs I see no problem with tasting rooms and restaurants on farmland.

67. I agree.
68. I am against any change in policy which may threaten our protected farmland
69. I am favorable to no new tasting rooms in Ag zone, but I do think there are some tasting 'rooms' that have been allowed to operate over the years & they should be grandfathered in.
70. I am not sure. I believe tasting rooms are an important draw that is associated with grape growing and wine production. Anecdotal, I do not see that type of agriculture in Skagit county.
71. I am ok w small scale tasting rooms. One concern is traffic on small roads. The extra income for the valley is great, but we all know tulip traffic year round would be untenable
72. I believe tasting rooms are OK at farms, especially those that use produce to create their own wines. I have some hesitation on big restaurants. Something smaller is better. A good example is the Taylor Shellfish restaurant: smallish but also selling what they produce. I'd say no to a big resort with a hotel & restaurant. We already have plenty of lodging options and good, larger restaurants.
73. I can think of no compelling argument for why restaurants and tasting rooms should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
74. I can't think of anything that is more enhancing to agricultural and connection to the land than being able to take into our bodies the alchemy of land, water, air, sun and human creativity playing out in reverence for these forces. Skagit Co could benefit exponentially from allowing visitors to deepen their dive into the magic here through their taste buds. If the concern is parking or overcrowding of streets, maybe there could be some kind of car pooling system created, or buses?
75. I disagree. One of the best features of Skagit county is the restaurants currently in the middle of nowhere.
76. I do love the farmland, as I am an owner. I do not think that restaurants should be built on farmland. This is a totally different situation than wedding venues using old barns that are already established.
77. I do not think tasting rooms would be compatible with an active agricultural site.
78. i enjoy farm to table food that I would hope will be a part of this.
79. I feel this activity is served well already under current zoning.
80. I haven't formed an opinion on this question.
81. I might support some tasting rooms/restaurants IF they serve only predominantly farmed products from the site.
82. I support events on land zoned as agricultural that promote the awareness, value, and contributions that farmers and their care of the land are providing such as farmer's markets, educational opportunities or workshops, community gardens, farm stands, celebrations of significant events like family gatherings, small weddings, harvest, planting, etc. If the tasting rooms or restaurants serve products grown and tended on their farm then that is appropriate as well.
83. I think all small businesses need all the help they can get.
84. I think allowing for limited tasting rooms and dining within a careful set of guidelines could be good for farmers and not negatively impact the environment.
85. I think if it is permitted and planned out accordingly (these types of uses should make sense where they are being proposed), that it will be a net benefit to the economy of Skagit county.
86. I think tasting rooms or restaurants would be amazing on farms. Farm to table experience
87. I think tasting rooms would be okay
88. I think that it should be allowed if there is sufficient room.
89. I think the goal should be to keep the area more agricultural than tourist-entertainment. I do not believe that tasting rooms and restaurants can be kept under control in the long term and would become exceedingly commercial and out of sync with agri use.

90. I think with proper siting & scale a compromise could be found that would not adversely impact ag or rural residential.
91. I understand that no one likes change as a rule. However, as things get more expensive people are searching for a means to make their farms viable. One of these would be tasting rooms, restaurants and breweries. In the meeting on Dec. 6 the conflicting stances on agriculture came out. I have read through both Snohomish and Whatcom regulations and I much prefer the flexibility of Snohomish. Opening up our property to other people would both help educate the general public and share the beauty of this site. Although we aren't wanting a restaurant, tasting room or brewery, I can understand how someone else might.
92. I would love to visit wineries and restaurants on farmland and I think it would generate a lot of money for the county.
93. If a farm wants run a hospitality food business such as tasting rooms and restaurants, they should be allowed to do so as long as the other guidelines currently in place are met. It must be an accessory to the farming activity. no more than 10% of total land can be used for non-farming activity, etc.....
94. If allowed, there will be a creeping effect of diminishing agricultural land for strictly agricultural use. Once lost, the agricultural land will not be retrievable.
95. If already a law on size let the law remain
96. If kept SMALL and sized accordingly, it is possible for this to provide supplemental income to the farmer without affecting the overall function of the agricultural use.
97. If kept small scale, restaurants & tasting rooms are a good example of the farm-to-table food idea.
98. If operators can convert existing facilities to tasting rooms either on a part time or full time basis without increasing the existing footprint it should be allowed to the extent it meets other health and sanitary codes.
99. If the ag zones are opened up for restaurants, it is hard to limit their expansion. If some restaurants are allowed, it becomes easy to allow chain type restaurants (they are locally owned as well) and then comes the pavement so patrons can use them year around and continued erosion of the agricultural lands.
100. If the tasting room is on premises is the winery or distillery it should be aloud
101. If there is proper area-controlled setting why not
102. Impact on the land and surrounding areas
103. In general I agree, however I believe that the bureaucracy should always allow a case by case determination to exist and not hold a predetermined attitude. That requires govt. employees to use non biased judgement, which in turn require intersection , which is not always self-evident, thus persons in these positions of power should have access or required participation in courses that teach objectivity. They need to learn to analyze synthesize and unbiasedly come to a rational conclusion.
104. it brings more agritourism and tax revenue to our community "
105. It is these value added services that will keep Skagit farms sustainable especially small acreage plots.
106. It may lead to concessions a farmer may not have time to supervise such a business. Then the business could become at odds with the farming (noise, dust, smell) and create a hardship for the farm
107. It seems like the number and locations of these venues are growing fast enough that this isn't an issue
108. It will not be enforced
109. It would be much harder to regulate tasting room and restaurant traffic. So close to Seattle and Bellingham, Skagit County could quickly become a victim of its own success, and see traffic jams, rising residential rents, and diminished quality of life for local residents.
110. Keep farmland! We don't need tasting rooms or restaurants on farms!!

111. Keep the current policy. Tasting rooms are seasonal in nature. Year-round cover crops like barley provide highly valued consumables without adding to alcoholism.; Restaurants and tasting rooms can be accomplished on unfarmable land.
112. Limited liquid tasting rooms potential only with special use permit spelling out limitations, i.e. seasonal and limited hours. No to restaurants. Restaurants need to be on sewer or Large OSS system otherwise we are polluting our waterways.
113. Looking for more tasting rooms and restaurants
114. Many of our local roadways are already usage-stressed. Upkeep is often lacking in adequacy. 2-lane roads should be saved, primarily, for local access.
115. Maybe we would have more vineyards if the tasting rooms were allowed.
116. Nearly all horticultural nurseries in England have ""tea rooms""-people tend to spend lots of time choosing plants and need nourishment. Bob and Margie Harts Granary Café at La Conner Flats on Best Road followed this model, and local farmers and seasonal tourists treasured it from 1985 through the early 2000's. A preexisting 1914 Granary with a new septic drain field set in a stunning display garden surrounded by his 232 acre farm. How we miss it (and Bob and Margie). No lost farmland, and extra income for the farm.
117. Nervous Nellies in the county's employment should reconsider their reason for working for the people of the county.
118. No
119. No
120. No
121. No
122. No
123. no
124. No
125. No
126. No
127. No again its government overreach.
128. No farmland taken out to build tasting rooms or restaurants. But if an existing on-site building can be repurposed then that should be allowed. Just no taking of farmland.
129. No following up"
130. No to agritourism. Do not allow
131. no way to regulate how many people if you have a restaurant
132. No!
133. NO! If your farms are in production why on earth would the county want to curtail or limit access to other revenue generating businesses?
134. No, it's their land not the governments...
135. No, they should allow tasting rooms on farmlands to allow the farmer to sell his/her product
136. No, this could be an appropriate use, again with limitations
137. no, this would bring more tax revenue and money to Skagit county.
138. No, why would you deny a farmer a potential source of revenue which could help preserve the farm land
139. No. Could draw more income to area.
140. No. Creative codes can make a win-win environment for business & residents.
141. No. If a small restaurant or tasting room can be added within existing developed area then it should be allowed as long as it's connected to the farm (tasting room on a vineyard, restaurant offering foods mostly grown on local farms, etc)
142. No. Restaurants that use local grown food and meat would be great!
143. No. I think tasting rooms and restaurants should be allowed.
144. No. It is an opportunity for the property owner to develop their property and make money in the best way that they see fit.
145. No. They would provide added income for the farmers and surrounding communities.

146. No. Things will need to change in the future.
147. not an accessory use
148. Not sure what a tasting room or restaurant on a farm would help with farming.
149. Nothing at this time
150. Of two minds about this too. Such a paucity of dining options in rural Skagit where so much fresh food is being produced... what about food trucks?
151. Ok, let's have all tasting rooms have ingredients that are only from Skagit farmland.... phooey; Yes, I agree, see below
152. One purpose of exclusive agricultural zoning is prevent more profitable land uses (such restaurants and wineries, breweries, or tasting rooms) from bidding up the cost of agricultural land to such an extent that farmers can no longer obtain and farm the land profitably and hastening the conversion of land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses. When effectively implemented exclusive agricultural zoning decouples the market for agricultural land from the market for non-agricultural land and ensures that the value of agricultural land is determined by the lands potential for agricultural output rather than its potential use for non-agricultural purposes. Allowing restaurants and wineries, breweries, tasting rooms, and other commercial activities on agricultural land will undermine the effectiveness of Skagit County's exclusive agricultural zones.
153. Only when connected to a working agricultural enterprise, offering products produced by that enterprise
154. Placed strategically, these activities can co-exist with both getting benefits.
155. Please allow farmers to keep farming by diversifying their business model in this way.
156. Plenty of other counties in Washington State allow tasting rooms in agricultural zones. Skagit County is unique in not permitting these tasting rooms. I believe it should remain as it is currently.
157. restaurants and tasting rooms should be in areas zoned for commercial business
158. Restaurants and tasting rooms can help highlight the value that preserving farmland. Farm to table isn't just a fad
159. Restaurants and tasting rooms would not promote preservation of farmland. People could use land adjacent to farmland that was zoned appropriately without losing business.
160. Restaurants have many contaminates as part of doing business. Runoff and sewage and parking lot contaminates will damage farmland.
161. Restaurants or tasting rooms in RR zones would need different operating rules so as not to disturb neighbors.
162. Roads in farming areas are already overloaded in ill-equipped for more traffic. Keep the tasting rooms and restaurants in currently zones areas. There are so many empty storefronts it is ridiculous. Non to mention the deep ditches on the side of farm roads where imbibers already find themselves.
163. Rural residential lands could be licensed for tasting rooms or restaurants but not agricultural lands.
164. Rural residential. should be allowed.
165. Rural uses would be ok for tasting rooms, just not Ag-NRL
166. Same answer as the wedding question
167. Same answers as before
168. Same response as to prior questions.
169. See above response and to add to it: Farmers have historically needed to sell their products through resellers at a fraction of the ending retail price. Direct selling to the public of products grown locally would help sustain local agriculture. No different than out tulip growers having shops where they sell their local grown bulbs on the farm.
170. See King County Growth Hearing decision on this topic. At this point in Western Washington this is not a viable agricultural practice and can be accomplished in urban areas.
171. See prior response

172. See the Schedule F test argument above. If the farm can support tasting rooms or commercial kitchens that allow seating (or a restaurant or whatever) then LET THEM TRY! It's hard enough to make money in spirits and food, it's the on-farm opportunity that could create a unique value and the market and efforts of the farm business owner should be the determining factor not policies that neither promote the preservation of farmland OR profitability per acre.
173. Seek exemption or exception This way inspections can be performed and public welfare can be maintained. Not to use active farmland.
174. Should be allowed but limited in size and by impact on neighbors and farm activity.
175. Should be allowed if an accessory to the main farming activity. I.e.-a tasting room at an orchard; a farm to table restaurant at a farm.
176. Should be limited in size
177. Skagit County should focus on large scale commercial agriculture and food production over profit and tourists.
178. Small facilities should be allowed
179. Small scale food and tasting operations are very different from the insinuated 12K person/year attractions described above. Ag-NRL offers a way to share the bounty of Skagit County with visitors, supporting both tourism and the hard working farmers who may need an added source of revenue to survive. Farmland that is not currently being farmed may provide other wonderful opportunities that current regulations have prohibited from being explored.
180. Smaller groups ok if on ag land where product is grown.
181. Some should be allowed but not on flood zones lands.
182. Stick to the current code
183. Stop restricting Washingtonians
184. subject to control
185. Tasting rooms and food could be on a small scale.
186. Tasting rooms and restaurants are a commercial use and should require appropriate zoning changes to be accommodated
187. Tasting rooms and restaurants will enhance agritourism.
188. Tasting rooms and small restaurants (non-chain) should be allowed on any Ag / rural lands
189. Tasting rooms are a valuable addition to crop growing
190. Tasting rooms are another agritourism form that brings revenue, farm interest, tax income. If there's room for it, why not.
191. Tasting rooms enhance the consumer experience and should be encouraged. Anything that supports the Skagit brand is positive. Anything that strengthens the bond between the community and the farming community will serve the long term goal of preserving farmland. This is the strong lesson that can be learned in other ag-urban interface regions in NA and Europe.
192. Tasting rooms for wineries would be beneficial if allowed on vineyard property
193. Tasting rooms seem very reasonable as would farm stores. The restaurant industry is brutal and I don't think that use fits.
194. Tasting rooms should be allowed to allow the farmer to promote their crop yields. However, restaurants open something more expansive than what should be allowed on a farm to promote their yields.
195. Tasting rooms should be considered as agritourism and hence allowed, just like weddings
196. Tasting rooms should be same as fruit stand, an addendum to the existing orchard
197. Tasting rooms should have the same requirements as restaurants, including meeting location and zoning requirements. Skagit is primarily a food production center with ancillary activities permitted on a limited basis. No one is interested in turning Skagit County into Sonoma or Woodinville, especially the food and fiber producers,. There should be an economic assessment of the unintended

consequences of tasting rooms including traffic disruption, infrastructure requirements and possibly a limit on the number of accessory venues allowed in the county. These could be allotted with a lottery and limited to replacement venues to ensure there is no increase in size or number of acres converted for this activity.
198. Tasting rooms which evolve into saloons should be prohibited. In agricultural areas, night comes early. Not so for bars.
199. tasting rooms/restaurants should be allowed on Agr-NRL as well as long as primary use remains farming or natural resources based
200. That should be the decision of the property owner, flowing the same rules and regulations as any other such facility
201. The First Amendment prohibits government from abridging "the right of the people peaceably to assemble." ; I think your interfering with the a few amendments in our constitution again and the bill of rights.
202. The footprint is limited and will still be required to be permitted.
203. The only alternative is the allowing of a tasting room in an existing building on a farm that is producing grapes for wine production. As long as there is not loss in farmland and they use an existing building on the farm, what difference does it make?
204. The two uses can coexist and compliment farming activities.
205. There are already plenty of places to consume alcohol and eat in rural commercial areas. I would not care to see them added to rural residential and agricultural areas.
206. There are limits.
207. There are plenty of restaurants, breweries, and distilleries throughout the County. They don't belong in the ag zone.
208. There is no reason not to limit that kind of business to city limits. The infrastructure is there, we have areas that need upgrading. Why would we sprawl into the farmland?
209. There should be expanded rules for pop ups, commercial kitchens (like the one in the tulip winery barn) and food trucks. I feel like that would be a good compromise because a farmer could create a small space in their non farmable parcels to promote prepared foods from their crops, etc. Without the red tape of a larger restaurant area.
210. there should be tasting rooms and restaurants allowed in farmland to provide more widespread opportunities for all venues
211. There's plenty of existing land not very suitable for farming available for structures such as restaurants.
212. These activities can bring in added revenue to the farmers and provide an appreciation of the farmland to the customers.
213. These activities provide additional revenue for farmers, land owners etc. Stop trying to limit our revenues.
214. These are commercial activities and should be in areas where commercial is allowed and off of farmland soils
215. These choices are too broad. Some version of tasting rooms or ability to serve food should be allowed.
216. These kinds of enterprises can be important for helping keep farm enterprises profitable
217. These so called "tasting rooms" are a slippery slope. They are a Trojan horse by which we will end up with what amounts to a bunch of bars/restaurants on farmland. There is little practical way to enforce limits once they are allowed.
218. These uses are not compatible with agricultural use, they require septic systems, parking lots and other conversions that are not supporting the agricultural use of the property are not acceptable.
219. They are non-agricultural
220. they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint

221. This could be additional revenue for the area with the correct infrastructure.
222. This could create too much traffic! ; Again, poorly worded. A tasting room is entirely different than a restaurant. And food should not be allowed by delivery.
223. This could potentially bring too much of a city feel to our farm community.
224. This is a tightrope: tasting rooms and restaurants in my humble opinion irrevocably change the character of the environment.
225. This is a way to expand business while retaining our rural environment and communities.
226. This is an arbitrary and limiting restriction and serves no one but contrarians. Plenty of states, counties and cities across the country allow for taprooms and restaurants on agricultural and even residential zones successfully and to the benefit of all.
227. This is an area where businesses can showcase their products and supporting other local products to visitors who would like to hang out and have a bite or drink in the farm areas for some period of time.
228. Three houses east of the new wedding venue is a winery. Most if not all of their ingredients come from Eastern Washington. Very little if any ingredients come off their farm. It is a joke.
229. too many car accidents already & people getting hit. tow trucks & police are an hour or 2 waiting already. i know because i locked my keys in the car the other day. Lots of disturbance for people that want to live in hide away valley... we need to keep it beautiful & serene
230. Too many people on a daily basis. The parking requirements would be problematic. The other unforeseen impact the farm might have on the restaurant/tasting room: Dust, smells etc. Similar to weddings. People also trespass and for food growers this is problematic especially considering Food Safety rules.
231. Too much traffic to tasting rooms on a regular basis. This can have a substantial environmental impact
232. uncertain
233. Unless part of a working farm
234. Unless the food or beverage comes specifically from that farm, it should not belong in that ag zoning.
235. Up to the farmer.
236. Visitors at tasting rooms and restaurants attend them for personal enjoyment and are likely to want to wander around and "sightsee" around a farm. Again, more cars, more people with access to crops, animals, facilities--with little or no oversight. Kids, dogs don't read the signs or follow the rules.
237. We are being eaten up by square feet of overpriced made for tourists places. Keep farmland workable
238. We are not keeping the essence of our rural areas if we allow for restaurants and tasting rooms.
239. We have adequate space for this with existing law
240. We need the preserve all farmland and keep development out. We should also make it equally about being able to support and make it less expensive for farmers tax wise. So, the need to to have to have another income to survive.
241. We need to keep agricultural land.
242. We should minimize hard development on farmland ; We should minimize hard development on farmland
243. We want to have the freedom to manage the Ag lands per owners choosing but having Ag land that visitors can visit without extensive regulations is ideal. I don't want to see big developments such as restaurant chains being established on farmland however owners should have the option to hold small seasonal events on Ag land that don't require a lot of code requirements. Fit activities under recreational use

limited liability and ensure the activities won't take Ag land out of service.
244. what better way to learn about the sourcing than a tasting room on the farm?
245. While there is no reason a restaurant should be at a winery, it's just silliness to disallow a tasting room. Other farms sample their goods, this seems to me to fall into the same category so long as patrons can't sit around drinking full bottles of the stuff then driving while intoxicated. In fact, learning how to properly -sample- wine should be part of the educational element of a tasting room. Probably regulators in this county would do well to visit number of wineries outside of the county to become familiar with best practices bringing home with them a style that fits our valley.
246. Why are we acting like this isn't occurring? There is very little farming happening on many ag lands. It is only a technicality. Give tax breaks only to real farmers. Quit allowing all these businesspeople to massage the system."
247. Why not?
248. Why would you want to destroy farmland to have tasting rooms for rich city people? Why would anyone want to destroy farmland so rich people can come get drunk?
249. Wineries and breweries should be allowed to have tasting rooms as that goes hand in hand with the business. Dairies should be allowed tasting and retail for cheese and other related products. Restaurants should be limited to food trucks during events.
250. With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
251. With proper parameters for use, size limits and thoughtful approach with respect to neighbors, I would think this could be done feasibly and to the farm's benefit.; With a thoughtful approach and stipulated parameters , I would think this could be done to everyone's benefit.
252. x
253. yes
254. Yes
255. Yes
256. Yes
257. Yes
258. Yes - drunk drivers are a menace
259. Yes, not allowed on farmland or residential zoned areas.
260. Yes, I believe we need to preserve farmland and not allow further incursion.
261. Yes, let restaurants be restaurants and farms be farms.
262. Yes, we should continue this policy. Case and point Bale Breaker Brewing in Moxie WA. Is this brewery beautiful and well thought out? Yes. Does this mean it suits our agricultural land, in my opinion, no. We would still be sacrificing the true agricultural integrity of this limited land at the expense of a business opportunity.
263. yes. Neighbors don't want restaurants near them!
264. Yes. We should continue to help agriculture lands to persist and not be taken over by new buildings and concrete
265. Yes. I don't think a tasting room should be allowed to be put on any property. However, if there is an established winery/distillery/brewery already on the property (and it's zoned appropriately), then I believe a tasting room should be allowed.
266. Yes. Restaurants don't belong in farmland. There is no way to have a restaurant and not disturb or impede farming
267. Yes. This draws too many visitors. Smaller "versions" such as taste samples at roadside stands are fine.
268. Yes... Should not build commercial buildings on land used for farming. Keep land rural and farmed.
269. Yes...there IS 'land' that is not appropriate for agriculture, let them use that !!!
270. Yes, yes— I have been to Napa and Walla Walla. We do not want that here. It is all agritourism now

More respondents agreed to potential allowances for accessory tasting rooms subject to a special use permit with limitations on temporary events and other standards.

9. Allow an accessory tasting room if it is subject to a special use permit, which would allow for temporary events, noticed to nearby property owners, and other permit requirements are met to ensure safety and proper infrastructure. Periodic renewal of the permit would be required and a report to verify compliance.

Response	Total	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	278	64%	58%	13%	69%	68%
No, I do not agree	156	36%	42%	88%	31%	32%
Total	434	100%	137	8	36	249

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=434 respondents total, with 430 sharing their ownership status

Accessory Tasting Room, Comments:

1. "again this choice negates the previous and I disagree with more permits. etc... the old saying is ""give an inch and they'll take a mile"" don't go there!	Agree. See above.
2. "Agree yes. Make the size match the venture	15. Agree. Sizing informed by data is a good approach.
3. "Disagree	16. Agree. Room sized to acreage is a good idea.
4. "I think tasting rooms should be allowed, but do not agree that you should have to tell your neighbors.	17. Agreed - other than again "proper infrastructure", very suspect verbiage.
5. "not again, no	18. all would be a better with more to offer the community
6. "Only on nonagricultural soil.	19. Allow outright.
7. "Permit all forms of agribusiness and pursue the above test for ag processing facilities since those big spud sheds and Brussel sprout processing plants are the only thing really eating into the rotational crop acreage in the valley.	20. As above, carefully controlled seasonal/accessory tasting rooms could boost farm incomes and maintain land ownership.
8. "Tasting rooms do not have to be on farmland.	21. As above, Farmland should not be converted to other uses, period. There is plenty of land where these other uses are appropriate.
9. A lot of times they hold events and say nothing to the other property owners they must guarantee that their event will not bother their neighbors and make sure no one encroached on their neighbor's land or interfere with the neighbors work or blocking with cars and people	22. As long as current laws and regulations are observed
10. A more open, longer-term approach is preferable. Subjecting operations to ongoing permit review introduces too much operational risk and will discourage meaningful investment. Ultimately, too much control will be self-defeating --- compromising the ability of operations to remain profitable. Weakening business profitability will weaken farmland preservation over the longer term.	23. As long as the permit fee wasn't outrageous!
11. A tasting room or restaurant should just have a regular business permit.	24. Assessing the impacts of accessory tasting rooms on the amount and functions of prime ag soils needs to be done before any changes to permitting that makes it easier to convert more ag soils to any other uses. Self-reporting and compliance do not instill confidence if the permissions are on request with no framework for limiting both the activity and location. Just as the Growth Management Hearings Boards have rejected putting convenience stores on farmland because of the acres converted, so should tasting rooms have the same requirements and limitations.
12. a tasting room related to the farm should not need any special permits beyond standard health and safety	25. Assessor... which will lead to, oh, it just a little bigger, oh, it a storage room, oh, it's a BARN!! ...maybe a 'room if it's 'historical', but not hysterical...
13. Again, I think this is opening up a can of worms and I cannot see this benefiting Skagit in the long run. Keep tasting rooms and restaurants where it is zoned now.	26. But with the ability to object for reason and cause.
14. Again, yes and no. It would depend on the site. In our case, we have no near neighbors. If the site is in a populated area where parking is a problem, maybe. Usually agricultural land has space and comes with its own noxious events, such as weaning 30 head of young stock (noisy) or putting manure on a field (smelly). ; If it is subject to a special use permit for temporary events, a notice in the paper, and notice to adjacent property owners and other permit requirements are a given. I don't believe a periodic renewal is needed unless the property is sold. In the case of handing, it down to a future generation, then I believe the permit should carry along to the family.	27. Compliance and review are key.
	28. disagree
	29. Ditto above
	30. Do not allow
	31. Don't have an answer for this as of right now.
	32. don't see a real need"
	33. Existing farm stands and wedding venues do not go through this process now. Enough!"
	34. Facilities should be required to meet health and sanitary codes to protect the public and not increase their footprints.
	35. Growth Management Board is clear on this subject.
	36. Hard to know, from this description, how such a tasting room would affect nearby properties and the rural character of the valley. I worry that many such small businesses cropping up at random would be detrimental to the rural character and

	quality of life here. There are already so many more tourists now than in the past.
37.	however, the code is written, it's a good idea for tasting rooms and temporary events to be held
38.	How ironic that Garden Path Fermentation wanted to move their operation to some of the best farmland in the world, only to advocate for its demise. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation. Tasting rooms and restaurants are the antithesis to soil conservation.
39.	how would it be enforced and regulated. Just say no.
40.	I agree as long as the permitting is not too restrictive or expensive for the farmers to obtain.
41.	I agree there can be exceptions with a special use permit.
42.	I agree. The tasting room should not be larger than what is necessary for the producer. Then it might just become a bar.
43.	I assume accessory means it is selling products made by the ag operation, not products brought in from elsewhere.; I assume accessory means that it is selling products produced by the farm, not a bunch of stuff brought in from elsewhere.
44.	I assume that Ag-NRL property is not involved.
45.	I assume this is a way of demonstrating the farms production and serves the farm, not become a business and sham farm
46.	I can think of no compelling argument for why restaurants and tasting rooms should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
47.	I could agree to this if temporary events were very rare, such as only during Tulip Festival and permanent infrastructure was not built.
48.	I disagree on the basis that a small farmer should be able to compete with a large established farmer on equal terms.
49.	I don't want to be a nearby property owner.
50.	I don't agree for the need of a special use permit nor the temporary nature. This doesn't preclude requiring notice to nearby property owners and requirements for safety and infrastructure.
51.	I feel these are arbitrary units and should not be standardized, case to case basis and unbiased interaction between the petitioner and the govt personnel.
52.	I think a special use permit should be seasonal, and not specific to each opening.
53.	I think an accessory tasting room needs to meet the requirement stated above.
54.	I think that makes sense
55.	I think the county should set standards, require filing by the landowner, but not waste tax \$ on permits. Spend those \$ following up on possible compliance violations when informed. With focused permitting the system is targeting honest folks. Maybe just have a submittal checklist form for planned uses with end of year reporting.
56.	I think the tasting room could contribute to a kind of "urban sprawl" situation if managed that way.
57.	I think the tasting room/store can be operated normally but large events could require special permit
58.	I think with proper siting & scale a compromise could be found that would not adversely impact ag or rural residential.
59.	I wouldn't think the farmers would want this.
60.	If all the grapes and/or apples are grown on the farm, then yes.
61.	If once in a while and temporary, perhaps. Nothing permanent
62.	If sized appropriately to the acreage for temp. Events.
63.	If this was limited to a certain number of times a year, it might be acceptable.
64.	If you make too much dang red tape, no real farmers can benefit from these proposed changes. While I appreciate caution against allowing big tasting rooms and restaurants on good farmland, your complex permitting processes will prevent anyone but those with deep pockets and plenty of

	time to jump through the hoops to share the tastes of their harvest and some local product.
65.	If you want an example of the valley under this anything goes model, visit Napa valley, ca.
66.	I'm not sure what an accessory tasting room is, but if it is being attached to something that already is working, that would be ok.
67.	Infrastructure and process will help create clear parameters.
68.	It makes sense to allow for special events (like Tulip festival events) or the fire dept. pancake feed.
69.	It may lead to concessions and outside interest. A farmer may not have time to supervise such a business. Then the business could become at odds with the farming (noise, dust, smell) and create a hardship for the farm
70.	It will not be verified
71.	It would have to have strict rules for drinking on the property only as well as designated driver rules followed ; Yes
72.	Keep government out of this - they just want more licensing fees.
73.	Leaves room to be creative. All these activities can add to the spirit of an agricultural Skagit.
74.	let the tasting operate as a tasting room. enough with all the extra regulations that just continue to drive business away.
75.	Like I said, where does the money go? Give a portion to farmland conservation ???; No, I do not agree... see other answers...
76.	Limit size of gatherings to ensure parking needs do not encroach farmland
77.	limited permits -
78.	Maybe. Would be more information to make informed response.
79.	Most folks do not bother to read such notices. Too much expense to County budget to pay for notices in newspaper.
80.	Name one good thing from the alcohol industry? Let's not promote an activity that is addictive, let's promote agriculture and our ability to feed our fellow human.
81.	Need more information to be able to decide. What happens if a tasting room is placed with concerns gravel and the business fails. Who is responsible for getting the land back to pure agriculture
82.	Need public water and OSS that can handle all the people. No extra food service though
83.	No
84.	No
85.	No
86.	No
87.	No - local wineries are a joke
88.	No comment
89.	no comment, agree
90.	No not governments job
91.	No one wants to live next to it.
92.	No special permit needs.
93.	No tasting rooms on farmable land.
94.	No tasting rooms should be allowed. This region is not suitable for viticulture.
95.	No tasting rooms!!
96.	No, they should be able to operate as a business would if you put these limits on them again they will not succeed and corporations would take over the land
97.	No what about the smaller farmland less than 10 acres, they should be allowed the same rights
98.	No, land should be used for farming not agritourism
99.	No, only allowed in existing farm buildings.
100.	no, tasting rooms should not be tied to farm size
101.	No, the farm should be able to decide how big of a tasting room they want to put on their own property. They should be in line with the current fire codes for occupancy.
102.	normal building codes should be enough
103.	Nothing at this time

104. Oh, this just seems like silliness, notify neighbors, periodic renewal. The county already has liquor licensing, a tasting room is a variation on that theme. Lavatory facilities yes, bottled sales yes, opened sales no.
105. ok,, this is a good middle ground; unusual but doable
106. Once allowed on farmland, there will likely be greater use than authorized--compliance will be very hard to monitor."
107. Once you open that door, it will be hard to shut. Human response to all these rules will be to break the rules. Don't let this get started.
108. One purpose of exclusive agricultural zoning is prevent more profitable land uses (such restaurants and wineries, breweries, or tasting rooms) from bidding up the cost of agricultural land to such an extent that farmers can no longer obtain and farm the land profitably and hastening the conversion of land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses. When effectively implemented exclusive agricultural zoning decouples the market for agricultural land from the market for non-agricultural land and ensures that the value of agricultural land is determined by the land's potential for agricultural output rather than its potential use for non-agricultural purposes. Allowing restaurants and wineries, breweries, tasting rooms, and other commercial activities on agricultural land will undermine the effectiveness of Skagit County's exclusive agricultural zones.
109. Only with strong and enforceable wording that provides for the rights of neighbors. Fireworks, loud music, traffic congestion are only a few of the possible violations.
110. Our valley is home to working farms. We don't need a Disneyland farm
111. Permits are nothing but a scam.
112. Permits only mean money for the county. They hold nothing for the farmer, landowner etc.; Permits only mean money for the county. Rules and regulations are developed by people behind the desk and who are not in the industry. Permits are a hassle, require many unnecessary rules to be met costing money to the permit holder.
113. Programmatic is the key here. Renewal and Review are essential.
114. Review of permitted facilities would keep the focus on active, approved activities.
115. Same
116. Same comment pertaining to a wedding or special event... If the wedding/event is regulated by the county to ensure the farm is able to still act as a working farm, then I feel it is a safe option for a form of agritourism.
117. See above
118. See above comment about rural residential lands only.
119. See above note
120. See answer to previous question
121. See comment above.
122. See previous answer.
123. Seems like burdensome, expensive and unnecessary restrictions if accessory use is allowed
124. Should be allowed only IF agricultural products amounting to 50% or more of products being tasted are produced on site.
125. Should be allowed without special permits
126. Should be allowed. I think too much red tape is not needed. Farms have a hard enough time surviving
127. Skagit County agricultural land is too valuable to allow it to be 'paved' over. No"
128. Smaller limited venues like this seem to match the agribusiness model. They allow owners to use these temporary activities to educate the public as well as advertise their business without becoming the main focus.
129. Small-scale tasting rooms located on the winery premises make good sense.
130. sounds good
131. Tasting rooms for wineries would be beneficial income for winemakers

132. Tasting rooms require parking lots and should be in already existing buildings. Coops formed to reduce cost to producer
133. Tasting rooms/restaurants would be significantly more likely to succeed in clusters such as in mount Vernon, Burlington, Bayview Ridge La Conner etc. - this would allow hotels/tourisms and walkable experiences, which would improve the tourist experience, reduce the risk of drunk driving on farm roads and be better suited to also support other industries such as spas, art galleries, clothing et. - See Saint Helena - Napa Valley for example - with a vibrant downtown corridor
134. Temporary events shouldn't require the infrastructure of permanent facilities; assuming other issues (parking, road safety & sanitation) are accounted for
135. temporary is the key word here (not annually temporary)
136. The county should continue its current policies and codes that do not allow tasting rooms or restaurants on land zoned for agricultural or rural residential purposes.
137. The First Amendment prohibits government from abridging "the right of the people peaceably to assemble."; No permit required. If you get a complaint then check to see if laws are being broken. Example raw sewerage.
138. The key is how it is done. For example, the Perkins apple farm near Sedro-Woolley has concerts but also not to many immediate neighbors. More of a case-by-case situation.
139. The only way for agriculture to survive in Skagit County is to expand agritourism. The death knell for commercial farming is already sounding and evident with the number of plant farms for nurseries. This has been the last step before the complete collapse of commercial agriculture in every county in western Washington from King to Pierce to Snohomish to Clark to Lewis, and now Skagit.
140. The use should be consistent with the original permit and not slide into another use not meeting the original need.
141. There is a need to be monitored for compliance with health and liquor board (if applicable) standards.
142. These are starting to sound like leading questions! Yes, I agree to allow accessory tasting rooms, following all current laws-are there current noise ordinances? Parking limitations? I think most issues are covered. Again, do not discourage entrepreneurship-most will fail without your help, statistically.
143. These restrictions are likely to be a huge interference with the viability of the farm business
144. They should be fully allowed if done IN HARMONY with the farmland and are using existing structures and minimal footprint.
145. they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
146. They're already doing that
147. This adds burden to the county for monitoring compliance.
148. This question doesn't make sense. I think it is important to permit a venue, wither it is a tasting room, restaurant, farm or special event venue, but each location could be held to different allowances of events a year, according to the location and how rural or populated an area is.
149. This questionnaire is running how it's authors want to direct the flow into the future. There should be a higher, verifiable percentage of ag or farm income to prove it is indeed a farm.
150. This seems like a good way to hold the establishments accountable and insure they are keeping the public safe or aren't getting carried away with how they operate.
151. This seems like a reasonable special use that would not affect long-term use of agricultural land.
152. This sounds like a big hassle.
153. this sounds like it could be too restrictive.
154. This will cause a fracture of the current zoning
155. This would be beneficial to wedding venues and special events without causing excess stress to area.

156. This would be used as a get around of the zoning and be abused.
157. This would go hand in hand with venue rentals for periodic events.
158. To date, Skagit County has not been effective in monitoring these activities and or enforcing zoning violations when they occur. It is not appropriate to create avenues for conversion of properties in any circumstance, since it typically lends itself to property owners "asking forgiveness (after the fact) rather than permission (in advance)"
159. Too commercial, too many people, i.e. the traffic generated by Tulip festival; No temporary events, temporary infrastructure or temp parking. Damages the neighborhood, unfair to neighbors, unsightly, etc.
160. Too complex. Too much administration. Too many loopholes for the eventual elephant to pass through.
161. Too much red tape. Who will be enforcing these rules
162. Too much regulation
163. Vehicular impact on adjoining property needs to be addressed
164. We are not interested in excessive government oversight. I would consider this to be excessive oversight
165. We have enough problems with drinking in Skagit Co.
166. we should not need a special permit
167. While I agree that assurance that tasting rooms and restaurants in the Agricultural Zone are compliant with the goals and requirements of that zone, I'm concerned that excessive permitting requirements and/or costs associated with said requirements could effectively prohibit even fully compliant businesses from operating.
168. Why is this needed?
169. Why so many restrictions? For example, how would a tasting room not be a logical and sustaining, for a vineyard?
170. Why, sell your wine through a retail store and let them hose the wine tasting.
171. With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
172. Would support with usage controls
173. x
174. Yes
175. Yes
176. Yes

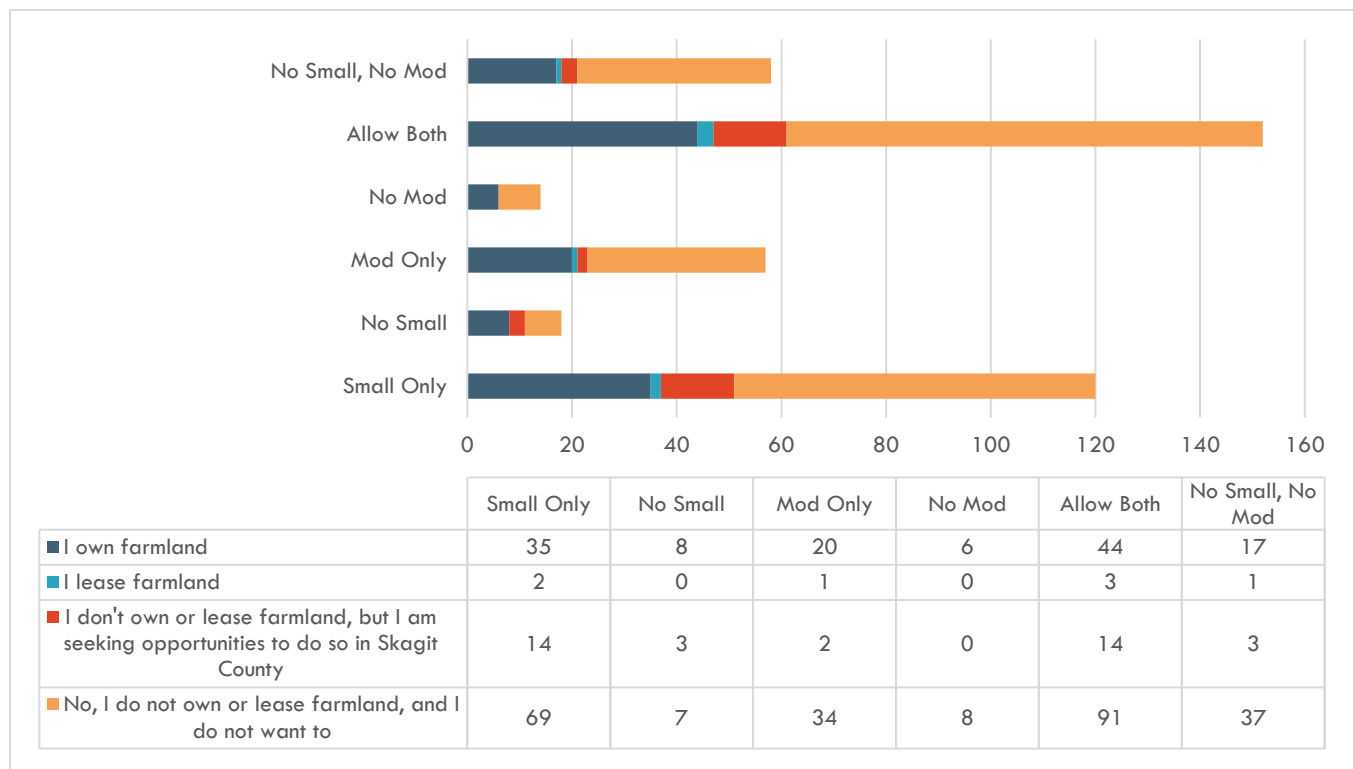
177. Yes
178. Yes
179. Yes
180. yes
181. Yes
182. Yes
183. Yes
184. yes
185. Yes
186. Yes
187. Yes, but not on flood lands.
188. Yes, I agree. I am going to start reading two questions ahead from now on! Please see my response to the previous question.
189. Yes, Accessory tasting could be ok if germane to the crops grown on the farm in question
190. Yes, brings money into the growers.
191. Yes, I think it is important that they uses make sense for where they are proposed and be in compliance with the rules.
192. Yes, it is good advertising for their products and could bring in the cash
193. Yes, it would seem to encourage and be consistent with farming use.
194. Yes, this keeps the focus on the farm aspect first.
195. Yes, this seems fair.; No, but temporary limited tastings could be fine as long as neighbors agree.
196. Yes, this would support agricultural land
197. Yes, tourist only visit tasting rooms for a short time
198. Yes. Farmers are growing hops, fruit grasses etc. to make a living. What better way that to have a tasting room.
199. yes. Keep it small!
200. yes. size appropriate seems a good compromise
201. Yes. This is an excellent way to help farmers sustain their livelihood.
202. Yes. Bring the public in to learn and understand the worth of our agriculture and the contribution to local economy
203. Yes. Have you been to Prosser or Quincy and seen how they manage? Boon for business and tourism brings cash and jobs.
204. Yes. Increased income
205. Yes. That could be one solution.
206. Yes. Things will need to change and grow.

Two thirds of respondents agreed with having small tasting rooms (65%). About half thought moderate tasting rooms should be allowed (50%). Most didn't want to limit small or moderate tasting rooms.

10. Allow accessory tasting rooms if the tasting room is sized in proportion to the acres of on-site grapes/hops/fruit grown (e.g., small room if 10 acres grown onsite, or moderate size room if at least 20-40 acres grown). Please choose two options below.

- 65% Yes, I agree small tasting rooms should be allowed (n=273)
- 50% Yes, I agree moderate tasting rooms should be allowed (n=211)
- 24% No, I do not agree that moderate tasting rooms should be allowed (n=101)
- 18% No, I do not agree that small tasting rooms should be allowed (n=78)

Total n=423 Respondents



Accessory Tasting Room, in Proportion to Fruit Grown, Comments

1. "No	8. ; Yes, I would take all my visitors to local tasting rooms, and I would buy their wine. I prefer to buy local and currently in Skagit county it is actual hard to do!"
2. "Size of tasting rooms should be decided using patron safety. The size of the property under cultivation should not be considered, unless the amount of property used does not impact/reduce the productivity of the land.	9. 10 acres doesn't produce enough wine to create a tasting room. Most grapes etc. would come from somewhere else. Coop tasting rooms are the answer in existing buildings not on farmland. Reduces the peace of valley farming
3. "This poll is not working correctly. All of these questions are similar and can be answered similarly. The county needs to step back and get less involved what everyone does on their private land. If a property gets trashed, we already have laws that permit fines and force cleanup. As we can all see this isn't enforced properly.	10. Accessory tasting room under these conditions if the product uses items grown on site and product is made on site would be acceptable.
4. "Yes	11. Again, dependent on the location the retailer is choosing to place their business.
5. "yes, I believe farms should be allowed to host events	12. agree
6. "Yes. Good for the valley	13. Agritourism is the only way to maintain any semblance of commercial agriculture in Skagit County. Otherwise, it'll be
7. ; The First Amendment prohibits government from abridging "the right of the people peaceably to assemble." "	

	warehouses and parking lots as far as the eye can see, just like every flat parcel of land in Southern California.
14.	All policies should be centered around soil conservation. For the future of humanity.
15.	All these items above are development of farmland disguised as agrotourism. Priority is keeping viable soils for farmland, and this goes against that. We open this door, and we are losing farmland
16.	Allow however big tasting room the property owner thinks the property will support. Don't limit entrepreneurs from trying to make a dream come true
17.	allow if no land is removed from ag use to accommodate the tasting room
18.	Allowing a large tasting room on small acreage opens the door for pseudo agritourism where the product is not local but faux local products brought in from outside the Skagit Valley.
19.	AND... provided the products used to produce what is being tasted are grown and processed onsite, not imported from eastern Washington. Also, this should be limited to products like wine that have an historic connection to onsite rural production. Brewing and distilling are historically urban uses that require many different levels of material processing and products obtained from many locations. They are not rural or agricultural uses.
20.	Any special use permit which requires constant notice to neighboring property owners is a pain in the behind for a business. I think this use should either be allowed or disallowed based on other factors. No business can function with constant uncertainty and administrative overreach.
21.	Are trying to regulate everything?
22.	As a customer, a smaller tasting room is preferable. At some point it starts feeling like a cattle call when they get too large
23.	As long as farmland production is maintained, and requirements for parking/size/frequency are managed (with neighboring notices), I think proportional sizing makes sense.
24.	as long as food safety, worker safety and guest safety measures are in place.
25.	But with the ability to object for reason and cause.
26.	compliance would be too hard to be sure the sizing is accurate.
27.	Criteria should be drawn up so these activities can function without taking away from our valuable farmland.
28.	Disagree. Notifying neighbors is not the way to do this. It's an all or nothing. Stick with a tasting room in perspective to the acreage.
29.	Do not allow
30.	Don't increase drinking traffic and pollution
31.	don't see the need"
32.	Easy to make the tasting Room the priority - quasi restaurant- and the Ag use a lower priority. Just say no.
33.	Encroachment
34.	Enough problems with alcohol consumption in Skagit County already.
35.	Farmers should have the option available if they chose to have a tasting room or not and it should be equal to size of farm.
36.	Gee, Bellevue, WA use to be farmland. So did the Puyallup valley, So, did parts of Marysville, so did the Snoqualmie valley.... etc, etc.
37.	Hard to answer this without knowing what "moderate" means.
38.	i agree
39.	I agree ALL tasting rooms should be allowed and if a potato farmer can convert 50 acres of farmland into a gravel parking lot for his trucks then we shouldn't be talking about the size of tasting rooms.
40.	I agree that whatever size tasting room the property owner deems necessary for their business should be allowed. Arbitrary limits and acreage requirements quickly become

	outdated and an impediment to business in the county. Instead, measures should be taken to work with property owners to determine if their plans qualify as still agri-land or if their plans require rezoning to something else due to the lack of growing.
41.	I can see that a tasting room on the sites described above could be compatible
42.	I can think of no compelling argument for why restaurants and tasting rooms should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
43.	I do not agree with regulatory limitations to the size of tasting rooms. The question should have included an answer that reflected a more open option. The size of the tasting room should relate to the strength of the business proposition. Trying to build in upfront limitations without understanding the vision and scope of opportunity seems misses the point. Very few business plans will support much investment in this area --- defensive regulations will only discourage the few opportunities that could make a meaningful contribution to the region. The premise of this question seems backwards in its focus.
44.	I don't agree with the alcohol industry and think there are better things that we could be focusing our attention on. How about 4-H and all the good things 4-H is doing for our community. That would be time much better spent.
45.	I don't see how acreage relates to tasting. Regardless of acreage set a common standard applicable to all farmland. You can always establish a process for exceptions.
46.	I don't think the conditions suggested are sufficient. A tasting room for 10 acres in use for grapes/hops/fruit, for example, is not compatible with agriculture if the remaining farmland on the parcel(s) is 100 acres, for instance. The concern is not to replace farming with non-farming uses.
47.	I don't want the use to be abused, as when the production field is just a subsidiary function of the property to satisfy legal requirements and actual production is done elsewhere.
48.	I know of 3 tasting rooms in Skagit county. (I'm sure there is more) 2 were closed before lockdown. What a waste.
49.	I picked the best answer of those offered.
50.	I think it is one of the best ways to market added value production.
51.	If it's a business, shouldn't need a permit to have the community there. Should be open to all who want to come.
52.	If the tasting room was located in a facility already devoted to farming use, then yes.
53.	If there is to be a tasting room, it should be proportionate to acres.
54.	It makes sense for additional income
55.	It makes sense to make the size of the tasting room proportional to the size of the amount of produce grown.
56.	It may lead to concessions and outside interest. A farmer may not have time to supervise such a business. Then the business could become at odds with the farming (noise, dust, smell) and create a hardship for the farm; See answer to above. Survey not allowing cut and paste
57.	It would be a way to showcase what is being raised on the land. Most vineyards import their wine from elsewhere because it takes quite a few grapes to make a bottle of wine, but there could be a mixture of home grown and imported from elsewhere.; It would be ideal to be able to showcase what is grown on the farm. A tasting room is one additional way to do so.
58.	Keep the number of visitors small
59.	Looking at Woodinville, I believe that if a farmer (e.g. winery) is looking to have a way to promote what they produce, a small onsite tasting room is acceptable.
60.	Managing according to size of farm makes sense. The farmer could generate business on site with not much extra impact. A large area planted naturally produces more outbuildings,

	etc. which could be drafted into use as tasting rooms without entire new structures being necessary.
61.	Moderated tasting rooms are ok but limited. In compliance to growing the grapes on site and making the wine there on the farm where they want to have a tasting room.
62.	No
63.	No
64.	No
65.	No
66.	No - disingenuous to say we grow good grapes.
67.	No (probably), it's missing the point of keeping agricultural focus. Neighbor impacts are potentially a negative.
68.	No comment
69.	No limits
70.	No new tasting room should be constructed. Require the remodel of an existing barn or shed to serve as the tasting room.
71.	No objection to tasting rooms, just object to where they are allowed.
72.	No tasting rooms. They can't be controlled; Unclear. What is the connection between product and on-site production? No tasting rooms in ag zone. But if so must be only product from site or they are just a bar.
73.	No they should not need a permit when they have a farmland and a business lic
74.	No, again, the climate may be... wet, muddy, cloudy, smelly, dusty, not enough parking, etc....it's not necessarily about the building...!?!
75.	No, it should go through the regular business permitting process like any other business.
76.	No, land should be used for farming not agritourism
77.	No. The use should not need to be temporary, nor should continue use need to be reapproved.
78.	No. To many options will make loopholes.
79.	No; see above.
80.	none needed
81.	Not sure why the model is 10 acres, when there are many farms that are smaller than 10 acres, producing crops for market, and/or are being used for wedding venues, and could easily house these considerations (food, tastings, special events) with less of a negative impact on the farming community and more of a positive impact on the visitor experiencing the farming lifestyle.
82.	Nothing at this time
83.	Once again, smaller venues will be less likely to become the main focus of the business, at the expense of the agricultural focus.
84.	One doesn't usually get to taste the products at a grocery store.
85.	Only permanent, small tasting rooms connected to operating farms/wineries
86.	Our community lacks gathering spaces outside of churches.
87.	Programmatic and reviewed etc.
88.	Same as before: Extraneous uses should not be allowed. They need to be sited off farmland.
89.	Same as previous answer. Deal with tax breaks for true farmers only.
90.	Same reasons as above: protect farmland.
91.	Sampling is one thing, there are plenty of bars and restaurants in Edison
92.	Scale is important
93.	See above
94.	See above
95.	See above answer.
96.	See prior
97.	See prior responses.
98.	Should be allowed without size considerations which just gives preference to existing facilities and shuts out the newcomer unfairly.

99.	Size of tasting room may be more contingent on geography and road infrastructure then number of acres farmed. H
100.	Small and moderate are inadequate measures to formulate and opinion.; Small and moderate sizes are not defined so I can't formulate an informed opinion.
101.	Small or moderate tasting rooms should be allowed if regulated properly.; ...as long as they are truly "accessory" tasting rooms.
102.	Small venues would lessen the chance that adjoining landowners would be adversely affected by the activity.
103.	Smaller is much better. Less impact.
104.	Small-footprint structure, limited parking, oversight.
105.	Sounds like an option
106.	Tasting room capacity should be relative to parking and space to minimize disruption.
107.	Tasting rooms are a huge industry and if done correctly (monitored for size/usage/number of visitors annually, etc) this could be a very good addition to Skagit County tourism.
108.	Tasting rooms are a logical outgrowth if a vineyard and grape growing farm.
109.	Tasting rooms are a means for a new and small producer to promote the product. It provides a means to higher margins, improved demand and eventual distribution than is normally possible for a startup with limited capitalization.
110.	Tasting rooms are related to grape- growing, an agricultural occupation.
111.	Tasting rooms should be allowed to provide supplemental income and to sample their products
112.	Tasting rooms should be allowed.
113.	Tasting rooms would be a financial benefit to the wineries and breweries and bring an additional source of economic development for Skagit County
114.	the best way to open up the farmland to all types of business not just farming
115.	The county should continue its current policies and codes that do not allow tasting rooms or restaurants on land zoned for agricultural or rural residential purposes.
116.	The criteria proposed is bogus. It's the conversion of prime ag soils that is important. Posing a proportion of ag land converted to a tasting room disadvantages smaller landowners and only adds to the cumulative loss of farmland which is not permitted by the GMA.
117.	The key is to keep things small so that farm visits don't become industrial sized. Using existing parking, etc. keeps farmland.
118.	The land size should not be an issue
119.	The size and proper infrastructure need to have county pre-approval, so farmland is not lost to parking, driveways and outbuildings.
120.	The tasting room should show case what is done on site & should be the secondary enterprise, but farmers need to be given options to have income.
121.	The tulip growers show how important the various enterprises are successful.
122.	There is plenty of property available in the county that IS NOT agricultural in nature, these tasting rooms need to be in appropriately zoned areas, not conversion of farm land.
123.	There should be no limit on size in relation to onsite average, total average perhaps
124.	They should be fully allowed if done IN HARMONY with the farmland and are using existing structures and minimal footprint.
125.	they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
126.	they should not require a special permit
127.	this appears to all be booze related so in the long run there is a processing plant somewhere if you are trying to preserve farm land the processing plant that is located elsewhere is where the tasting should occur

128. This is not a viable crop in Western Washington.
129. This seems reasonable.
130. This should be allowed on farms growing grapes and hops as it is what they produce.
131. This would allow a small or medium business to exist. ; This would allow a small or medium business to exist
132. To make an informed decision, more information is needed. Please see my comment above. My worry is that tasting rooms can become something other than originally intended.
133. uncertain
134. Under the special use permit, then allowed.
135. Unless the food or beverage comes specifically from that farm, it should not belong in that ag zoning.
136. Very difficult to enforce limits. What if they stop growing hops or grapes?
137. We have a well-producing vegetable plot and greenhouse, a large outbuilding that could accommodate a moderate size tasting room, why not use all the space available. Less bureaucracy invites more creativity and seasonal activities
138. We should give small and medium sized landowners the same advantages of large land owners.
139. We turn down things on ag lands that would help us adapt to climate change but we would allow wine-tasting rooms? That sounds like California
140. We'll of course safety needs to be regulated. I don't think that this issue should even be discussed in this survey. If safety is accommodated via a permit, then there is no reason to deny the use.
141. We've enjoyed several wineries this past summer - huge benefit to our area.
142. what IS an accessory tasting room? how is it different from a farm stand?
143. What is meant size wise in small and moderate?
144. What is the need for some acreage restriction. Owners should be allowed to use existing facilities which to their maximum benefit within health and safety regulations and restricted from expanding their existing footprints.
145. While it's appropriate to have a local sourcing requirement in place for tasting rooms in the Ag Zone, I do not believe that this should be tied directly to the size of the lot, as there are a number of very small lots grandfathered into the Ag Zone where commercial farming is not viable and value-added uses are therefore both necessary and instrumental toward the goal of preserving the agricultural character of the land, but where the proposed acreage requirements could not be met.
146. why do I have to choose between these options. what is small? what is medium? you are going about this with crappy questions that direct answers to such specific situations.
147. Why?
148. Would rather see a farm co-op where tasting could take place on rural commercial land.

149. wow, someone wants tasting rooms.... last time, no
150. x
151. Yes
152. Yes
153. Yes
154. yes
155. Yes
156. Yes
157. Yes
158. yes
159. Yes
160. Yes
161. Yes
162. Yes
163. yes
164. Yes
165. Yes
166. Yes
167. yes, some regulation should be required to keep from annoying neighbors
168. Yes, a very good idea!
169. Yes, as long as hours are regulated for neighbors' peace (I.e. 11:00 p.m.) curfew, and no excessive fees. Don't make it a money maker like a speed trap is. I agree
170. Yes, I think that is acceptable
171. Yes, if it is not removing agricultural land from use
172. Yes, this seems fair, as long as the number of temporary events is limited.
173. Yes.
174. Yes. That allows for controlled growth.
175. Yes. There can always be exceptional situations and those should be dealt with case by case.
176. Yes. This makes sense to me.
177. Yes. Again, growth and change. Wisely.
178. Yes. There should be a licensing process to allow this. Otherwise, they might end up popping up everywhere.
179. Yes. To ensure the proper compliance
180. Your sizing seems to be missing the point here. The size of the room is not proportional to the size of a property owned, rather the max capacity visitors is dependent on the waste facility, as well probably as the vehicle management. The valley has little to no sewer system capacity. So, we are talking about septic systems to manage waste. If a property doesn't perk near a tasting room, it doesn't matter if the property is 100 acres, you can't have visitors there. And if a small barn has a commercial septic system it's whole place can be a tasting room. Perhaps this is another way of saying I don't want to see a valley of port-a-potties. That's not going to be fun on the Tulip Valley Festival poster. Rosengard is bad enough during April!

A majority of respondents would allow limited food service including farmland owners and non-farmland owners, except for those who lease farmland.

11. Allow limited food service only to an already allowed accessory farm stand or farm-based business as a take-out only use. An example would be a drive thru coffee (or other food or beverage) stand with no seating.

Response	Total Num	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	250	60%	56%	38%	63%	62%
No, I do not agree	167	40%	44%	63%	37%	38%
Total	417	100%	129	8	35	241

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=417 respondents total, with 413 sharing their ownership status

Limited food service, please explain:

1. "First, coffee isn't a crop in Skagit County, so this example makes no sense. Random grandfathering is an embarrassment.	24. Assists farmers with subsidizing income and won't destroy farmland.
2. "Having a small roadside stand is much different than buildings for wine tasting and eating with sit down facilities.;	25. Coffee??? Food service ok as related to crop makes sense for example veggie panini or smoothie
3. "Is this the Schuh Farm exception? The idea of limited food service without an opportunity to enjoy the food on the farm is missing the point of allowing members of our community AND consumers that travel to (and spend money) in our community to enjoy farmland.	26. Depending on the business provided, it's difficult to accept due to the potential of trash and other debris that could ruin the beauty of the county.
4. "No	27. Do not allow
5. "See above; See above	28. Do they grow the coffee on the farm? Are all of the other ingredients grown on the farm
6. "We already allow this with food trucks, ice cream, strawberry shortcake.	29. Do we another drive thru coffee?
7. "well, if they are already there.	30. Drive through shops are what one encounters in urban or dense suburban areas. I think they would impact rural character in a manner analogous to billboards.
8. "Why? Just say no	31. Drive thru and take out create additional issues beyond a tasting room type of use
9. "yes farmers should be allowed to diversify their income	32. Example of Schuh Farms drive thru coffee stand that also sells baked goods with fruit they have grown is acceptable that compliments their farm stand.
10. .	33. Explained multiple times with previous questions
11. A small sit down deli or bakery could really help a struggling farmer or dairy	34. Farm stands are an acceptable use as long as the necessary support (such as parking lots) is not conversion of farmland
12. again, a terrible question. you should be fired. why so specific. just use the same rules the farms use now with 90/10. Whatever the owner does with that 10% property to make the farm functional and viable, let's do it!	35. farm stands should be allowed to have seating for their customers if they feel it enhances the business model
13. agree	36. Farms are farms - we need to preserve them
14. Agree	37. Focus on large scale commercial agriculture. Having food production in Skagit County is going to be very important when other areas can't feed themselves.
15. All policies should be centered around soil conservation. For the future of humanity.	38. Food or drink would be nice at an accessory farm stand etc.
16. allow businesses.; This is a limiting option. Just allow the business... take out with a picnic area, etc.	39. Food ought be allowed where alcohol is being served.
17. allow food service, to include seating. A restaurant could be farm related and beneficial to the farms continued operation.	40. Food service is different from tasting rooms and grape-growing
18. Allow food trucks.	41. Food service on farmland is just not needed.
19. Allow whatever owners need to be productive	42. Food service should also allow for sit down on-site consumption as long as inspected permitted as a restraint would be
20. Allow your rural citizens to bring the bounty of Skagit County to its visitors. "	43. food service should not be limited to an already allowed farm stand. Should be allowed even if no current farm stand is in operation.
21. Ambiguous. I do not agree because I don't want them. Someone else might disagree because they want less restrictions. I prefer no food service on farms except temporary events.	44. Food trucks and walk up service are already available at several farms. Farm-stands are already selling food and beverages
22. An already existing business serving a bit more would probably not alter things in a big way.	45. For all the reasons stated above, local farmers have to be viable. Key here is limited. I would not want to see a McDonalds on a farm property, but I see no reason they
23. Another venue that eats away at farmland bit by bit. There will undoubtedly be grandfathered business. That is more than enough.	

	shouldn't sell a cup of coffee for people to enjoy while browsing a shop. Prepared foods from local produce is a good way to sell raw products.
46.	Government already too involved in citizens lives. Leave us alone!!!
47.	I agree, I think are you saying a place like Polly's ,now sisters espresso can serve hot dogs , if so yes. Where do you think that famous old rodeo clown Wick Peth ate lunch every day. They should actually name their hot dogs "Wick Burgers".
48.	I agree with the above but I also think that there can be a compromise where a few sit down areas could be for a very small amount of people. For example a food truck that only serves items from a farm should be able to have a few picnic tables. I agree with the above that the area should correspond with how big the farm actually is. A small ten acre farm doesn't make sense to have a pop up cafe style business but someone as big as Skagit valley farms does.
49.	I am OK with small restaurants like Taylor Shellfish. Drive-up is OK too.
50.	I believe it would be taken home food not food for immediate consumption.
51.	I can only answer by separating mobile or establishment food service. Mobile services should be allowed. Establishment services should require the land designation changed and taxing adjusted accordingly.
52.	I can think of no compelling argument for why restaurants and tasting rooms should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
53.	I don't agree that no seating facilities should be the only type allowed. A more fulsome restaurant and/or shop should be permitted.
54.	I think any non-farming use - such as restaurants or drive-throughs - should be licensed, not "allowed" outright. The reason is that it is hard to account for impacts that may occur over time. Traffic is a major one but there are likely others. An annual review through a licensing procedure would make it possible to monitor impacts.
55.	I think most would be take-out service anyway, but we shouldn't limit.
56.	I think people want to spend time on the farm, and seating in comfort is important. Many need a break from walking.
57.	i think that year round sit down food service should be allowed in the farmlands to open opportunities to other business other than just farming
58.	I think you should be able to expand food service beyond what is described above.
59.	I view an example of an appropriate sized takeout to be the farm stand at Cascadian Farms in Rockport
60.	I want a farm stand to be a farm stand.
61.	If a business is promoting agrotourism, then I believe the primary use of the land is farming and not a token to use the agrotourism label
62.	If food service is already allowed, why would you not allow customers to have a seat?
63.	If it is a farm product stand, fine. But drive throughs belong in the urban areas of Skagit County.
64.	If temporary, could be ok
65.	If this exists and is temporary and does not disturb farmland soils, that is ok
66.	In order to produce that food, there needs to be public water and a large, permitted OSS system that can handle the extra nutrient loading. A regular residential OSS is not designed to handle food service preparation. Agricultural zoned land does not have sewer or large OSS systems.
67.	Increased traffic and noise. Changes the feel of "country life".
68.	Just more traffic
69.	Keep food services out of agricultural land. Allow farms to remain agricultural enterprises
70.	Keep it farm-based. Not a commercial endeavor.
71.	Keep people moving through. Only there temporarily

72.	Keep the traffic moving, there is never enough parking and it tends to having people park on road. So, keep it moving.
73.	Let that sink in--if we keep putting up barriers to the commercial use of farmland in Skagit County we will LOSE IT. Quit equating all agribusiness with the potato/seed/silage/grain large acreage crop rotation farms and BE INCLUSIVE of ALL BUSINESS owners and ag land owners. "
74.	Let them have seating if they want. If they can meet health codes, let them eat, drink and be merry.
75.	limited seating could be allowed
76.	Low impact farm stands and coffee stands are acceptable.
77.	Manageable with small seasonal staff retaining farm to table feel
78.	More options should be allowed
79.	New ventures should be allowed to compete with existing. Why should Snow Goose be allowed to do what a stand 2 miles away is prohibited from doing?
80.	No
81.	No
82.	No
83.	no
84.	No
85.	No
86.	No
87.	no
88.	No
89.	No
90.	No
91.	No
92.	No - we have towns for that
93.	No allow a little dining room area to sell their product
94.	No comment
95.	No- farm owners need every chance to increase revenue and creativity
96.	No need for this. There are plenty of similar facilities in nearby towns and on non-agricultural lands. Let's not junk up our farmland.
97.	no need"
98.	No! No drive-thrust. No experiences foe the tourist, too much trash and not the flavor of slow food!
99.	No, land should be used for farming not agritourism
100.	No, there 'farm-stands'... that's enough. Skagit Valley doesn't grow coffee, tea, or other beverages... although ice cream with or without berry flavors ARE Skagit valley ingredients...
101.	No, unless it's a temporary emergency take-out situation such as the pandemic.
102.	no. drive throughs/no seating make farmland too commercial in a rural neighborhood. Neighbors don't want that!
103.	No. If infrastructure is in place, you could code small establishments. Food is important if alcohol is tasted.
104.	No. I'm not sure I can see this as practical and I think the bias should be towards making sure that the existing restaurant infrastructure is property supported.
105.	No. The limit is not necessary. Coffee is also a poor example as we don't have coffee farms here. The food establishment should be relevant to the farm use.
106.	No. I would rather have a seating area than a drive thru if I had to have a farm stand near my property. The traffic would be less chaotic.
107.	No. This again is up to the property owner and should go through a standard business and fire occupancy permitting process.
108.	No; see above
109.	Nothing at this time
110.	On the surface this appears to be a good solution, but what happens when someone wants to be a few tables in and sell cinnamon rolls and coffee. They should be able to expand

according to their size.; Someone may want to enlarge on this, maybe put a table or two and have take-out as well.
111. Once again increase in traffic and pollution ; Once again don't encourage traffic
112. Once in a while I would like a cup of coffee, but NO.
113. Operating ANY business is expensive. Being limited to farm stand or take-out only may discourage start-ups, put smaller ventures out of business.
114. People spend a long time walking on farms and should be allowed to sit down in a cafe setting to eat.
115. Permanent structure only
116. Please tell me how this is different from the original question... One thing leads to another and then, farmland is gone....
117. Potentially damaging to the Ag-NRL property. Easier to deny use than to justify choices made or monitor compliance with restrictions.
118. Prefer no expansion
119. revenue
120. same as above
121. Seating should be allowed
122. Seating should be allowed. Picnic tables? A small indoor seating area?
123. See prior
124. Seems a little 'commercial' but maybe it could work without ruining the farm's presence.
125. Service to the public.
126. Should be able to add new business opportunities
127. should be allowed to do what the market can hold.
128. Should be allowed to have picnic tables and seating similar to those available at food trucks.
129. Should be allowed to new too, not just existing
130. Skagit County needs more food and beverage options. Look at Edison. It is packed every weekend all year. Allow for Skagit county residents to benefit from the tourism already here.
131. Small and/or temporary quickly becomes permanent and enlarges
132. Sure, maybe fewer hoops to jump thru with the country food department.
133. Take out or drive through = litter
134. The devil is in the details. It should in no way hinder area farming operations.
135. The direction of the questions and suggestions is concerning. Why focus all of this development on the farmland soils themselves? We barely allow environmental restoration on farmlands and that is the stuff that is going to help us and fish and wildlife in a changing climate. We need to refocus our thinking. New development should not be in floodplains. Seasonal and temporary is one thing but not these long-term creeps on the soils and flood land of quasi-businesses or a real businesses.. We already have way too much development in the floodplain. Move commerce to the hills, even if ag related
136. The established stands support a working business however it is bleeding out to giant traffic uncontrolled mess on small rural roads. Small stands get big and then get greedy.
137. The Growth Management Hearings Boards have rejected ancillary food services as an activity on Ag-NRL. Yes, there are grandfathered venues like Snow Goose and the Farmhouse restaurant, but that does not mean these activities should be permitted anywhere else. The current venues were operating pre-GMA and allowed to continue. The conversion of prime ag soils requirement began with the 1990 passage of the GMA. The County needs to calculate annual conversions of prime ag soils on Ag-NRL as well as conversion of other rural lands with prime ag soils before allowing a zoning or land use change that violates the well-established policies in Skagit County.
138. The limited food service or farm stand should mesh with the agricultural product(s) being produced.

139. The point of on-farm dining to offer patrons a unique, memorable seed-to-plate or seed-to glass experience, which will help them to feel a closer connection between what they eat and drink and how and where the ingredients that go into these things are grown. Requiring to-go service only would greatly undermine the value of this experience!
140. There are enough damn coffee stands. You can't swing a dead cat by the tail in Skagit County without hitting one.
141. There is no explanation needed. I agree there should be limited food service. Enough said
142. There should be no arbitrary restriction on food service besides those already required for running a food based business.
143. These should be limited to promote those products being grown only.
144. they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
145. This is already a settled matter
146. This is great for local businesses as long it does not impact communities.
147. this is not accessory to ag
148. This is too restrictive
149. This isn't a fair question. As I understand it, an "already approved farm stand" would sell relatively unprocessed agricultural products, not prepared food. What does a drive-through coffee stand have to do with agriculture?
150. This option would still allow for the farmer/owner to capitalize on their own crops, and yet not allow for zoning changes.
151. This seems like a reasonable trade-off between commerce and quality of life.
152. This should be allowable for new users, if the road ext can support it. To go or to stay should be allowed.
153. This should be allowed along with full-service sites
154. This survey suggests a big trend towards changing Skagit county from real farming to commercialization, adding population and traffic to already challenged farm roads. How does this make sense?
155. This would limit new stands
156. Too easy for these to be non-farm related. We don't need a bunch more drive through fast food places scattered around.
157. Too many restrictions.
158. Too restrictive
159. Traffic consideration and modifications would need to be required for this use to occur safely. That would result in other impacts.
160. Unfair to small farm owners who haven't gotten a chance to get a farm stand started.
161. Unless the farmer is growing and roasting coffee beans that is not consistent with the focus of education and stewardship (See previous notes)
162. Unless the food or beverage comes specifically from that farm, it should not belong in that ag zoning.
163. Visitors should have an option to stay and sit while dining or enjoying a coffee. What's the rush? Let them hang out and enjoy the area. Sit down service or areas to sit should be available. Leave it up to the farm stands to have that decision but it should be available should they want more options.
164. walk-up food service, families sit at picnic tables then stay longer so kids can pet pigs, drink cider, take photos.
165. We already have these near my home on Memorial hi way. I constantly see traffic issues/near misses with vehicles coming and going on the hi way.
166. We have restaurants in town that have parking, etc. Keep the farmland farmland.
167. We lost local restaurant options locally during Covid. Adding some new good cooks would be lovely.
168. Well., maybe. A few picnic tables or chairs, but on a very limited basis.

169. What can it possibly hurt for someone to sit down and enjoy some fresh berries (and juice) with their family?
170. What does coffee have to do with Skagit County farms? Takeout of products made with food grown on the farm is fine but unless it's a coffee plantation then no espresso stands. Also, takeout adds to plastic single use container waste.
171. What does this have to do with farming? Maybe something like the corn stands on McCorquedale, but must have adequate traffic provisions. The corn stand gets pretty hectic when cars backup into road. Is okay because the season is short.
172. when serving alcohol it should be required to offer food. it is not fair to tell my 90-year-old mom she cannot sit down to eat
173. Why is it limited?
174. Why no seating?
175. why not on-site meals
176. Why not? Any perceived negatives can be managed.
177. Why restrict the use of existing facilities?
178. Will seating, too
179. With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
180. With proper permitting from above question seating could be allowed and limited
181. Would be beneficial to prevent loitering
182. x
183. Yes

184. Yes
185. Yes
186. Yes
187. Yes
188. Yes
189. Yes
190. Yes
191. Yes, and allow a seating area.
192. Yes good trucks can work well.; Food*
193. Yes this should be allowed, even if it has seating.; Land uses should be left up to the owner as much as possible in rural areas.
194. yes, why not
195. Yes, again with limits to size, food can enhance the rural experience
196. Yes, allowing on-site seating would seem to take away from farming acreage
197. yes, if impact low on area
198. Yes, if limited.
199. Yes, if stand does not create a traffic problem....a lot of folks are addicted to coffee and will risk their lives on a 2-lane highway to get their morning fix:)
200. Yes, only food and coffee in existing buildings.
201. Yes. This could be an additional type of food service but not the only solution.
202. Yes. Increase income for the farm and community
203. Yes. We all love our coffee stands. y

Most respondents would allow temporary /special event food service including farmland and non-farmland owners, except those that lease farmland.

12. Allow food service if the accessory restaurant is subject to a special use permit, which means that food service would be temporary and limited to special events. All permit requirements for proper infrastructure and notice would be included.

Response	Total Num	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	244	61%	57%	38%	73%	62%
No, I do not agree	158	39%	43%	63%	27%	38%
Total	402	100%	126	8	33	232

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=402 respondents total, with 399 sharing their ownership status

Temporary food service, please explain:

1. "Maybe
2. "No
3. "this is way too technical and is assuming to many ""ifs""
4. .
5. A special event restaurant would attract more customers to Skagit County
6. accessory restaurant should be permitted
7. accessory restaurant should not be restricted to a temporary status. Permanent status should be acceptable as long as primary use of property remains farming or natural resources activities based.
8. Again, my suggestion is a licensing process so that no rights vest to the potential detriment of agriculture.
9. Again, no temporary or limited. Should still require proper facilities.

10. Again, not supporting this idea in the least. If anyone lives in the farmland areas, I would be shocked to see this supported. I'm not against farming at all and support it totally. But a whole nice adjunct industry, not so much.
11. Again, permitting is expensive to the county and hard to regulate. There are restaurants in nonfarming areas that are fantastic and no need to turn farms into quaint things for those from outside the county.
12. Again, why limit the choice for the farm-stands, let them make the choice which is best for them.
13. agree
14. Agree
15. Agree
16. Agree.
17. allow food service outright

18.	allow the ability to have more year round food service to open up the business opportunities
19.	Allowed under special use permit.
20.	Allowing more expansive use would likely creep into a change in the purpose and intent of the agribusiness designation definition as presented. Loss of agricultural land would likely result.
21.	Already here...it's called "Farmers Market" geez... nothing more, nothing less.
22.	An appropriate accessory drive through would be the Cascadian Farms farmstand
23.	anytime proper food handling is achieved and monitored why not allow anytime - a special Saturday when baby goats are born, there's particularly a lot of flowers blooming, etc... an extended opening is advertised and folks are invited out.
24.	Appropriate controls needed
25.	As long as the food served is showcasing the products the farmer grows or is provided by local farmers and designated as such
26.	Assuming this does not require county monitoring.
27.	Basically catering of events on farmland should be allowed.
28.	depends on the frequency of ""temporary"" and ""limited"" events"
29.	Do not allow
30.	Do not support restaurants in the Ag zone. Period.
31.	Do not want more enforcement and administrative requirements. Those requirements require bloat of the administrative staff or ineffective enforcement or both
32.	Easy to abuse permitting process
33.	enough with the limitations on how the business will run. the industry is already regulated for public safety and health.
34.	Except in the case of food trucks, I would not be a fan of carnival style dining in the valley, Transitory dining does not contribute to a higher end venue, tax generating community.
35.	Farms = food
36.	Farm-to-table restaurants are typically very small in nature, often with fewer than 20 seats, and the model on which they tend to operate is by giving those that visit a very special one-on-one experience. Limiting food service to larger events not only undermines this but also puts a far greater burden on resources, such as parking, water use, wastewater, etc...
37.	Focus on food production.
38.	Food service could be permanent with proper permitting requirements.
39.	Food service should be allowed year round or seasonally with farming. It should be up to the farm and food service operator
40.	Food service should be related to the events without expanding existing footprints.
41.	Food service should not be limited to temporary and special events.
42.	Food trucks for special events. Nothing permanent. Event over, truck goes away.
43.	For catering purposes only.
44.	Good service shouldn't be limited to special events. It's not reasonable to think that every farm would have a "restaurant" - it's simply not economically feasible. But it would be a wonderful boon to tourism to have a few options for visitors to stop at and enjoy a farm fresh salad, or coffee, or a wine tasting, or an ice cream cone as they explore our area. And area residents would love another way to support our friends and neighbors.
45.	How many such events could you squeeze into a year?
46.	I agree that requirements for proper infrastructure is mandatory, but operations should be allowed for maximum time so that the operation can be successful.
47.	I believe both if the above options could work
48.	I believe in the freestanding farm to table restaurants as the ones currently grandfathered in- which are neither temporary or limited to special events.

49.	I believe that any addition of a permanent restaurant facility would adversely impair by removing land from agriculture and creating too many collateral issues for neighboring farms as well as needing additional tax dollars to properly implement the guidelines.
50.	I can think of no compelling argument for why restaurants and tasting rooms should be more restricted than agritourism generally.
51.	I could agree if food service infrastructure were not permanent, i.e. food trucks.
52.	I do not support special use permits in any form, as I believe they simply lead to permanent farm land conversion
53.	I don't understand why it can't be more permanent.
54.	I don't believe they should be temporary or limited to special events
55.	I don't understand the above
56.	I think a permitted accessory restaurant could be run year-round without limits for special events.
57.	I think farms should be able to have restaurants without these restrictions
58.	I think farms should not be limited to temporary and limited events. On a practical level, they will shut down after harvest season (fall). It is expensive to staff a café, and traffic stops when wind, rain and misery kicks in. Better have a great summer to carry you through. Isn't that the way is always on the farm? No year round income, but if you can extend that income a few more months...
59.	If food service is already allowed, why would you limit it to only special events?
60.	If the county is thinking of allowing a special use permit for accessory food eateries, then perhaps one for just special events and one for x amount of days per year. As a farmer for example, my thirty acre farm could do well with a food truck that had only the meat and herbs I grow for more than just special events. I don't think it would make sense economically. I think the permit should reflect how much a footprint a food accessory area/unit takes up. A food truck for example with a couple of picnic tables could be great income for a farmer with a small plot by a main road. And if they need to move for farming/rotational reasons or if anything causes any issues...then it's more doable than a permanent structure.
61.	If this means catering then yes; if this means a temporary restaurant - I can't see how that would work so no.
62.	It is really nice for tourist to have an ice cream or beverage or snack on their visit to the farm.
63.	It should not be restricted to temporary and special events.
64.	It would be clear when permit is granted that a temporary use would be advantages.
65.	Leave farms as farms
66.	Less conflict with primary interests of farming activity
67.	Let the restaurants serve the food. Stop trying to governmentise everything.
68.	Let's work on revitalizing the downtown area with agritourism instead.
69.	Like what Gordon's does during Festival of Family Farms
70.	Limiting them to permits will not allow a business to prosper
71.	Longer term permitting should be encouraged and allowed.
72.	More death by a thousand cuts. So no.
73.	No
74.	No
75.	no
76.	No
77.	No
78.	No
79.	No
80.	No Again allow them to sell their product as they should have business lic

81.	No catering, no special events. Clients will be affluent population. Observe other states and the demise of agriculture.
82.	No comment
83.	no not necessary
84.	No permits.
85.	No temporaries, too hard to control
86.	No, adding restaurant facilities would likely decrease available ag lands over time.
87.	No, land should be used for farming agritourism
88.	No, leery of businesses could interpret "special events" to mean.
89.	No, loophole problem.
90.	No, shouldn't need a permit, and shouldn't be limited.
91.	no, this is commercial use and requires a zoning change
92.	No. This should be allowed as a permanent thing.
93.	No. Why limit food service to just a few dates? It wouldn't justify the infrastructure investment by the establishment. Seasons will dictate the tourist traffic.
94.	No; what special event is to take place at the farm?
95.	not special use only
96.	Not sure I understand the question. If we are talking about a catered wedding with outside vendor that would be ok. Not sure I want to see restaurants on farm land.
97.	Not the proper place for such activity.
98.	Nothing at this time
99.	Often temporary become permanent and require construction of food handling facilities.
100.	Only if food service is mobile and the commissary kitchen is located elsewhere on sewer.
101.	permits and rules don't improve the quality of the experience - they just slow down the ability to have them
102.	Permitting should allow the potential for summer seasonal permitting.
103.	Pushing the envelope if infrastructure required. Eventually becomes permanent
104.	Regular food service, call it a "restaurant" if you like, is a complementary activity. Sitting down for a berry scone at a berry farm, makes sense to me.
105.	Restaurants require dishwashing and possibly cooking oil disposal that are not compatible with a septic system.
106.	Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
107.	Same as above
108.	Same comment pertaining to a wedding or special event... If the wedding/event is regulated by the county to ensure the farm is able to still act as a working farm, then I feel it is a safe option for a form of agritourism.
109.	Schedule F and health department rules. Full stop.
110.	See above
111.	See above
112.	See above response
113.	See above.
114.	See above.
115.	See previous comment. Temporary is the key word in this question.
116.	See prior
117.	See prior answer. Restaurants, coffee stands etc that are non-mobile or permanent structures should not be allowed on zoned farm land
118.	See Taylor Shellfish answer, above.
119.	Should be allowed at all times
120.	Should be allowed in all cases
121.	should not need special use permit. should be allowed to be permanent with proper health and safety considerations
122.	Should NOT require that they be temporary
123.	Sounds like a good option for event planners
124.	Special events need food. Require recycling (cans bottles) and composting of uncoated paper plates and food waste.

125.	Special events need to get permits. The chronic special events creep over into always open events every few weeks impacts to neighbors.
126.	Stop limiting to "Special"...open up if they can swing it
127.	Temporary and limited to special events would be okay.
128.	Temporary use would be reasonable, if they were having a seasonal event. Since a lot of agrotourism is seasonal, it makes sense.
129.	The biggest issue I see here is food hygiene. Good luck with that, I won't be eating there.
130.	The county needs to stay out of the way and let farmers develop the means to maintain their farming operations, even if it means great restaurants on a farm.
131.	The criteria for a special use permit approval should include prime ag soils acres and conversions caused by the special and/or temporary use(s). No one is tracking how many acres have been converted already nor does the County have any incentive to say no to requested permits, including special uses, as the money from these permits helps fund the Planning and Development Services staff and programs. The County Commissioners should remove the incentive for PD&S to say yes to any permit by returning to a budget allocation from the General Fund that does not make the employees' salaries dependent on the number of permits processed. Other reforms may be needed to de-couple this unethical and expensive policy which the WA State League of Women Voters requested removed over 10 years ago after their extensive report on the influence of "user pays" policies on number of permits.
132.	The devil is in the details, it should not hinder area farming operations.
133.	There's always a special occasion.
134.	they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
135.	This is not Accessory to Ag
136.	This question presumes temporary and special events (not agricultural activities) are permitted. Are they?
137.	This seems like a reasonable trade-off.
138.	This survey often does not include all the definitions needed to make an informed answer. My responses are made therefore with my gut instinct that our local farm products need promoting and options concerning the final product. I do not want to circumvent any food safety requirements, nor do I want these proposed businesses interfering with the private enjoyment of adjacent property owners. I think a study of how this is done in places in Europe could be helpful. They seem to have a good balance of rural vs commercial with their agriculture.
139.	Too much wiggle room.
140.	Too restrictive
141.	Too restrictive.
142.	Traffic
143.	Tulip, Halloween and holiday events are good examples of what is currently happening to benefit local agritourism.
144.	Unless every day could be a special event? There are many retailers that don't want to provide food. But it is an important part of their location. Food Trucks are already required to permit and should be able to work at locations that they create relationships with, VS making the business owner of the space build and permit for food service.
145.	Use business sense.
146.	What restaurants are permitted on farmland? I suppose Farmhouse is. Are there more? I am ok with farmhouse doing this in their parking lot
147.	when serving alcohol we should be required to offer food
148.	With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
149.	x
150.	Yes
151.	Yes

152. Yes
153. Yes
154. Yes
155. Yes
156. Yes
157. Yes
158. Yes
159. Yes
160. Yes
161. Yes and no. Some people would want a temporary arrangement and others would want a more permanent situation. It would be nice not to limit an entrepreneur who wants to branch out. They should be encouraged.; Someone may want to have a small, full-time accessory restaurant.
162. Yes, but limit to 3 events/year of 1 day only
163. Yes but limited seating and following local bylaws; Yes
164. Yes, farmers should be allowed to explore other types of income
165. Yes, as long as it's limited and temporary
166. Yes, good idea.

167. Yes, I would like more food options out here! And more events to go to.
168. Yes, if this was just a special event business. If it was a full-time business, and I would say no.
169. yes, seems to be a reasonable compromise and could enhance the economy of Skagit Valley
170. Yes.
171. Yes. Another solution but not the only.
172. yes. Keep it temporary for festivals etc.
173. Yes. I assume this question is directed to food trucks. Special events only. Lots of thinking needs to be given to how a "special event" is defined.
174. Yes. I think it should be allowed during harvest season but not year-round.
175. Yes. Temporary, and/or special events are just that.
176. Yes. To improve the local economy
177. Your statement is the answer. The key is Temporary.

Most would not support allowing restaurants or tasting rooms as a primary use through rezones on a case-by-case basis.

13. Allow restaurants or tasting rooms as a primary use if the subject property is rezoned to a commercial zone, on a case by case basis, after a public hearing and noticed to property owners.

Responses	Total Num	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	163	41%	38%	50%	41%	43%
No, I do not agree	235	59%	62%	50%	59%	57%
Total	398	100%	128	6	34	227

Publicinput.com, BERK 2022

n=398 respondents total, with 395 sharing their ownership status

Restaurants/tasting rooms on if property is rezoned, case by case basis, please explain:

1. "Agree
2. "I answered no to this previously why ask it again
3. "I do not agree with rezoning agricultural land to commercial.
4. "If rezoning is permissible then the county would be changing their policy of maintaining farmlands.
5. "It's too much of a slippery slope for farmland to turn commercial.
6. "rezoning is not necessary. the county should allow us to run our business and collect the taxes.
7. "We don't want to lose our agricultural zoning just to accommodate a restaurant. A provision within the zoning will allow the ag primary use to be reinstated at any time and not allow other commercial activity to leach into the ag lands if an ag-inspired establishment is not successful.
8. "We have the Farmhouse Restaurant (now Sean O' Connors)
9. .
10. A rezone process would take into consideration the fundamentals of the area. Once a rezone has occurred, it should enjoy the uses that are common with that zoning.
11. Absolutely no rezoning of farmland for other purposes should be allowed.
12. abuse due to favoritism will undoubtedly corrupt that ides

13. Again with the ability to object and also does not affect property price.; As long as there is an ability to reject the zoning if needed and with the ability to object and also does not affect property price.; Again with the ability to object and also does not affect property price
14. agree
15. agree
16. Agree on a case-by-case basis after a public hearing and notice to property owners
17. Agree, if people are determined to change the zoning. Perhaps the zoning would return to previous state if ongoing rules were not kept.
18. Agricultural land should NOT be rezoned!
19. All the above are in line with my future vision of the Skagit.
20. Another case for the corner of Avon Allen and Highway 20 (previously had the Country Café-I miss the hashbrowns!)
21. Are you suggesting rezoning ag. Land?
22. but there needs to be a demonstrated justification for such a rezone"
23. Can't slide into losing agricultural land in this manner.
24. Change is going to come. Hopefully public hearings will control the changes in a good way.
25. Chipping away at the agriculture land.

26.	Commercial activities always create conflicts with active ag and set up valuations tensions that tend to go where the money goes
27.	Commercial zoning conversion when the property owner is creating a commercial enterprise is realistic on a case-by-case basis
28.	Disagree. Rezoning would eventually replace farmers
29.	Disagree. This sounds overly complex to implement.
30.	do not allow
31.	do not know enough for a proper response
32.	Do not open the possibility of rezoning farmland to commercial use!
33.	Do not rezone any land that is now zoned farmland.
34.	Do not rezone farmland.
35.	Don't take away farmland
36.	Due process and public vetting are key.
37.	Environmental and socioeconomic analysis should always be the first consideration and if deemed an appropriate, yes. Allow for the use
38.	Everyone has some excuse why they need to destroy some farmland fir THEIR super special business idea, and who gets to rezone is usually connected more to who knows which commissioners than the strength of the idea. No more rezones. No more death by 1000 cuts.
39.	Fair for business
40.	Farmland should be primary
41.	Follow current re-zone practice - that requires public hearing and notice.
42.	Food service should not be allowed to rezone the land. It should stay part of the farm; This would run the risk of losing land zoned for AG
43.	How is this keeping with our goal of preserving farmland?
44.	However, IF the county decides to change their farm preservation policy, then, yes, restaurants and/or tasting rooms should be allowed on a case-by-case basis. "
45.	I agree with this statement except the phrasing of "primary use of the subject property" the farmstand should not be the primary use, just an accessory.
46.	I agree.
47.	I am NOT in favor of rezoning agricultural land. Once it is lost it cannot be replaced.
48.	I cannot agree to rezoning farmland to a commercial zone.
49.	I do not agree with rezoning any ag land to commercial. Ag land should remain ag, but the allowable uses of ag land should be expanded to allow for additional ag-adjacent uses such as farm-to-table food experiences, tasting rooms, events, etc.
50.	I do not support rezoning of any farmland
51.	I do not support rezoning to allow for this kind of growth. It will have a larger environmental impact. Skagit County is a very special place, and we should not be messing with it
52.	I don't think any farmland should be rezoned - now you're getting into murky water. It's one thing to let an existing farm (like WA Bulb) host off season weddings to add a revenue stream. It's another thing to have whoever wants to rezone some land to build a hotel and restaurant.
53.	I don't believe in zoning
54.	I don't think I trust the rezoning process. too much room for outside influence to sway the outcome. the heart of agritourism is the "agri" part and should remain.
55.	I like the case-by-case basis, I like the notification to neighbors, but it's too slippery of a slope. The enforcement of all of this is too light."
56.	I live in La Conner and realize the case by case systems can be shifted by greed, going against public wishes and public officials using variances.
57.	I respect farmland for what it is. Fearing the conversion of it to a "commercial zone" would result in corporations or builders buying out these properties and increasing the population density due to mass real estate development.

58.	I support a commercial aspect of agricultural zoning, but it should be limited/governed. Case by case votes encourage corruption. One set of rules for all without special approval!
59.	I think primary food services don't need to be in prime agricultural areas.
60.	I think the key word is rezoned. In the case of rezoning, it changes everything.; The emphasis is on rezone, which changes everything.; If a property is rezoned, it undergoes a public hearing and comments, plus a notification in the paper.
61.	I think they should be given the opportunity.
62.	I worry about your case-by-case standard. Commercial zoning may need to have another subcategory in it so not all the restrictions are placed on Agribusiness. Have a reasonable list of standards. If the business meets the standards, then issue a license, if there are exceptions, that's the time for case by case
63.	I'm a broken record
64.	If it cannot be farmed, rezone it. But make sure it cannot be farmed. But commercial scares me. Today a tasting room. Tomorrow a manufacturing plant
65.	If it's not truly a working farm it should not be zoned as farmland
66.	If things are kept small
67.	If we start rezoning piecemeal, pretty soon all the agricultural land will be rezoned out of existence.
68.	I'm not sure if rezoning would affect the use of the agriculture land
69.	I'm not sure the zoning process is trustworthy.; It's a slippery slope.
70.	In general, we have more than enough commercial zoning, much of which is currently vacant buildings; we should be biased towards revitalizing the existing commercial zones, not creating new ones. Additionally, much of the charm of Skagit is from agricultural and rural character, which would be degraded if more of those areas were zoned commercial. But I do think there's probably a few genuine cases where a small area being re-zoned would benefit the vibrancy of the surrounding area, so I think there should be a process to allow that on a case-by-case basis, with significant input from the public and especially property owners.
71.	It's too expensive to rezone. Just do it without all the rezoning and permits
72.	it's time to allow this type of business in the farmland
73.	Land use can be allowed to change especially if 1 acre of a 40-acre parcel changes zoning. It can work in some places but could be disruptive in others. Having a review process allows for flexibility without rigid blanket rules
74.	Let it be rezoned on case by case
75.	No
76.	No
77.	No
78.	No
79.	No
80.	No - we have plenty of commercial zones
81.	No Ag zone should be sufficient
82.	No because unclear if neighbors have a day or just get notice. If rezoned commercial, then can all commercial activities take place? This is dangerous.
83.	No comment
84.	No disagree
85.	NO farmland use rezoning
86.	no keep it agricultural as primary
87.	No don't rezone ag land. Next thing it will become housing or commercial property
88.	No Re zoning of Ag land. There are plenty of other places that are not farmable to place a restaurant

89.	No restaurants on agriculture zoned land. With the best soils in the world, you want to pave them over for a restaurant? Put them in town.
90.	No rezoning , temporary permits only
91.	no rezoning away from farmland... that definitely would not protect farmland!
92.	No rezoning of agricultural land to commercial.
93.	No rezoning of agricultural land.
94.	No rezoning of farmland please!
95.	no rezoning should be done to turn farmland into a commercial zone.
96.	No to rezoning requirements
97.	NO! Do not rezone for ANY reason.
98.	No!! No removing at all. Farmland needs preserved as such.
99.	No, as it would take land out of agriculture use
100.	No, doesn't need to be rezoned for a use as such. Let people do what they want with their own land.
101.	No, if it is farmland, I would like the farm to be preserved
102.	No, keep in farmland. No rezoning.
103.	No, no, and no. As answered previously, there are plenty of empty storefronts that can be used for restaurants or tasting rooms. There is a near empty mall that could be a common location for many different purposes.
104.	No, not consistent with agricultural use
105.	No, this will turn rural farmland into commercial property
106.	no. Don't rezone farmland to commercial!
107.	No. Rezoning from agricultural to commercial to accommodate a restaurant or other use does not protect farmland.
108.	no. too scary to see that kind of creeping growth, a slippery slope?
109.	No. Why would rezoning be necessary? That removes farmland and would open the door to other types of development.
110.	No. I do not agree with rezone to commercial to allow for this
111.	not on Ag-NRL
112.	Nothing at this time
113.	Outside money will come and pressure zoning boards for change. The restaurant could become more valuable than the farm. Trojan Horse.
114.	Oversight and notification of neighboring property owners seems fair.
115.	Policy should allow and encourage this use for products are locally sourced.
116.	Possibly. It would depend on why the zoning was changed.
117.	Potential for this type of case-by-case rezoning to become contentious and capricious. And also leave nearby property owners wondering what might be coming next to change the character of their neighborhood.
118.	Primary use... not an extension to the land use.
119.	Quit destroying farmland for commercial businesses
120.	Restaurants and "tasting rooms" are urban uses, and urban Washington State law, belong in an urban growth area. In addition to undermining the effectiveness of urban growth boundaries and agricultural zoning, allowing commercial food and drink services in rural areas will increase the number of vehicle miles traveled, undermine the economic competitiveness of cities, impact the availability of water, and increase septic discharges and the potential for groundwater contamination. DO NOT allow commercial urban uses such as restaurants, bars, and store in rural areas or on agricultural land.
121.	Restaurants and tasting rooms should be allowed unless the clear intent is for the property to no longer be agricultural and require rezoning. If the property owner is no longer growing ingredients for the proposed business on the property, then it would need to be rezoned.

122.	Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
123.	Rezoned is what needs to be avoided
124.	REZONES!! =Piracy of the commons.
125.	Rezoning battles cause hardship on neighbors trying to preserve the area, slippery slope to over-commercialization; No rezoning, preserve the current character of the area
126.	Rezoning decreases farmland
127.	Rezoning for a money grab reminds me of a past county commissioner who used the good old boy system to get his land rezoned so he could build a hand ball court for him and his buddies. This is what we are trying to avoid, farmland loss.
128.	Rezoning goes against the goal of keeping agricultural land.
129.	Rezoning is the act of changing the permitted activity so such use might be included.
130.	Rezoning is the exact opposite of what you just told me agritourism and this survey were all about. Skagit county has loads of underdeveloped commercial zones that are much better candidates for commercial primary use operations.
131.	Rezoning just to allow activities opens up the process of rezoning for anything.
132.	Rezoning needs to be an option for landowners. Stability of ownership is important.
133.	Rezoning of Agricultural uses to commercial is a slippery slope and some sort of firewall for this should be in place.
134.	Rezoning should not be required. If there is public demand for a service, it should be allowed.
135.	Rezoning to commercial use is not, in my opinion, in the best interest of farmland.
136.	Same answer. Either it is ag, or it is commercial, exceptions already are turning into the norm.
137.	See above
138.	Seems prohibitive to the activity.
139.	Seen it time and again, people with money and connections get rezoned for their benefit while reducing the livability. Going through it right now.
140.	should be part of agricultural zoning if possible. Commercial gives too much leeway for expansion.
141.	Start rezoning and it will not stop
142.	Stick with the code. We need farmers to farm unencumbered.
143.	Taxes and a public process would be considered
144.	Temporary is safest.
145.	That is not preserving farmland.
146.	That sounds like it would cost the landowner a lot of money and therefore would only be accessible to landowners who have an outside income (wealthy people who buy farmland as an investment opportunity and have the financial resources to capitalize on the neighboring farmland aesthetic without actually contributing to the agricultural economy of the Skagit Valley). Most farmers would not have the income to be able to afford the rezoning process.
147.	The "slippery slope" known to proceed breaking down farmland protections
148.	the county is too regulatory and should stay out. "
149.	The idea is to preserve farmland. Re-zoning will defeat the purpose of preservation. Agritourism cannot impact the land.
150.	The reason ag lands are no longer farmable is not that they lose their great soil. It is because the land is gradually returning to pre-agricultural conditions due to climate change, flooding, sea level rise, etc. So, these lands are not where we want to put commercial activities. If the soils are still good and farmable, they should not be rezoned for commercial activities.

151. The rezoning option would have catastrophic long-term effects and also be a NIGHTMARE to police. I can't even believe the county even entertained this proposal from the consultants brought in.
152. The Re-Zoning process is not simple, my experience - anything attempted at the planning level is extremely costly and mostly having to "unfortunately" result in the hiring of consultants, engineers etc., so as to address all the interpretations and intents of the various Codes the County bases their decisions on. Even recording a single document at the County has become ridiculously expensive. Try to come up with different method.
153. then it wouldn't really be agritourism... some idiot would try to open an Applebees
154. Then the farmland is gone
155. Then you are taking it OUT of Ag designation.
156. There is no need to rezone our current farmlands. Plenty of mixed-use land already exists in the county.
157. There might be a few exceptions, but not on existing productive farmland."
158. This answer is contingent on criteria of rezoning to commercial land use and the effect that would have on the farming potential of the land.
159. This is a confusing question. Is the question about changing zoning farmland or about restaurants? I am opposed to rezoning farmland.
160. This is a slippery slope.
161. This is an impractical proposition and would destroy our region. Its question posed only to paint this topic into a corner.
162. This is not agricultural activity. It will erode the agricultural use. Do not do it
163. too much politics involved. People with money will soon or later get their way. Too many examples of rezone taking place with neighbors not wanting it but still get shoved down their throat.
164. Under the current code, the rezoning of land in the Ag Zone for commercial use is extraordinarily unlikely, and the requirement for such rezoning is tantamount to an outright prohibition of the activities in question. In order to be viable, this option would need to be accompanied by a clear and straightforward procedure that would allow for rezoning as long as certain key requirements are met.
165. Very hesitant to see any farmland rezoned. That could go bad very quickly.
166. Way too easy to replace farmland with non-farm related businesses that don't sell Skagit products.
167. We are trying to preserve farmland. rezoning existing farmland to accomplish this option is opening the door for future abuse. I would like it if the County would actually raise the 40-acre minimum for housing to be increased to 100 acres. We have already seen too many new houses built on farmland.
168. We don't need to rezone it. We need to let people do what they wish on their private property as long as it is not destroying the properties.; Rezoning cost money. Businesses should not be allowed in residential areas if they cause sizable amounts of traffic. Rural areas should not be legislated.
169. We must give identification and protection of prime ag soils stronger protections from re-zones and policy changes that convert this land to other uses. We should

not incentivize conversion of prime ag soils by allowing re-zones with mitigation (cash payments to the FLP and/or two or three times the acres re-zoned as Ag-NRL if the parcels had prime ag soils for examples), as there is no replacement for these soils.
170. Will discourage any meaningful investment over a time horizon that could actually help preserve farmland
171. Wow, is this going to be 'political ' ... who is going to 'pay off' who?? No.
172. x
173. Yeah, let the people talk, let the voters vote.... this is America... uffda
174. Yes
175. Yes
176. Yes
177. Yes
178. yes
179. Yes
180. Yes
181. Yes
182. Yes
183. Yes
184. Yes
185. Yes, going through the hoops is important especially making sure all property owners in the affected area have been notified of their rights and details of the hearing, i.e. who what where when etc.
186. Yes, if the property is already zoned commercial use.
187. Yes, but only if the rezoning does not affect the agriculture land surrounding the subject property
188. Yes, if property is re-zoned then a restaurant would seem acceptable.
189. Yes, ok, if the rezone takes into account that the property is not well suited for agriculture and is out of floodplain
190. yes, re-zoning is required to allow expanded commercial use
191. yes, some traditional farming can't transition to modern ag industry and if a farming family can find a value-added way to stay food oriented and ag oriented but move to an end user product I support that
192. Yes, this would more closely align with allowing the property owner to have control over their property and follow the same rules as any other business owner.
193. Yes. Resident agreement is important for future success. The Vine at Bertelsen requires 9:30 pm stop of music in their contacts! Keeping peace with neighbors makes it a pleasant long-term success.
194. Yes. But not on farmland.
195. Yes. If a property owner chooses to do so and follows the laws.
196. Yes. If the property is re-zoned or used for reasons other than initially intended there should be a hearing process.
197. Yes. This could be a solution as well.
198. Yikes! That is a recipe for disaster. Who will actually know about the public hearing and the application? The notices today are tiny and limited in area. In addition, this allows the change regardless of public opinion. This is definitely a bad idea.
199. Zoning is zoning- gives an opportunity for the public to provide comments to the Commissioners
200. Zoning laws should be set in stone!

Farm Stands and U-Pick

A large majority of respondents would make no changes to the code for traditional types of agritourism like farm stands and u picks. And most would simplify the current permit process for them.

14. Make no changes to the code in regards to farm stands and u-pick. These are allowed in most rural resource zones.

Response	Total Share
Yes, I agree	85%
No, I do not agree	15%

n=389 respondents

No changes to code for farm stands and u-pick, please explain:

1. "Agree	20. do not expand the rules. You give them a little crack and they will crawl through it."
2. "Roadside stands and farm stands need to be differentiated. If a small-holder grower wants to do an honesty box at the end of his or her driveway, rock on. As long as that property files a Schedule F if the owner wants to put up a 5,000 square foot store with a coffee stand and pastry counter LET THEM!	21. Do you need to permit them, even the folks with a small amount, like subsistence farmers with a small overage for sale?
3. "Seasonal roadside stands" should be temporary so if the farming practice changes the ground can go back to productive farm use.	22. Don't we already allow for farm tours during the autumn season? Let's celebrate farming by not turning farms into Disneyland. Everything has its place, but to remain rural agricultural, we must not stray from that mission.
4. 45% of food inflation is derived from big money interests - leaving Skagit families at a disadvantage when feeding their children. Why not remove barriers to food by better facilitating u-pick options - lowering the cost for families and putting more money directly in the hands of farmers who have sucked up 100% increases in the cost of fertilizer (due to the bastard known as Putin) and increased fuel costs to run their tractors? ; 45% of food inflation is due to the greed of large corporate interests. Remove barriers to food for Skagit families. Our farmers are also hit hard by doubled costs for fertilizer, petrol for their tractors and other operational costs. Put more money directly in their pockets.	23. Duh, what is the beef here?? Are we gone squash the farmers?? This is getting really corny...
5. Again, I would prefer a licensing system as indicated above. Farm stands and U-pick are appropriate farming uses but need to be reviewed for traffic impacts, etc. 5,000 square feet sounds way too big.	24. Easy access to healthy foods is good. Just don't gravel over more farmland to make parking areas.
6. Agree	25. Enforce current rules
7. Agree	26. Farm stands and u-pick are a reasonable and necessary part of viability for many farms, as well as providing an enjoyable activity for visitors and locals.
8. Agree. The more opportunities to earn income from the products of the farm the better for the farmer and the public.	27. Farm stands and U-pick are the proper use of Agritourism.
9. Always good to relook and change	28. Farm stands are fine.
10. another way to generate money for the county	29. Farm stands will need to expand to support attracting moneyed tourists from Redmond and Sammamish. Skagit County businesses need more legal opportunities to separate these wealthy tourists from their money.
11. change the rules and open up to all farms the chance to offer more stands	30. Farmers need to get the monetary benefit of crops. Local residents buy a lot of food at farm stands, and you pick is cheaper. The quality of life is substantially better due to the farmers here
12. Changes could be made to benefit the owner of the stand the community that surrounds them. This is a case-by-case situation and all should be heard. Some u-pick stands are the only income for small farmers and their job should not be made harder! WE SHOULD SUPPORT THEM!	31. Farmstands add value to residents and visitors alike, adding to farm incomes and allowing visitors a taste of the valley at a reasonable price.
13. Changes to the code to allow for more options other than U-pick and seasonal usage	32. Good law
14. Continue to allow for farmstands and U-pick and keep parking areas designated in proportion to acreage.	33. have a certain percentage of farm goods or base of goods be from Skagit County. using off site geo names is increasing, like San Juan Salsa, it's made in Smokey Point the only connection is using the name San Juan, Lopez Ice Cream is made in Anacortes. farm stands are a good idea, some Snow Goose on fir island does carry foreign made goods, if they wanted to expand, I would limit out of county goods
15. Current policy sounds reasonable	34. However, I would need to be better informed if that code is impacting farmers bottom line
16. Current rules seem fair.	35. I agree with the current code, however, I think the sellers should be required to have a state business license posted at the stand. There are literally dozens of farm stands in Skagit County where large amounts of cut flowers, produce, nursery plants, and other farm products are sold--way over the state guidelines for license requirement.
17. Current system seems to be working adequately and providing a benefit to the farmer and public.	36. I am local and I enjoy this type of buying local and the amount of people using them does not seem unseemly.
18. Disagree	37. I could provide a more flexible answer if I knew what kind of changes might be proposed.
19. do everything possible to support farms and their retail operations!	

38.	I don't know enough about the code to really comment but think review is always good.
39.	i generally agree with the way things stand but am not educated sufficiently on the details
40.	I love farm stands and u-pick.
41.	I love our farm stands! The freshest produce.
42.	I think exploring the option of farm tours is a good idea.
43.	I think that access and parking is the key. Most farms selling produce and u-pick are encouraging the agricultural industry. I am sure I am not qualified to comment on this as well as Mike & Jeans berries. ; I haven't noticed any problems with the u-pick stands or the farm stands. I don't believe I am qualified to comment on these, other than I do stop ever so often for strawberries.
44.	I think the amount of 500 visitors should be allowed to be higher
45.	I think the current uses are fine. Tours should be educational
46.	I think these are being well utilized and should be allowed to continue.
47.	If it ain't broke don't fix it.
48.	If it's working as-is... why change anything?
49.	I'm not sure where you got your data from but it's absolute rubbish. Tulip gardens could choose to do u-pick operations and handle 2,000+ customers PER HOUR, for 8 hours a day the entire month of April so it's not a demand game. And it's trending UP, not down. "
50.	Improve it by not getting to involved, other than to encourage it.
51.	It should be as easy as possible for a farm to have a stand. The farm should have adequate parking - could be seasonally temporary in a field and not block neighbor use of roads.
52.	It's already on the book. The key is seasonal.
53.	I've always loved to go to u pick it's! Very good experience for children to learn, too.
54.	Keep things the same
55.	Leave it alone. Should not require permitting etc,
56.	let them do what they want as long as it doesn't take away from farm land.
57.	Let them make money as long as it does not impede farm production land.
58.	Limit tours to a maximum of one week per year.
59.	Listen to the comments of the farmers who run the stands to see what would increase their productivity to help the community
60.	Local direct marketing supports small, artisanal and organic local producers
61.	Make permitting easier and more straightforward and clearly stipulate any requisite restrictions.
62.	More care should be taken to provide for safe ingress and egress in regard to existing farm stands. This would include parking accessibility.
63.	More farm stands! Convenient for us locals and allows us to pay the producers directly
64.	No
65.	No
66.	No
67.	No allow this a in any zone
68.	No comment
69.	No comment
70.	No issues with current standards.
71.	No opinion other than the observation that the present system seems to be working.
72.	No reply. I think that this decision needs to be informed in its entirety by existing farms with farm stands u-pick.
73.	no to many regulations
74.	No. Change is inevitable.
75.	No. The code needs to be expanded to allow more options for other rural locations that are hampered by arbitrary or outdated special permit limits.

76.	Not a fan of permits.
77.	Not sure on this. If the current behavior studies are correct and sustainable, I could work.
78.	not sure what changes would be beneficial but can't really rule out changes without knowing what they might be.
79.	Nothing at this time
80.	ok
81.	Restrictions on size and signs are too restrictive and are violated by most existing stands.
82.	Ridiculous rules. Who is counting. Let folks operate and be successful. Stop regulating. Let it be.
83.	Should support additional financial income to working farm properties.
84.	size should be proportional to farm and context
85.	Skagit County needs a large farmers market area. The seasonal road stands are fine if kept small but we are seeing ones that are large and basically parking lots and stores. We need to focus commercial ag such as vendor areas and markets out of best soils. Airport area would be a great place for that as other ag-related commercial activities are there. Selling food is commercial. Farmers Markets are places of community that are commercial for food and ag related products
86.	Skagit County's regulations for agricultural land seem to be very effective. Before making any changes do a comparison study on the economic viability of farming and the loss of agricultural land across jurisdictions in Washington and identify any common features of the successful jurisdictions as opposed to the failures. Emulating the actions of the failures makes no sense.
87.	That has potential. It brings in more visitors with less change to original property functions; It may expand visitors without changing the original land functionality
88.	The current policies aren't being followed. Some change or clarification and compliance is needed.
89.	The current rules are understood and acceptable.
90.	The doors should be open for farmers to increase revenue by having diversified offerings beyond wholesaling their crop.
91.	The estimate of what "could" happen is not a criteria on which to base changes. The estimate has no information about acres conversion, or other criteria that impacts Ag-NRL uses as primary production farms. Guessing about the numbers does not make it so. And wishing something to be possible is not valid for making good land use decisions.
92.	The insurance for a farm to have a u pick or a small stand is pretty substantial and comes with its own regulations that protect farmland so it would be just more red tape then is needed.
93.	There are not enough road stands in Skagit County. I can barely find any east of the freeway where I live, and I am constantly complaining about it. This is a really big deal to me. I would absolutely buy all my food from local farms if I could pick it up at a farm stand.; Please make it easier for locals and visitors to purchase local foods. I think year-round food stands should be permitted. I think that the permitting should be streamlined and that instead of annual renewal what about every two years
94.	There is no question above to answer.
95.	There should be no restriction on visitors
96.	These are ok by me.
97.	These pop up, seasonal and often on your honor stands are an example of a great reason to be alive. Period. I had to live away from them for a number of years and it was soul-crushing. The way this valley operates as a community through its seasonal produce is a quality-of-life marker. That, yes, is hyper local -and we love it that way! IF IT AINT BROKE DONT FIX IT
98.	These restrictions are artificial and only serve to discourage investment. The prescriptive, limit focused approach to writing regulations in this area are counterproductive. The

number of visitors is an unknowable for the farmer. Limitations on the number of visitors work at odds with the purpose of opening the stand in the first place. What is good (more customers) becomes bad --- this makes no sense and introduces an unacceptable business risk.
99. These uses are small and not especially promoted by the chamber of commerce
100. They should be allowed to grow with the market.
101. They should be seasonal, and temporary. That means they don't permanently stand on ag soils, or become obstructions in floods etc. Instead, make a large farmer's market in an area out of the floodplain. Permanent farmer's markets are better for the economy and community. It would be a real draw to Skagit County
102. This is getting so crazy that all this is being asked!
103. This should be encouraged other than further regulated
104. This would help the community to buy locally.
105. Those farmstands are like parking lots. They sell far more than food. Understand need to sell produce but they could do that at local farmers markets if we built one
106. those limits seem reasonable
107. Update to improve the farmers ability to diversify their income sources.
108. We love our local valley farm stands.
109. well, what changes are being considered?
110. What answer?
111. WHAT IS the CODE?? Agree to what I have yet to see or read... ...how I have wanted to FIND a farmstand, and yet they are hardly listed anywhere. You want economic growth? Encourage list a MAP of farm stands... not just word of mouth.
112. What is the question? People love U-pick and farm stands.
113. When we buy property, we rely on the zoning laws to protect us. If the zoning laws can be changed so regularly, that gives outsiders the power to change our way of life.
114. Why change a good thing? It's a waste of tax dollars to review and change it
115. With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
116. x
117. yes

118. Yes
119. Yes
120. yes
121. Yes
122. Yes
123. Yes
124. yes
125. Yes
126. Yes
127. yes
128. Yes
129. Yes
130. Yes
131. Yes
132. Yes
133. Yes
134. Yes, u pick is awesome, leave it alone.
135. Yes, but there should be no restrictions on how many visitors they should have per year.
136. Yes, I like a farm stand for fresh produce
137. Yes, I like farmstands and use them
138. Yes, I love to support all the local farmers to help with extra income for them; Yes
139. Yes, I think? Extensive permitting should not be necessary for on-site farmstands.
140. Yes, it works now.
141. yes, these are fine
142. yes, they fit my definition of farming
143. Yes, they serve an educational function.
144. Yes, this already seems fair.
145. Yes. If it isn't broke...
146. Yes. If it currently works why change?
147. Yes. Don't fix it if it's not broken.
148. Yes. I see no issue with the current regulation
149. Yes. see above.
150. Yes: I find this is a good way for people to get locally grown food and support farmers
151. You will lose money at 2000 people per year

15. Simplify the current permit process for farm stands and u-pick to make it easier, but do not change the regulations.

Response	Total Share
Yes, I agree	81%
No, I do not agree	19%

n=383 respondents

Simplify permits for farm stands and u-pick, please explain:

1.	again, change the codes so each farmer can decide but it should be approved on case by case level with county and farmers
2.	Again, do not know the current process but easier is always better.
3.	agree
4.	Agree
5.	Agree
6.	Agree
7.	Allow in all reasonable rural resource zones and simplify the permit process to make it easier.
8.	Allow people to earn money the best way they see fit.

9.	And the point of this question is??? What has gone wrong in the past that this question is even asked??; What is this a problem at all, Why is this a question??
10.	any simplification is good - less government!
11.	As above
12.	Big agree.
13.	By all means make a bureaucratic process easier if it already exists and is functioning.
14.	change regulations as need to make it easier for farms to have retail operations, whether seasonal or year-round. Farms need to have as many income streams as possible to keep in operation.
15.	Change the regulations AND make it easier. You want to actually preserve farmland? Give consumers and voters an

	emotional attachment to the land by encouraging them to spend time on it not dissuading them because there are 8 grumpy farmers in the valley that hate traffic and don't want to explain why they are illegally spraying in the dark.
16.	change the rules and stop trying to control the farmland, let the customer decide what they want to have prosper
17.	current process is effective
18.	Depends on what changes are being proposed
19.	do not allow
20.	Easier is better.
21.	Efficiency always helps farmers.
22.	Equity is important
23.	Every alternative use for farm land must require monitoring and regulation, otherwise there will be more violations that become "the norm" and have no recourse; Without monitoring and enforcement, there is no real regulation. We hear arguments supporting "property rights". Well, open space and farmland receive tax benefits for current use. That alone is reason to enforce zoning requirements.
24.	Farm stands are no threat to large scale commercial agriculture.
25.	Farm stands serve not only the farmer but the community
26.	Fundamentally, every aspect of a process should be periodically reviewed to make it easier for the customer (the public, in this case) to make use of the resource.
27.	Good idea even though I don't know anything about the current process.
28.	I agree with simple permit process.
29.	I agree with simplification but am unaware if codes need to change.
30.	I agree.
31.	I am not sure what the regulations are.
32.	I am open to revising the regulations as long as the goal for farmland preservation are retained.
33.	I am unaware of what the process is and thus can't formulate and informed opinion.
34.	I do agree with making it a simpler process
35.	I do not have enough knowledge to respond to this question; I do not have enough knowledge to answer this question
36.	I do not know the existing permit process so unable to answer this question.
37.	I don't know if regulations need to be updated due to increased interest in purchasing food direct from the farm.
38.	I haven't seen where it has been a problem at any of these stands. Again, perhaps I am not the right one to comment on this.; Most of these stands are very small. There don't seem to be any problems with them, but perhaps someone else might have a different take on them.
39.	I suppose I agree, but how can anyone answer this question fairly without knowing (a) what the current permit process requires, and (b) what sort of changes might be considered.
40.	I think there should be more than 500 people allowed
41.	I would love to see more local produce.; This would help the community to buy locally.
42.	If it allows more farmers to sell their produce, let's allow that.
43.	If someone wants to do something, they should do the work
44.	If the current process is onerous, then yes, change it.
45.	It may expand visitors without changing the original land functionality
46.	Keep all the regulations we have currently. You don't really need to make it easier, because we have enough already.
47.	Keep it simple for everyone.
48.	Keep the current process.
49.	Keep the permit process going to make sure the presenter is responsible to answer all necessary issues associates with the development of a new stand. Again, no farmland should be lost if anew stand is proposed.
50.	Less red tape
51.	make it easy

52.	More open process for expansion and growth
53.	No
54.	no
55.	No
56.	No
57.	No comment
58.	no opinion
59.	No opinion
60.	No permit should be needed
61.	No reply.
62.	No simplification needed
63.	No, if they need better zoning let them
64.	No. As mentioned above, I have no issues with the current regulations.
65.	No. we don't want these stands to grow and multiply like mushrooms.
66.	No. Zoning may need updates. Bayview is growing fast for rural, but the zoning lines aren't keeping up.
67.	Not enough info to agree. What would be changed to make process easier?
68.	Not fully familiar with the current process, but it is important to make sure road safety and general services are maintained.
69.	Not sure on this either...??
70.	Not sure what is really meant by the statement above
71.	Nothing at this time
72.	Paperwork made simpler is always better.
73.	permit should not be required
74.	Reducing the permit process may encourage more farms to have stands.
75.	Regulations have to change when new developments dictate it.
76.	Regulations that relate to safety as far as vehicles are concerned should remain but any other regulation that makes it challenging for a farm to have a stand should be abandoned.
77.	Remove permit process.
78.	Remove permits all together. Not necessary and a burden for the farmer.
79.	Requires no explanation.
80.	Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
81.	see above, require local goods or at least review this. make other easier.
82.	See above comment
83.	See next
84.	Seems obvious
85.	Simple is better. Government control is unnecessary
86.	simple straight forward guidance is essential for anything.
87.	Simplicity of regulations is always a good idea
88.	Simplify but over time regulations always need to be revisited and changed. Make that easy as well.
89.	simplify process, easier for farmers.
90.	simplify the permit and boarded the uses to allow for increased business for farmstands, U-pick
91.	Simplify the permit process AND change the regulations to be more open
92.	simplify the process and expand the possibilities.
93.	Slippery slope.
94.	Small farmers don't have time and energy for a lot of regulations. Keeping the process simple will encourage small business which I think is appropriate.
95.	Sounds good.
96.	Sounds good. Agree!
97.	Sounds reasonable
98.	Standards need to be maintained as road traffic and congestion is ever increasing.
99.	Start with that
100.	Streamlining the process would always be a good improvement

101. Supplemental income is important for farmers and roadside stands enhance the experience of tourists who will then visit again.
102. The current numbers are low in what they allow, and again not being followed.
103. The statement seems contradictory. If the process is simplified, it stands to reason that some of the regulations would or could change.
104. This is OBVIOUSLY written by someone that does not want change or to simplify things.
105. Use the reconsideration and rewriting of the current permit process to ask operators what they may want to do or need to do in order to uphold the County Comprehensive Plan and the GMA requirements. Make changes to the regulations only after outside legal review of the proposed changes and only after farm stands and u-pick operators and production farmers agree the change is needed. The opportunity for one group of people to make more money is not a criterion for changing the land use.
106. Want to keep it simple without losing health control.
107. What is the process? How about the college student who sells flowers in a stand in her front yard?
108. What is the Zoning?? Agree Yes or No to what ??
109. Whew, an answer I agree with.
110. Why does a farm stand need any PERMIT?
111. With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
112. x
113. Yes
114. Yes
115. Yes
116. Yes
117. Yes
118. Yes
119. Yes
120. Yes
121. Yes

122. Yes
123. yes
124. Yes
125. Yes
126. yes
127. Yes
128. Yes
129. Yes
130. Yes
131. Yes
132. Yes
133. Yes, make all permit easier but nit change requirements
134. yes, this shouldn't take an act of congress
135. Yes, farmstands are temporary
136. Yes, I like a farm stand so easier would be great
137. Yes, it should be easier.
138. Yes, keep the zoning farmland.
139. Yes, keep zoning the same
140. Yes, simpler is almost always better. Small business shouldn't have to jump through hoops.
141. Yes, simplify but continue allowed use
142. Yes, simplify. Allow more roadside stands. allow farms to diversify their incomes and to offer value added products. I want to live in a community that supports their farms.
143. Yes. Anything made simpler is better, no?
144. yes. Permits are often complicated. Keep it simple.
145. Yes. Ease permits so business can grow.
146. Yes. Less government involvement is better for all.
147. YES. Small time farming is hard enough without expending precious time, money and energy to jump through hoops. Leave the hoops for the bigger kids, they have the resources available.
148. Yes. That is a good place to start.

A majority would update design standards for u pick and farmstands by ensuring adequate parking and infrastructure. Slightly less than half supported standards to ensure minimal impact on the environment or loss of farmland for u-pick and farmstands.

16. Update the design standards for u-pick and farmstands by either (a) only allowing for it to be developed in an area that has the needed parking and infrastructure (to ensure no loss of farmland) or (b) allow development of infrastructure if it has minimal impact on the environment - environmentally and on loss of farmland.

- 57%** Yes, I agree with option (a) (n=214)
- 49%** Yes, I agree with option (b) (n=186)
- 19%** No, I do not agree with option (b) (n=73)
- 14%** No, I do not agree with option (a) (n=53)

n=376 Respondents

Update design standards, please explain:

1. "b
2. "b
3. "B) More infrastructure will be needed to support keeping Skagit agriculture sound and profitable.; Yes
4. (b) it's common sense
5. A
6. A
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. A
11. A
12. A
13. A farm stand doesn't significantly take up that much room; Farm stands are needed because the grocery stores sell expensive food that tastes like cardboard
14. A hard and fast rule should be that it does not add any impervious surface to floodplain. Keep anything that needs more impervious surface out of floodplain
15. A little of a and a little of b. In other words, a case by case with un biased personnel who have been schooled in objectivity and don't suffer from the power of my job syndrome.
16. A parking lot is grounds for objection?? Good grief....
17. a) ...no loss of farmland
18. a, because new infrastructure moves the property toward commercial use and a needed re-zone
19. a. don't want farms to look like shopping businesses with lots of traffic.
20. a. encouraging more infrastructure may invite too much change in land
21. A. Worried about "giving an inch and someone takes a mile". We can't afford too much leniency.,
22. Again, this will help the small farmer. They are not going to take away good farmland for parking
23. Again, keep it simple and don't fine small operators who just didn't know they were supposed to get a permit. First offense should be an opportunity to educate.
24. Again, the design standards need to start with baselines as to how much prime ag soil has been converted to parking and other infrastructure in the past. We have no assessment of acres converted currently and how that conversion has affected food/fiber production. There is no such concept or policy of minimal impact of development on farmland or the environment. All development has impacts.
25. Agree with choice A
26. Agree with minimal impact on environment
27. All for preservation farmland and the rural character of Sk. Va.
28. Allow agritourism.
29. Annie Lohman commented on the increase in population and Leo Roozen did not. I am sure both are aware of the increase in crowds and traffic control. ; If additional parking is needed, then the owner of the property should be able to provide it for customer safety and for safety of the general public.
30. As long as there is infrastructure this should not be an issue.
31. b
32. B
33. b
34. B
35. b
36. B
37. b

38. B
39. B
40. B important for growth while minimally invasive to our rural quiet neighborhoods.
41. b is preferred but what about also allowing them to add farmland elsewhere like if they have an area away from the road that they don't farm that they could farm to keep their overall acres the same. I think minimal impact should be acceptable.
42. B it would only take a tiny portion of land
43. b Should be case by case
44. B, got to have room to park
45. B, if I'm the long run a small amount of infrastructure supports a small farm and has minimal impact, I don't see an issue
46. b, some infrastructure should be allowed if it doesn't involve taking existing farmland out of production. New buildings may be needed to improve farm use, such as adding covered areas, replacing or enlarging existing buildings, etc.
47. B, the key words are minimal impact
48. B, this would allow the property owner to further develop their own property as they see fit.
49. B, wordplay... not enough details
50. B. Let people meet codes if they can
51. B. People should be able to improve their land and add features within reason.
52. B. You need to allow parking if you allow u-pick.
53. B. As long as it truly has minimal impact on the farmland or environment.
54. b. I don't think a rigid rule is appropriate as there will always be an outlier or exception.
55. B. No tacky dumpy places with dangerous parking. Have standards but do not lose farmland.
56. Both options are important to protect the loss of farmland and/or habitat.
57. Can't lose any farmland, for the future.
58. Do not allow
59. Don't increase congestion
60. Farms looking to sell produce to the public should prepare for the traffic and ensure they have the land to do so without risk of reducing the crop production on the farm itself.
61. Farmstands should be allowed on any rural / Ag land
62. Farmstands should not be a road hazard. They should only be allowed if customer is able to pull entirely off the roadway.
63. goal should be to keep farms financially successful! Preservation of farms requires adapting regulations to let the farms succeed.
64. I agree.
65. I am against Option B as it would potentially create contentious arguments regarding what constitutes "minimal impact", including possible legal actions which would drain county resources.
66. I do not know current regulations, but we should not allow more things on farmlands and floodplains.
67. I don't agree with option b as it appears to me "minimal" is very subjective and once the permit is issued, it becomes another "seek forgiveness rather than ask permission"
68. I realize the goal may be to curb the impact of larger agritourism situations on available farmland, but it is VERY important to always consider how changes will impact small, family farms.
69. I see too many farmsteads with inadequate parking or an area for shoppers to get off the road safely

70. I suppose option "a". Is this really the sort of question that's appropriate for a survey?
71. I would be concerned about creeping commercialization that impacts agricultural land, protection of which must be the top priority. However, smaller farms in particular need other income streams to stay in business.
72. I'd need to know more about what option B entails before making a statement.
73. Ideally, there should be no loss of farmland but I leave it up to each farmer to make that call for their land and desires for businesses to come.
74. If taking some farmland out of production so income can be generated from a farm stand or restaurant should be allowed. This activity can help a farm to stay viable.
75. if we build it, they will come
76. In the interest of equal protection I hope the same standard will be applied to all agribusiness development standards in the future. Especially the ones that permanently convert farmland into processing plants and parking lots, when all of that work could be done in town in existing facilities and a higher tax rate.
77. It may expand visitors without changing the original land functionality
78. it should be up to the farmer to decide best use of his land, whether it is as a parking lot or a strawberry field
79. just allow the growth that can happen as need without controls from county and state regulations
80. Keeping the rural nature of those stands would seem to be preferred by customers.
81. Long term view is to keep the magic Skagit farmland and not to commercialize it. This allows commercialization and in 10 years has the potential of looking like a commercial venture as opposed to an agricultural land.
82. minimal environmental impact/minimal loss of farmland is key. Infrastructure is key.
83. Minimal impact of modest infrastructure development, e.g., a gravel parking area for u-pick customers' use seems a worthy goal.
84. Minimal impact should have a focus on ecological impact and not on arbitrary maintaining X number of farmland acreage.
85. Need more information
86. No
87. No additional restraint on these businesses
88. No comment
89. No loss of farmland is the goal of the County. Don't change that position.
90. No loss of farmland.
91. No restrictions. These only benefit existing stands.
92. No, keep current rules
93. Not enough information. Who will be making the decision?
94. Nothing at this time
95. Offers more opportunities.
96. Only when infrastructure is already there, no further loss of farmland
97. Option (a) is best, but option (b) is okay if "minimal impact" is clearly defined and not just someone's opinion for a given plan.
98. Option A at this time. It already has parking.
99. Option a). no loss of farmland is the focus.
100. Option A: keep from taking farmland out of production
101. Option B
102. Option B could lead to encroachment on farmland and interfere with neighboring farms.
103. option B. Time continues to march on and the County needs to march with it.
104. Option B.; Option B

105. Preserving farmland is important.
106. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
107. Seems both a and b should be combined.
108. Seems reasonable but hard to know given no definition for what is meant by "minimal impact" . That could be interpreted many ways!
109. should be determined by on site visit and allowed if it doesn't take away from farm land.
110. Small parking areas are going to have to be developed.
111. Some farms have their existing structures away from the road or cannot allow the public into their work areas. Allowing a small stand on the side of the road is reasonable.
112. The definition of "minimal" is crucial.
113. The objective should always be to have zero loss of farmland. Any added infrastructure or parking should be done in a way that has this goal. If parking and infrastructure already exist, they should not be expanded unless it can be done without loss of farmland. If none exists, then the sizing and limitations should be consistent with existing facilities on existing farms.
114. The problem is defining what is ""minimal impact"". One person's ""minimal"" might be another person's ""totally unacceptable"". "
115. The re-purposed farm yard or old building sites are what would be good to use here. Streamlining the permits for no net loss and use of old sites should be considered and incentivized
116. The whole idea is to protect the farmland.
117. These uses are doing fine and may not need change but they must not wreck the farmland
118. They need to park on the owners of the properties land, not on public land.
119. This can open doors for other businesses by controlling parking availability such as bike and bus tours
120. this seems sensible.
121. Want to preserve farming & farmland but want to give farmers more economic options
122. We are fast losing our valuable tillable farmland. It is attractive to develop because it is flat and easy to build on. Just look to our neighboring counties South and North of Skagit to see how much farmland has been lost to housing and commercial and other uses but NOT farming or farm-related. You expand or relax the definition of "Farm stand" and pretty soon it is an amusement park or a restaurant but NOT farming. We have rural reserve which can support some farm activities and I believe this is the zone to put these "other" activities that aren't related to tilling, growing crops, or raising livestock.
123. While I agree with most of that statement for larger stands I don't agree with that for small farms and little kids who want to earn some money and start a small stand. One the other side of this, a farmer needs farm protection but not so much red tape that they can't come up with new opportunities for their families to support their farms.
124. why do the design standards need to change? where is the option above that lets them remain the same?
125. Why do we have to update the design standards?
126. Why the need for more regulation? Why would a farmer impact the farmland production? Only if the stand is making more money... More regulation is only going to make him lose more money
127. With adequate policies, this seems like a good idea.
128. With the caveat that the permit be regularly reviewed for impacts.
129. x
130. Yes

Bed and Breakfasts and Farm Stays

A large majority of respondents want to continue the bed and breakfast allowances.

17. Continue to allow bed and breakfasts as a permanent accessory hospitality activity, subordinate to the farm use.

Responses	Total Share
Yes, I agree	94%
No, I do not agree	6%

n=385 respondents

Most would allow temporary farm stays but there is greater support among farmers than non-farmers.

18. Allow temporary farm stays. This includes RV or other camping or temporary stays.

Responses	Total Num	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	220	58%	65%	71%	68%	52%
No, I do not agree	160	42%	35%	29%	32%	48%
Total	380	100%	124	7	34	213

n=380 respondents total, with 378 that identified ownership status

Temporary farm stays, please explain:

1. "allow with limits
2. "Farm stay"...really? Where do these terms come from? NO, I do not agree with allowing farms to be converted into RV parks.
3. A reasonable way to encourage agritourism.
4. agree
5. Agree only if RV services are sited on existing non farmable ground and stays limited (e.g. 48-72 hrs.) and not located within specified distances of adjoining property. On one hand I could see allowing an overnight stay in a hayfield after harvest. But "no" to services being installed on farmland or ATVs etc playing on farm lanes impacting neighbors. The county, state and feds have plenty of camping spots thru out WA.
6. Agree with temporary farm stays
7. Agree. People benefit from proximity to farming and understanding food systems.
8. allow more RV access and ability to have more users
9. As an RV'er this would be great!
10. as long as it is controlled and doesn't turn into Burning Man North
11. As long as it's in the same or better shape as when they started
12. As long as the farming activity of neighboring properties is unaffected.
13. As long as they are not developing a KOA or other type of camping facility.
14. Definition of "temporary"?
15. Do not allow
16. Do not allow, this may attract a more vagrant crowd.
17. Do not limit to RVs. Allow for other types if accommodation such as tiny houses or yurts
18. Do not want to see farms turned into RV parks"

19. From my quick research, this sounds like a win for both local business and visitors. Wish I had an RV to try out this type of vacation!
20. Harvest hosts could get out of hand .RV temporary stays could generate too much traffic.
21. I agree in theory but believe it could get out of hand or be taken advantage of. There is more need of permitting or regulation in RV or camping. Permanent waste facilities, etc. There are already too many people living in RV's without adequate facilities for sewage
22. I agree. I love temporary stays.
23. I am a member of Harvest Hosts and love being able to stay at farms, supporting local businesses.
24. I believe both RV and camping stays would change the agricultural character of the land under any circumstances.
25. I don't want to see RVs. That is not what living in the country is about.
26. I had not thought about this one until Terry Sapp brought it up. I will defer my comment.; Mr. Sapp talked briefly about this and that he had a good experience. As long as it wasn't a permanent stay i.e. a rental, then it should be okay.
27. I see no problem with this allowance.
28. I think there needs to be serious expansion of the rules and boundaries if RV or other camping is included in temporary stays. I am not completely against it but have seen in other counties where the concept gets out of control very quickly and does impact neighboring properties, wetlands, etc.
29. I would agree to this if a limit was put on the number of RVs allowed. Otherwise the county could end up with dozens of RV parks on farms with hundreds of RVs in them.
30. I'm concerned that this will change the character of farming.
31. If the use can be accommodated after environmental analysis and a favorable decision
32. If there is adequate parking.

33.	It doesn't mention how big an area would be for a "farm stay" or how many people
34.	It will expand and impact available farmland
35.	It would take up farmland; RVs require flat, solid spaces. That sounds like developing RV parks on farmland.
36.	Lack of water in future
37.	Limit agritourism
38.	Limit the number of nights of stay (no more than 2 nights), and the number and size of allowed vehicles.
39.	Limit to 2-3 days to avoid temporary housing and associated difficulties
40.	limited sites with the usual existing regulations.
41.	Limited size though. Cannot be allowed to turn into a RV park.
42.	Makes sense.
43.	Many farm workers cannot afford housing, or gas money anymore to drive to work
44.	Maybe. Would depend on what maintenance infrastructure would be required, lot size rules, duration of stay & more to make a statement. This could easily turn Skagit into a drug cooking RV parking lot if it isn't set up to succeed. Done right, it could be great.
45.	Needs to be short duration i.e. 1 week or less. Need permitted sewage disposal and public water and a permit that covers the expense to check up on compliance
46.	No
47.	No
48.	no
49.	No
50.	No
51.	No comment
52.	no if establishing parking for such vehicles results in the loss of farmland
53.	No outside tents or vehicles
54.	No RV parking on farmland.
55.	No RV's. Ugly, not farm-related
56.	No RV's
57.	No RVs or camping that's why there are parks and campgrounds that we support with our tax's
58.	No- we don't need people dry camping and dumping in sloughs.
59.	No,
60.	No, a bunch of RVs will change the look and flavor of Skagit.
61.	No, I don't want to see an rv park at a farm.
62.	No, we don't want farmland turned into KOAs
63.	No.
64.	no. very tacky looking for neighbors. Strangers in the neighborhood.
65.	No. Don't need a lot of rv's parked on properties. Cabins or large lodge's preferable.
66.	No. Perhaps this is one that needs to be case-by-case. One would need to ensure neighboring properties are not adversely affected.
67.	No; We don't need more tourists out on our farmland. Tourism leads to negative impacts on land. People can't seem to use common sense when tourists being
68.	Not enough info on how would be regulated. Sounds like this would permit permanent campgrounds to pop up everywhere. Not good.
69.	Not if RV camping is the main purpose, and the individuals camping are not contributing to the work of the farm.
70.	not in ag
71.	Nothing at this time
72.	only if size and use is considered
73.	Only if there is proper infrastructure, i.e. water, sewage, etc.
74.	Only if very limited.
75.	Parking lots make great campgrounds and provide revenue opportunities that matter for small holder growers.
76.	Provided no loss of farmland and proper health code compliance

77.	Public demand
78.	Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
79.	RV or other camping requires conversion of farmland to drain fields and other improvements.
80.	RV sites and campgrounds are eyesores, in my opinion.
81.	RVs allowed but limited. We don't want a whole campground springing up.
82.	RVs are homes on wheels. Without strict regulations these could be used instead of a trailer park. We have our state and federal parks for this.
83.	RVs Detracts from rural beauty of farmland
84.	Same as above.
85.	See above
86.	See above
87.	See above, no RV parks
88.	see all answers above
89.	See my comment below.
90.	Seems to be more permanent with more impacts on the land
91.	Should have restrictions see next question.
92.	Sounds like camping. Nope.
93.	Subject to qualifications in the following question.
94.	Temporary farm stays generally involve housing the guests inside the farmhouse/barn/bunkhouse so that there is an experience of being "on the farm". The limitations of the farm housing itself determines the numbers of visitors. Allowing RVs and/or camping (where is the infrastructure for campers?) is an inappropriate use of farms that can also threaten conversion of prime ag soils.
95.	The Harvest Host model seems to be a great way for visitors to enjoy our valley.
96.	the homeowner should be allowed to do what any homeowner can do. But this seems to imply they can do more than that so no
97.	The term "temporary" is vague and can result in unclear rules around what is and is not allowed. Per the B&B comment, the property owner should apply for a full-time use or a seasonal window (e.g. May through October) to help with additional income if that's what is needed.
98.	The term "temporary" will need to be defined.
99.	There are many people in our community classified as homeless who live full time in RVs. Encouraging overnight RV stays on private property could become a problem, once they come they may not leave.
100.	They should be fully allowed if done IN HARMONY with the farmland and minimal footprint.
101.	they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
102.	This could be a great income generator for farms and increase non farmer enjoyment of farms.
103.	This could become a problem for permitting. Once this practice begins someone will need to be hired for code enforcement to make sure the temporary stays are actually temporary and that the number of RV's do not exceed the permitted number.
104.	This could become visually ugly quickly and a lot of slow moving traffic to already crowded roads.
105.	This could cause too much disruption. ; Too much traffic is generally too disruptive. especially with large vehicles.
106.	This has to be logical and not just a passing fancy.
107.	This is just an excuse for an unregulated campground.
108.	This is taking up farmland and/or working area. I view this differently than having space in which temporary farm workers can live.
109.	This should be limited we have enough of these, and it could turn into trailer parks.
110.	This will be twisted around, and we will get homeless camps in the process.
111.	this will open the county door for expansion at will

112. This would be something I could do on my own farm. My husband and I did several "work away" stays while traveling and it was a great way to learn about the places we visited and connect to the local people.
113. This would be too much like a rv park with grocery not allow all to enjoy ; This would be like an rv park with grocery store thus limiting outside visitors not a good idea
114. This would most likely become a problem into itself. Jefferson County had an issue with RV/camping at their fairground being turned into a squatters fiasco to unstitch.
115. Too broadly defined - this too could a conversion to a campground.
116. under controlled regulations
117. Use of Camp Hosts at National Park and National Hatchery facilities allows employees to get their work done without constant interruption by tourists plus gives tourists a better experience with a guided tour of the facility. It could provide the same benefits for farmers and agritourists.
118. We have enough RVs in ag lands. They can go to the KOA to camp.
119. With no definition of "temporary" it isn't something I can support.
120. Would this improve access to temporary workers? If so, it should be allowed. If it's just going to create trailer parks on farmland, then no way.
121. x
122. Yeah, kind of like Bunk-a-Biker. Is going to take up agricultural land?? IDK
123. Yes
124. Yes
125. yes
126. Yes
127. Yes
128. Yes

129. Yes
130. Yes
131. yes
132. Yes
133. Yes
134. Yes
135. Yes
136. Yes
137. yes, I agree as long as it is regulated with some rules
138. yes, why not
139. Yes, with conditions. I think it needs to be regulated and no farmland can be removed/destroyed to allow this stay. If it's on existing vehicle parking, then why not?
140. Yes, with RV & camping options
141. Yes, brings in money to area
142. yes, but limits must be stipulated or this could be abused
143. Yes, but with caution. People looking for cheap camping can cause problems for landowners and their neighbors. Those who own RVs might be a better choice if limited to one or two. But not making the area into an RV lot.
144. yes, if number of RVs is very small, 1-3, and max of 3 days. No camping, just self-contained. fear the result will be negative to farming
145. Yes, it brings in more tourism and visitors to schedule County and support our local businesses.
146. Yes, with limitations as to size and visual impacts
147. Yes. But It's up to the farmers to cover liabilities.
148. Yes. It's a good idea to give families a taste of our county.
149. Yes. It's good for the economy
150. Yes. No explanation needed. This does not detract from the farmland... The owner should be able to host if they wish.

A majority would allow farm stays with specific limits though less support than the prior farm stay scenario.

19. Allow temporary farm stays if there are limited days of visits (e.g., max stay of 30 days) or there are limited number of RVs (no more than 1-2 vehicles) or they are operated to be low impact (no development of new infrastructure is needed to support them).

Responses	Total Num	Total Share	I own farmland	I lease farmland	I don't own or lease farmland, but I am seeking opportunities to do so in Skagit County	No, I do not own or lease farmland, and I do not want to
Yes, I agree	218	57%	59%	50%	65%	55%
No, I do not agree	165	43%	41%	50%	35%	45%
Total	383	100%	123	6	34	218

n=383 respondents with 381 identifying ownership status

Temporary farm stays with limits, please explain:

1. "Same as above.
2. "Strong limits. Dry camping only with electric hookup maybe. Max stay 2 weeks (as in campgrounds).
3. 1 week max.
4. 30 days is too long
5. 30 days? Can the RV hold this amount of sewerage? They either need to go empty or have infrastructure on site to accommodate this.
6. 30 days?? Longer, if the person is working on the farm for a season, like WWOOFers.
7. Absolutely, otherwise farms become an RV park/campground. If the user is not an employee, I would shorten the stay to far less than 30 days, maybe 7 tops.
8. Again, that might be fine for 1 farm but in aggregate across the county it would be disruptive.
9. Again, this is a service I currently enjoy as a member of Harvest Hosts. It's becoming a more popular way of travel.

10.	again, you are only allowing for the stays under the conditions you have already laid out. what if I think they should be allowed but without these restrictions?
11.	agree
12.	Agree
13.	agree
14.	Agree only if the number of rvs are limited to 1-3.
15.	Agree with temporary farm stays should be limited
16.	Agree, 30 days is too long, maybe 14 days at the most. Won't water n plumbing need to be available?
17.	Agree, but why limit number of RV's if the space is available and no new infrastructure is required and the impact to neighbors and farming activity isn't an issue?
18.	Allow farm stays for as long as they don't interfere with the generation of farm value (see Schedule F test)
19.	allow temp farm stays but not turn our farmlands into giant RV parks. The temp nature of this is unimportant - the housing market has sent huge numbers of people who stay 3 weeks in one place and move to the next and I would hate to see our precious farm land turned in to giant KOAs; agree yes but limited number of vehicles or impact.
20.	allow whatever numbers that are safe for septic and water amounts available
21.	Allow with low impact but again, with the focus being on ecological impact not on the maintenance of arbitrary number of farmland acres.
22.	Allowing RVs will be abused.
23.	Any farm workers/WOOF type RV accommodations should be considered separately from campers. They can park in the same spot, but worker RVs should not count against the tourist RV allotment"
24.	Could allow an educational opportunity to people not from the farm, which agriculture needs.
25.	Depends on where these are
26.	Do not allow
27.	Do we not have enough RVs in ag land already. They can rent a spot in town.
28.	Don't think there needs to be a limit
29.	Guests bringing in vehicles is hard to control
30.	I definitely think restrictions need to be in place for temp farm stays. This needs to be considered very carefully as to maximum stays and such. Some landowners would abuse their own land and surrounding properties to make money on space rent and such without considerations for waste and pollution issues, noise, sewer, water and other impacts.
31.	I don't for a minute think this would be adhered to and then there is the issue of septic, water, electricity etc. The only exception would be for temporary farm workers.; no, no and no... exception only to farmworkers
32.	I feel this would only lead to more vehicles being there for a longer period of time. Also, it would need to be very well checked, and another expense to pay for.
33.	I guess I don't want farms to turn into rv parks.
34.	I see no problem with this allowance.
35.	I think max stay of 30 days may be too long. Two weeks may make more sense.
36.	I would allow for development of rv site, electrical, water ,sewer hookups
37.	I would propose a max stay of 15 days. 30 days seems like more off a short-term rental.
38.	It seems like you'd need to allow more than just 1-2 RVs. 5 or less seems more reasonable. And some low impact infrastructure would need to be put in.
39.	It would change into something else if it were a long term visit. ; Please see the above comment.
40.	It would depend on the limitations imposed. 30 days seems like a long time for a farm stay unless it is linked to farm experiences such as woofing. What about farmworker temporary housing in RVs?
41.	Keep people out

42.	let the owner negotiate the length of stay
43.	Limit rvs and days less than a week.
44.	Limiting the RV stays to the duration of the harvest period seem acceptable to me.
45.	Little extra money for small farmers
46.	Long term stays lead to squatting, sewage issues and other legal challenges not properly addressed.
47.	Low impact and allow composting toilets to supplement septic systems.
48.	May need to look at appropriate length of stay as a crop season and not a calendar driven time period.
49.	Maybe for harvest workers.
50.	Monitoring the use is a good idea.
51.	Needs to be limited to avoid a whole campground moving in.
52.	No
53.	No
54.	No
55.	No
56.	No Airbnb's to take locals potential rental spaces and increase housing costs and availability.
57.	no camping. opens up tenant laws...
58.	No comment
59.	no consideration for neighbors
60.	No effect on farming
61.	no limits- they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
62.	No new regulation
63.	No permanent housing.
64.	NO RV's! Dodgy clientele, noise, eye sore.
65.	No RVs
66.	No rvs
67.	No RVS or camping
68.	No RVs, period.
69.	No temp farm stays in RVs or other vehicles.
70.	No, degrading the farmland
71.	No, how are temporary farm stays in an rv helping keep agriculture in our valley?
72.	No, it will still ugly up the valley.
73.	No, should be no limit
74.	No. We already have a problem with people illegally dry camping in the flats in areas. We do not need to invite the problem
75.	No. No rv's.
76.	not in ag-nrl
77.	Nothing at this time
78.	ok, but 2 weeks max, not 30
79.	ok, this is taking much longer than 15 minutes!
80.	Once this gate is opened, it's very difficult to close it as noted in my earlier comments
81.	Please no more than 2 RVs.
82.	Putting in some infrastructure should be permitted. Obviously we don't want to turn a farm into an RV park, but a larger farm could likely support more than 2 vehicles without disturbing their neighbors.
83.	Really? RV's on farms? No.
84.	Reasonable way to encourage agritourism.
85.	Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
86.	RVs are out of character with the farmland experience and would ruin it for those of us who love the beauty of farms as they now exist.
87.	S all operations should be allowed
88.	Same answer
89.	Same as above
90.	Same reason as above. Neighbor allows friend to put an RV on property, no running water, no human waste disposal. Not enough personnel to enforce guidelines.
91.	see above

92. See answer above
93. Should be very limited and inspected
94. Slippery slope to having RVs everywhere and overstaying the rules with no resources to verify stay length etc.
95. Some limitations would be necessary.
96. Still no. Did you call it a far stay that was in the lot north of the Neff farm on old 99, and left so much trash, raided the neighbors properties and lived like drug fed animals?
97. stop regulating. There are so few places to camp that are affordable. Let this work for families.
98. Temporary farm stay should be no more than one week at a time and only 1-2 RVs fully contained. Need public water supply, not individual well water. Also limit the stays to seasonal time frame (summer only). Need a permit with fee to fund compliance checks; Possibly agree - only with tight restrictions
99. That would have to be watched closely.
100. The criteria for temporary farm stays should be more clear than "max stay of 30 days". Is that 30 days in a year, a quarter or over two years? I agree with no new development or infrastructure could be a criteria to allow RVs but again limiting the number and number of days would need to assess the impact of these activities on ag soils conversion, demand on water and sewer systems and any other changes that impact local production.
101. The number of RVs allowed should be tied to the amount of land being used.
102. The term "temporary" is vague and can result in unclear rules around what is and is not allowed. Per the B&B comment, the property owner should apply for a full-time use or a seasonal window (e.g. May through October) to help with additional income if that's what is needed.
103. there are already too many illegal housing units in RVs around the county
104. Thirty days is too long. No more than 5 nights.
105. This could cause too much disruption. ; Feels generally too disruptive.
106. This is a terrible idea. This could become a problem such as Blake's RV resort on Rawlins Rd. (Fir Island) Permanent RV camp that is not permitted for the number of campers nor I suspect has a septic system that supports the number of inhabitants. Camp is adjacent to the Skagit River.
107. This is a use that is beyond what should be included under Ag-zoned properties.
108. we should be allowing farms to increase income streams from as many sources as possible. 3 or 4 RVs does not seem excessive, and we should allow farms to add necessary septic, water, and electrical systems to accomplish this growth.

109. x
110. Yes
111. yes
112. Yes
113. yes
114. Yes
115. Yes
116. yes
117. Yes
118. yes
119. Yes
120. Yes
121. Yes
122. Yes
123. Yes
124. Yes
125. Yes, direct larger crowds to other locations
126. yes, I agree
127. yes, this will have little impact
128. Yes, but limited days as this could easily become permanent residence for many people; Yes
129. yes, but only if appropriate limits are established and enforced (who's going to do that??)
130. Yes, limited sounds better.
131. Yes, minimum impact is key
132. Yes, only 1 or 2 vehicles. And no four-wheeling or other types of recreation allowed.
133. Yes, there should be some limits.
134. Yes, this is a great idea to enhance tourism.
135. Yes, this is redundant
136. Yes. This is an acceptable use. The limits make sense.
137. Yes. This sounds like a more reasonable approach. BTW, a maximum stay of 30 days sounds a little crazy and may lead to things needing to be policed with police serving evictions. Maximum stay of one week seems to me more appropriate.
138. Yes. A good trend in the right direction. Could bring in income year around for farmers and ranchers.; Yes
139. Yes. Good for the economy
140. Yes. Same answer as above.
141. Yes. without these limits, then it might as well become a trailer park.
142. yes...seems that there would be no loss in farmland
143. You'd have to clarify how no infrastructure would be needed to support this kind of tourism and how it would be policed. Do we really have the ability to enforce any such changes?

Festivals and Events

A large majority want to continue current allowances for festivals and events and a limit on the number of them.

20. Continue the current temporary activity regulations that allow some festivals and events but a limited number of events.

Responses	Total Share
Yes, I agree	88%
No, I do not agree	12%

n=369 respondents

Continue temporary use regulations for festivals and events, please explain:

1. "Agree	23. figure out ways to allow as many festivals as possible! they benefit many nearby business, including hotels and restaurants.; we need more and larger agritourism events
2. "We live on the path of the farm tour each October, we see a lot of traffic but it is only for three days. On the other hand allowing Wallace and Nelson farms to construct monster silage pits on our road has led to freeway traffic at freeway speeds during many weeks of the year by the rogue truckers doing 50-60 mph on field road. Oh and the everyday thereafter semis taking the stuff up to Whatcom .I would rather have a farm stand tan that noise! Kids in a station wagon aren't as dangerous as these banshee truckers.	24. Give more opportunity for expanded festivals and seasonal events.
3. Again - DIVERSITY.	25. Highway 20 should be the only access road to the tulip festival. And all visitors should have to yield to farm equipment
4. agree	26. I agree but like many of these answers the details make all the difference, such as the number of events allowed.
5. Agree	27. I agree in general but recognize that clear definitions and substantial enforcement is required. That means that fees for such events need to cover those costs - the public should not have to support the enforcement of standards of specialized private activities.
6. Agree (yes).	28. I agree with the caveat that these special permits have reasonable oversight and enforcement
7. Agree.	29. I could support some smaller farm to table events
8. allow more events	30. I disagree with the size quoted for Farm to Table events. Some small farms host 10 - 40 people and those events should be permitted with loose limits.
9. Allow only festival of family farms	31. I do not feel the farmer should be limited in the number of events.
10. Allow shuttle service only. No parking on farmland.	32. I do not think it should be limited, other than it is an accessory income, not primary.
11. allow the growth that the chance business to prosper	33. I feel possessive about my valley and would rather no one know about it and so I am against progress if it brings more people to live here. Sorry but that's how I feel
12. Any time just be safe	34. I feel the large festivals (tulips) are more disruptive than small events. Limit large festivals
13. As locals, we enjoy participating in the local festivals, farm to table and farm tours	35. I like the way it is now.
14. As long as the event can be held safely it should be allowed.	36. I love our seasonal farm themed events. Please keep them and apply what we have learned about the parking and traffic problems to a streamlined permitting process
15. As long as the practice does not encroach upon farm operations in the area, neighbor notification is required, and any on-site activity is contained and doesn't leave permanent change to viable agriculture lands.	37. I see no problem with this allowance.
16. Based on the info provided, I do not differentiate between festival and event. Either of the two should be compelled to have onsite parking and bathroom facilities prior to approval.	38. I think it could be expanded, but of course these festivals and events would need to go through the proper permitting to ensure it makes sense (safety, traffic, environmental concerns etc.)
17. Bring tax revenue to our community and showcase all we can grow here.	39. I think the county is enriched both monetarily and reputationally by having these 2 events each year. However, more than that would destroy our primarily rural character which is the reason why many of us choose to live here.
18. Continuing to allow current temporary activity regulations for some festivals and events should happen until there is an evaluation and update of the special temporary use standards. Shuttle service to events is not a solutions to a venue that is too small to be able to provide parking without converting ag soils. The criteria for accessory uses with a programmatic permit MUST have equally as strict criteria to evaluate if the activity infringes on farming activities and/or converts ag soils to other uses. As written, there is not enough data to make informed decisions about strengthening criteria and/or changing the criteria. Please do your homework before proposing ideas that have not been fully vetted with farmers/producers.	40. I think there are enough events happening. Let's see if there are more tasting rooms or restaurants that open
19. Current status good	41. If there is a NEW event that would like to start to showcase Skagit County, then it should be reviewed and examined to see if it would be a good fit for the time of year and location to be held. NOT just turned away.
20. Do not add any other events! No farm to table! Keep only what we have currently!	42. It does take a lot of effort and coordination to stage these events, i.e., the Tulip Festival. It also entails much traffic and
21. Events should not be limited in number	
22. Expand, expand, expand commercial opportunity.	

headaches for the locals, although the flowers are beautiful and the rewards much. I don't think anyone would want multiple Tulip Festivals. The Oak Harbor base had an open house with the Blue Angels one year and the traffic was backed up from Oak Harbor to I5.; I think Skagit County has a balanced amount of festivals and events. There is Cascade Days in Concrete, Berry Dairy days in Burlington, Loggerodeo in Sedro Woolley, the Bald Eagle Festival and the big one, the Tulip Festival.
43. Just don't let it grow
44. Keep the road right-of-way restriction but open it up otherwise to other types of events and remove limit on number of events. This increases economic activity and again provides chances for consumers to gain an appreciation for the land the event is on.
45. Limit the events.
46. Limits are good.
47. Make it easier to host these events.
48. More events the merrier!
49. More festivals, more money and exposure to the challenges and opportunities farmers face in Western Washington.
50. No
51. No comment
52. No limit should be placed on the number of events as long as no health, safety, or septic issues are present.
53. No limitations
54. no limits- they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
55. No new events, just Tulip festival and farm festival as those are traditional and recognized events.
56. no real harm"
57. No, don't know enough... tulip fields are not edible. What profit is it to farmers or the county ??
58. No, should be no limit
59. Nothing at this time
60. Once in a while. Limit it as occasional
61. permit should not be necessary
62. Question on who determines the limited number of events.
63. Reduce the controls on the size and number of events.
64. Rehabilitation of damaged farmland is very evident following some of these festival events. If a specific farm plans to participate in a festival every year, perhaps there should be allowance for parking surfaces to be developed on their farm ~ size to be determined by the number of acres under crop.
65. Seasonal events allow others outside of the county to visit and experience a good time. I wouldn't want to deny this from those who put on the festivals and events.
66. Seems to be working, doesn't need fixing.
67. Shuttle service is a great idea but otherwise this use seems to have a number of loopholes. One is definitely creating permanent infrastructure for the event
68. Shuttle service is a must for large events.
69. Shuttles make good sense. Farmland for parking does not.
70. Start cracking down on events in ag zoning. We don't want the headaches.
71. The county needs to provide better traffic control for the larger events.
72. The Tulip Festival jams the roads already, so it is ok but don't add more traffic here.
73. These are good for the local economy but certainly are a pain to some of the local residents. Records of problems should be kept and used to scrutinize future applications.
74. These events can be fun, but I especially like the idea of shuttles.
75. These events support local ag, we need them.
76. These festivals are huge and make getting around for the surrounding farmers difficult. Several fields have been taken out of production to become parking lots- some arguably semi-permanent with large swaths of gravel put down to

accommodate the crowds. Issues of trespass and other vandalism.
77. They should be fully allowed if done IN HARMONY with the farmland and are using existing structures and minimal footprint.
78. This has potential to help lots of vendors stay in business
79. This has worked
80. this is Agri-tourism at its highest. Why change it.
81. This is the only practical & enforceable way to ensure the use remains accessory
82. This would cause too much disruption. ; Seems not to be a good idea.
83. This would not help the small farmer to increase festivals that then helps large companies that put on the festival's
84. Traffic is horrific during the tulip festival. Locals just grin and bear it as it does bring tourist dollars into the area. Allowing more events may cause a back lash.
85. Tulip festival has turned into Disneyland. We don't need more of that. Limit them.
86. Tulips don't feed the people, nor the land. Less festivals, etc.
87. we have enough permanent/recurring events now.
88. We have no idea your current regulations. Events that educate people about farmland, animals on the farmland, the lifestyle and our land are worthwhile. Farm to table events, art festivals (true art brought by local artisans), poetry festivals that bring us to the fore, are all wonderful.
89. We love the Festival of Farms and go every year!
90. we need more events
91. While I agree with permitting requirements for larger events, small events (e.g., with fewer than 50 attendees) should be allowed without the requirement for special permitting and more frequent small events, which have a far less detrimental impact on traffic, parking, and other resources, should be encouraged in lieu of larger ones.
92. why are we trying to compete with existing restaurants that are already doing farm to table? Forget this!
93. x
94. Yes
95. yes
96. Yes
97. Yes
98. Yes
99. yes
100. Yes
101. Yes
102. Yes
103. Yes
104. yes
105. Yes
106. Yes
107. yes
108. Yes
109. Yes
110. yes
111. Yes
112. Yes
113. Yes
114. Yes
115. Yes
116. Yes, but only after canvassing and receiving acceptance from neighbors within earshot
117. yes, I agree
118. yes, seems to work as is
119. Yes, but maintain limited number of events
120. Yes, for educational purposes.
121. Yes, I'm in favor
122. Yes, keeping it limited and temporary adds farm revenue without causing ongoing issues of too many people in the area.

123. Yes, limit the number
124. Yes, so far they do a good job with the Tulips, Birding and other festivals.
125. Yes, this is a great opportunity for tourism dollars and for farms to make extra money. This does need to be supported by the county commissioners as it puts additional strain on the sheriff's department for traffic control, and related 911 calls.
126. Yes, while we that live in the valley get annoyed with the traffic, it does help people learn the farming process and support the local farmers.; Yes, a limit might help. But must look at the bigger picture.....all of Western Skagit County is agricultural, what is there to support the farmers and county without agri tourism?

127. Yes.
128. yes. although great PR for valley, really hard on the farming neighbors
129. Yes. Seasonal events support is important.
130. Yes. The level of activity is key here and needs to be at an acceptable level overall.
131. Yes. I see no issues with the current permitting process.
132. Yes. It's been good for the economy and has limited if any impact on the environment
133. Yes. Slow and steady growth.
134. Yes. Works well now.
135. Yes No to all of the above

Events

A sizeable majority would not reduce the number of events or reduce the size of them.

21. Reduce the number of special events permitted no less than what the code currently permits. Also reduce the size of events to smaller than what is permitted. Please select two options below.

- 77%** No, number of events should not be reduced (n=272)
- 66%** No, size of events should not be reduced (n=233)
- 21%** Yes, size of events should be reduced (n=72)
- 16%** Yes, number of events should be reduced (n=57)

n=351 Respondents

Reduce event number or size, please explain:

1. "Disagree
2. "don't change a thing.
3. "How do you intend to limit anything when you already have the tulip bash going on for a month.
4. "Needless to say, one particular event in Skagit County is very disruptive to everyday life in our community. During the Tulip Festival it is very difficult to navigate the streets without lengthy delays. We usually avoid ""town"" when the festival is happening, though this avoidance could potentially cause a loss of business to local retailers.
5. "Right now, we need as much business as possible for rural lifestyles to survive.
6. "to many restrictions. to many permits.
7. ?
8. A
9. A
10. Again, the landowner should be trusted to not damage the environment or land being used.
11. Again, this requires oversight and enforcement otherwise one could anticipate boundaries being stretched beyond the intent of the permitting process
12. An agritourism hub in a UGA would ameliorate a lot of the impacts of events. It could house permanent activities such as a fiber arts center, commercial kitchens (glassed in for public viewing), auctions, etc. The shuttle service could run out of there, keeping parking within one of the cities.
13. At one point it was 11 events and not it's 24. 11 was more than enough.
14. b

15. B
16. B because of the issues generated by larger events.
17. B) no one likes it when event congest roads.
18. B, the county can only hold so many tourists before it harms the locals' way of life.
19. b. more manageable and less foot print on land
20. c
21. C
22. c
23. C ... Less keeps farms
24. C. That way neighbors will not be disturbed as often or as much as well as local animals on farms
25. Current is fine- nothing more though
26. D. If we are interested in growing this segment of Agritourism, why would we want to decrease the options if this currently is successful?
27. Discernment of whether the event supports true farming activity or just appears to and is the primary business. If it is a business not supported by farming, rezone
28. Don't put barriers in place, allow the events.
29. don't understand the question
30. Expand, expand, expand. People here need more money to make a better living.
31. Farm-to-table events are an important piece of agritourism.
32. follow Snohomish County "
33. For large events like the Tulip Festival, traffic management is my primary concern and is not discussed above. If reasonable traffic improvement plans are planned to support

existing events/size/frequency, I think the existing permit process is reasonable.
34. How can you reduce the size of the event? Oyster run? Tulip festival?
35. How would you reduce the size of the tulip festival? It does not seem physically possible.
36. I don't prefer any of those.
37. I don't feel qualified to answer this as I don't know what the current size and number of event restrictions are.
38. I don't find any events that are held affect me in any way shape or form.
39. I don't know how large events can be now.
40. I don't understand what the question is asking- written in a confusing way; I have not noticed a problem yet. The problems will come if things get too loose
41. I like the current standard.
42. I really don't have the hard data or the concerns of those in other areas of the county at my disposal. So, it becomes a moot point. If you wish to furnish such, I will be glad to assist.
43. I think there is a good mix of events in Skagit County. ; Please see my above comment
44. I think they should both stay the same.
45. I'm unsure on these. I don't know the current limitations and requirements for event size and number.
46. It works fine now
47. It's a balancing act: please the visitors or keep the locals happy. Not sure of the ultimate resolution, but keeping as much property as possible as agriculturally zoned is very important, in my opinion. "
48. I've not lived here long, but this seems reasonable.
49. Just fine increase it
50. Keep it as-is.
51. Many people depend on the tulips. We do not need any more events!
52. maybe @ ; do not know what is currently permitted.
53. Maybe B, as some events have gotten really big and others have gotten smaller.
54. more events would be nice, generate revenue, and provide wholesome things for young people to do
55. N/A. I see not need to reduce further than what already exists.
56. negative impact on farmland
57. Neither. Do more.
58. Nice small events are always more popular.
59. No
60. no
61. No
62. No
63. No
64. No
65. No change needed
66. No comment
67. No current codes appropriate
68. No- leave it as well is
69. no to all of the above
70. None
71. none of the above unless someone can show me a reason
72. None of the above. I don't understand the background to there being an interest in reducing the number of permitted activities.
73. None. This should not be reduced.
74. None. The current level of approved events seems to be appropriate and leaves room for growth.
75. Not enough info here to answer
76. Not sure
77. Not sure what is meant by the statements above
78. Not sure what would be better.
79. Nothing at this time

80. On the other hand, the festival draws people from all over, which brings business to the community.
81. Open this up. Way up.
82. Option D: find a way to make existing events safer. Tourists entering crossing best road while staring at an iPad to get into tulips is a Death trap for them and for residents.
83. Reduced only if the rural area is already at capacity.
84. Reducing such events would dampen economic development
85. regulations should encourage these types of events. the more and larger the better!
86. Same as above
87. See above.
88. See above...
89. Skagit County is an amazing, fruitful location and should be showcased!
90. Some limits make sense. But reducing the number of special permits and the size of events would be counterproductive.
91. Special events are satisfactory as is
92. The current events seem to be reasonable.
93. The devil is in the details, i.e. where the event is occurring, impact to neighbors and noise. The total number of special events (24) per year seems high considering that this is every summer weekend.
94. The less impact on farmland the better. In
95. The problem is that this all happens within the same few summer months - it becomes too much. Especially in top of all the agritourism activities. We don't need the County turned into a rural Disneyland for Seattle.
96. The question is not clear
97. there should be less control of use in farmland
98. These events draw people and revenue to the county.
99. This is a difficult issue. Nothing succeeds like success. In general people want to see the big events because it is good for both the farm and hospitality community. But the size of certain events, like the Tulip festival, has become a congestion and traffic headache which degrades the local joy of the season.
100. This seems to be targeting the tulip festival. As I stated earlier, residents of the county have learned to live with the festival and know that the revenue brought in is important to the area. If the frequency is more often and the size smaller, it would lose its impact.
101. To many cars and people , equals damage to floor and Dona and then mire gravel for parking lots on farmland.
102. trespass and vandalism
103. Tulip festival overwhelms local citizens & visitors don't always follow rules for parking & congest roads
104. Unfortunately, even with all the rules around farming type events, if we limit them too much then it doesn't become economical for the farmer and the community. Enforcement of tourists bot damaging property, etc is needed.; I'm not sure on this one. But scale and regular review of permits to ensure that environmental regulations are being followed are a good thing.
105. Use of buses or vans for viewing tulip fields should be given consideration during peak bloom times.
106. Visitors will come regardless - best to be prepared and managed.
107. Where is the data on these events? Where is the analysis and benefit to a reduction of the number of events and sizes? 24 events per year seems in excess of the 13 weeks of "good weather" usual in Skagit's summer (spring/fall). Evaluating the impacts of existing events, conversion of acres, economic costs and benefits for changing the numbers and size are all needed before proposing policy changes.
108. Where is the keep it as it is choice?
109. where the events are now if fine, should not reduce the number but keep the same for a period of time
110. Whether it be a county fair or a farm-to-table experience, I think that the events and those attending are at a managed

size that is suited as such. I have never felt the number of events, or the number of attendees needed to be reduced.
111. Why reduce any? Is the current code not working?

112. Why would you destroy this for business owners when it's already working?
113. x

A large majority would allow smaller events like farm-to-table as an accessory activity.

22. Allow smaller temporary activities like farm-to-table events permitted as an accessory activity with a programmatic permit which limits size and number of events.

Response	Total Share
Yes, I agree	81%
No, I do not agree	19%

n=366 respondents

Smaller temporary, farm to table events as accessory, please explain:

1. "Agree
2. Again this would drive a better local economy.; Good to shop locally
3. Again, open this up. Skagit County has great potential. Let these events happen!!
4. Again, this could go wrong, but it is FARM to table, so therefore, agricultural....
5. agree
6. Agree
7. Agree
8. Allow - with no limitations imposed by the government.
9. Allow activities but do not limit the size and number of events. It is hard to succeed, and government should not discourage success
10. allow activities to happen unrestricted
11. Allow people (farmers, landowners, entrepreneurs) to experiment. Taking a risk on an event, legally, is a path to understanding how to proceed in a venture. Encourage entrepreneurship.
12. Allow without permits
13. And that permit should be \$1 and easier than checking out a library book to get.
14. As a chef, allowing a gathering or farm-to-table experience quarterly is something I would consider if a permit were able to be acquired easily within the county.
15. As long as it doesn't interfere with agricultural activities.
16. As long as the events are related to farm operation. E.g., a wedding is not related.
17. As long as traffic and other concerns are addressed.
18. Conversion of existing facilities should be allowed for farm to table as long as the footprint is not expanded.
19. Could add to the economic benefits and help Ag-NRL farmers be more profitable.
20. Do not allow
21. Do you mean a special event tent?
22. don't really understand the question
23. Don't understand question
24. Events that are small enough to have a negligible impact on local resources should be allowed without special permitting and should not otherwise be limited.
25. Farm to table events is not something I have thought about. I really have no input on this subject.; I am not sure limiting these is ideal. I have not had much insight into the farm-to-table events.
26. Farm to table events should be allowed. Period.
27. I do not see why not. Un less it's a farm to table Woodstock sized event.
28. I do not think it should be a limited accessory

29. I don't understand the term "smaller temporary activities" - would they be permitted/licensed or allowed uses?
30. i have no idea what you are asking here
31. I like some smaller temporary events to enjoy.
32. I like the idea of allowing farm to table events with simple regulations and not a bunch of paperwork.
33. If the farm is located in a rural area, remove the permit requirement completely.
34. Keep it small
35. Leave it alone, govt always messes things up trying to fix non existent problems
36. let growth decide how much use is needed
37. Limitations should apply.
38. Limited permits are good.
39. Maybe, what is the purpose of these events?
40. More detail re: definition of 'programmatic event' as well as size and number of events is needed
41. Needs application and approval so limitations clearly stated. Fee to cover compliance check.
42. No
43. No
44. No
45. No comment
46. No events, grow food.
47. no limit-- they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
48. no limits
49. No limits
50. No new regulation
51. No want less
52. not sure
53. Nothing at this time
54. perfect, allow farm to table events and see how well they preform
55. Permits and such would be needed.
56. Programmatic permits are good as County has oversight
57. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
58. should be no permit and no limits
59. Should relate to on farm product
60. Small events should be fine.
61. Smaller is better but do not infringe on other neighbors' property or schedules.
62. Smaller temporary activities are preferable
63. starting to stray into permanent commercial activities. Do it off the ag soils

64.	There are plenty of nice restaurants in our local towns that promote local "farm to table" menus and have flush toilets. Keep this in our towns not in our fields.
65.	There is no definition of programmatic permit. Are these like dinners that NGOs hold on farms? Fund-raisers held on farms. How many of these happen currently, where and on how many acres? Does this apply to private gatherings or simply those open to the public? Where are the criteria? It might be a good idea but there is no data to allow anyone to evaluate the option.
66.	These are one-time events and should require oversight and enforcement of applicable regulations
67.	These should be allowed but not limited to
68.	these type of events should be allowed as much as possible! ; these should be allowed and any regulations should support farms
69.	They should be fully allowed if done IN HARMONY with the farmland and are using existing structures and minimal footprint.
70.	This is essentially the previous question, reworded.
71.	This number needs to be discussed with each venue and supplier.
72.	This question is confusing. Already asked about limiting events and size.
73.	This seems fair.
74.	This would provide a little extra income but, if managed properly, should not impair the agricultural ambiance of the county.
75.	Use farmland for farming.
76.	We agree that smaller, temporary activities are a benefit to our community. The phraseology of your statement is confusing. We want these to be permitted, but certainly NOT discouraged in any way.
77.	We have to be careful of 'number of events means' If I ever worked with the county to do farm to table events and I did everything properly to protect my farm, a small amount of farm to tables might not make me any money, but larger amounts of these events would. Maybe there should be a person that specifically works with farmers in order to make sure they are protected, the environment is protected, but the farmer can still receive an income.
78.	What is "farm to table"? Like McDonalds? I'm pretty sure the food they serve comes from a farm and ends up on a table. That, of course, in no way makes McDonalds an agricultural use. These terms are really stomach turning.
79.	What's the problem?"
80.	Who doesn't like food?
81.	Why not; Why not?
82.	x
83.	Yea

84.	Yes
85.	Yes
86.	Yes
87.	Yes
88.	Yes
89.	yes
90.	Yes
91.	Yes
92.	Yes
93.	Yes
94.	Yes
95.	yes
96.	Yes
97.	Yes
98.	Yes
99.	Yes
100.	Yes
101.	Yes, allow but no limits on size and number besides normal occupancy rules, etc.
102.	yes, I agree with rules
103.	Yes, seasons will dictate possible events
104.	yes this would give a famer the opportunity to give it a try before going all out
105.	Yes, under safety and food service regulations
106.	Yes, a little bit of a good thing sounds great.
107.	yes, but only occasionally.
108.	Yes, during high season for tourism.
109.	yes, if you allowed events of up to 100 people say without a complex permit process that would allow farmers freedom to host events. especially the farm to table events. It could allow 3 small farms to gather together to host an event
110.	Yes, in favor
111.	Yes, love it.
112.	Yes, minimum impact is important
113.	Yes, people learn where their food comes from and supports the farmers....as long as the infrastructure is already there and it's not taking ag land out of production.
114.	Yes, small farm-to-table events are helpful in educating the public about farm products and farmers.
115.	Yes, these are good for the business owners and public.
116.	Yes, this seems fair.
117.	Yes. Smaller events like this would be great for the community.
118.	Yes. There needs to be some regulation on this of course.
119.	Yes. For the good of all. Increases awareness.
120.	Yes. I agree. If it helps the farm and there's no major environmental impact, then why not.
121.	Yes. That's a good way to try it out.

Most disagreed with disallowing farm to table events

23. Do not allow any farm to table events.

Response	Total Share
No, I do not agree	91%
Yes, I agree	9%

n=368 respondents

No farm to table events, please explain:

1.	"don't care
2.	"No
3.	Above

4.	Again, we have local restaurateurs that can provide "farm to table" meals versus bringing more traffic into ag production areas.
5.	Again, what exactly is a "farm to table" event? As far as I can tell it's little more than nausea inducing lobbyist

	gibberish or fodder for someone's Sunset Magazine/Instagram photo shoot. Restaurants, bars, store, and other commercial uses are urban uses and belong in cities.
6.	Again, why wouldn't you write the question as "Allow farm to table events" and then the yes would mean you like the idea and no means you don't. Instead of "No, I do not agree" being, I'm assuming, my way of answering affirmatively that I do agree to allow the events... I'm not sure how you can even know what we really mean when answering questions written like this. Alas, good luck.
7.	agree
8.	Allow a few each year but with all codes and permits always on a temporary bases
9.	Allow farmers and land owners to find innovative ways to earn money. Put in place reasonable rules.
10.	Allow farmers to be profitable
11.	allow these types of events
12.	Anything to promote our food production. The best wheat, apples, berries, flowers. Fishermen.
13.	As long as neighbors are not disturbed, these events should be allowed. They are wonderful for the farm, the chef and the attendees.
14.	As long the food on the table is actually coming from the farms nearby
15.	Best soil in the world. Grow food!
16.	Define phrase more thoroughly...
17.	Definition of farm to table is not clear. Does 1 item, several items, many items, all items need to come from the farm.
18.	Disagree
19.	Disagree
20.	Disagree, I wish we had more farm to table events
21.	Disagree.
22.	disagree. More harm is done to sustainability of Skagit farmland from tilling on dry windy days than on customers or patrons parking
23.	Disagree. No. Can't imagine this would be good for business.
24.	Disagree. See above.
25.	Does not make sense with the other allowed activities.
26.	Don't limit ability to help small farmers
27.	Don't be ridiculous.
28.	Exposure to on-farm experiences enhances both the quality of life of those involved and creating lasting impression of our agricultural community and honors our heritage.
29.	Farm to table events are wildly popular and would bring in a great amount of revenue and customer base to Skagit Valley farmers, thus ensuring that they are able to stay on their farms.
30.	Farm to table events can be held in other facilities, not on farmland
31.	farm to table events should be allowed
32.	farm to table events should be encouraged
33.	Farm-to-table, when done right, can help educate and inform those attending on the county or multiple county contributions to provide for the communities around them. Education about food is very important; from the most basic of potatoes to the notes of a wine or layers of flavor within a honey.
34.	Forbidding business is bad for business.
35.	Have a specific point person through the conservation district that handles farm events.
36.	I believe these are limited in scope and have limited impact on agricultural activities.
37.	I do support farmers
38.	I like farm to table events as a way to support small farms and spread the message about farms.

39.	I like the concept but unsure of the language used in these questions; .
40.	I think they are an important way to connect people to our valley and what grows here.
41.	it's called AGRITOURISM!!!!
42.	More information needed.
43.	No
44.	no
45.	No
46.	No
47.	No
48.	No
49.	No
50.	no
51.	No
52.	No
53.	No
54.	No
55.	No
56.	No
57.	no
58.	no
59.	No
60.	No
61.	No
62.	No
63.	No comment
64.	No farm to table or restaurants or tasting rooms.
65.	No that would stifle growth
66.	No- These are great events and can actually preserve the desire to keep farmland by allowing people to experience it.
67.	No, but do keep them limited in size and number.
68.	No, let them happen.
69.	No, then there is no tourism to farms that can support that. It's important for city people and others to learn where their food comes from and how to support farmers.
70.	No, this is good for the farming and business community. It is also a good activity for locals.
71.	No, urban and suburban folk need exposure to agricultural pursuits
72.	No.
73.	No. Farm to table events are great ways to help educate people on where their food comes from. We need this. Badly!
74.	No. Hey, it's America!
75.	no. just keep them too occasionally.
76.	No. People need to know about farms and support them.
77.	No. see above.
78.	No. We don't know until we try.
79.	Non-farm families should have the opportunity to see where their food comes from, acquire at least a superficial understanding of what it takes to produce food, and to enjoy an opportunity to eat locally produced food on site. Most people have no idea.
80.	Not enough info presented
81.	Nothing at this time
82.	Occasional is fine as long as no infrastructure added.
83.	Ok, why would this be bad?? Yes.
84.	Out of floodplain if regular occurrence-
85.	People enjoy seeing visiting farms and learning where their food comes from. Events like these encourage such engagement.
86.	Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
87.	Rural area. Less regulations.
88.	See above comment.
89.	See above.; No, I think expanding public participation, so the public is educated and enjoys our farming community

	is to be encouraged. Shutting out the public does not foster good will or even an understanding where their food comes from and how their food is grown.
90.	Seems a natural extension of agri-business
91.	Small events should be fine.
92.	Small farms need multiple opportunities to create income.
93.	That is what we are known for, the farmlands. Allow people to come and experience fresh food so they will understand the importance of the farmland and how it should never be reduced for housing development or industry/warehouses.
94.	There goes one of the best Skagitonians to preserve farmland auction items!
95.	There should be an avenue available to keep this under control and not interfere with ag operations occurring.
96.	There should be more flexibility here -
97.	These are a great opportunity, please allow
98.	These are excellent opportunities to educate the clients on farming.
99.	These could readily be held at established banquet facilities, doesn't necessitate being on a farm, and likely would include products beyond what is being farmed on a property.
100.	These events grow the appreciation of farm life.
101.	These events support local ag, we need them.
102.	they should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint

103.	This could support local businesses.; Would like to shop at my local farms
104.	Too strict.
105.	We cannot go on with business as usual, we really need to shrink our impact, not the other way around
106.	We, as locals, enjoy the local farm to table events and ability to buy local produce
107.	What is this about? Could you please let us know what precipitated this survey to go off the rails about Farm to Table? Seems that something threatening, or frightening must be afoot. Please let us know!
108.	What's the harm?"
109.	Why compete with existing restaurants that are already doing this? Have a new restaurant that does this if it's that important.
110.	Why don't these farm to table events fall under the temporary special use category? If these are part of the proposed programmatic temporary event permit, there needs to be criteria if it is different to the other SU category. Does this apply to private and/or public gatherings?
111.	Why say No? If you present a reasonable argument as to why it would be detrimental, I would have to reevaluate.
112.	Why?
113.	x
114.	Yes, want less tourists

Permit Applications and Procedures

A large majority would update agritourism application forms and criteria for clarity.

24. Create or update application forms to ensure agritourism activities are well defined and the important criteria such as ensuring the activity is accessory and supports onsite agriculture is made clear.

Response	Total Share
Yes, this should be a priority for the County	83%
No, this should not be a priority for the County	17%

n=367 respondents

Updated application forms, please explain:

1.	"a	16.	A is the answer, but is "code enforcement" the most important aspect? If so, how about code education?
2.	"I believe we should make clear rules, and most will abide and we don't need a bunch of permits and paperwork (forms, applications, review procedures, amended definitions and standards, etc.)	17.	A of course you can't proceed unless infrastructure investments are worth it
3.	"I generally think existing rules are adequate.	18.	A) clarity is always good
4.	"Yes	19.	A, as people could easily take advantage and disturb neighbors if not clearly outlined
5.	(a). under priority as stated.	20.	a, control the inevitable change in landscape
6.	(b) the farmers know what's good for them better than the government.	21.	A, especially the clear definitions
7.	a	22.	A, yes got to keep it up to date
8.	A	23.	A. I see this as an opportunity that should encouraged by the County.
9.	A	24.	A. Of course, the County is obligated to have a straightforward process.
10.	A	25.	a. The more cut and dry the process and rules are, the easier it is to enforce if something gets out of hand.
11.	a	26.	A. They need to stay well defined. Even farmers' markets are deteriorating into craft shows and cheap entertainment.
12.	A	27.	A... Clarifying makes sense
13.	A	28.	A... yet, who else would have that priority??
14.	A		
15.	a - we need to support our farmers, and this is one way to do it!		

29.	A: in order to support our farmers, and the permitting process already exists, then it should be a priority.
30.	addressing now will hopefully prevent abuse in the future growth of our valley
31.	Agree
32.	Agritourism is an important and great source of additional income to the farms as well as educational to those visiting the acres within the county. Farms that depend on it, should be allowed to do so.
33.	Agritourism is important for the county economic development
34.	agritourism should be supported as much as possible
35.	And make sure there are NO "good old boy " activities and favoritisms going on.
36.	As we know, we are an area people travel to and then dream of moving to. We need to protect our farmland. Agritourism is great for business, but we need the country to help with keeping it fair without too much strain to farmers and country. A happy medium...
37.	B
38.	b
39.	B
40.	B
41.	B you shouldn't have to jump through hoops
42.	B. I don't see this as a major priority as long as the 40-acre rule is in effect.
43.	B. This shouldn't be a priority because most of this shouldn't require permits. Let people use their land for profit. If the permits are a must, then yes... Review the process to ensure it is simple and straightforward.
44.	But yes, some form of document should be provided to farmers.
45.	C. Those answers are wide apart answers and too simplistic.
46.	Changes to forms and updates need to go through the regular public process and include farmers/producers and others affected by proposing changes. Determining whether an activity is accessory should include other measurements over and above income generation, costs or benefits or number of people served. Effects on neighboring properties and a clear method of closing a venue that is operating outside the criteria is also needed. Adding staff to enforce agritourism activities may not be the best investment for PD&S given other code violations that may have greater long-term impacts on the land. No evaluation of the cost/benefits of additional staff is provided.
47.	Clarity will benefit all parties. It will also ensure communication, esp. with neighboring properties.
48.	Clear and well-defined permits benefit everyone.
49.	Clear codes with very limited restrictions
50.	Clear regulations are essential as well as equal treatment and fairness.
51.	Create the permit with help of people who may purchase a permit if you leave it up to county employees and lawyers it will become too cumbersome for a non-lawyer to apply; Too much for the county to take on
52.	expanding uses with no enforcement is not a positive direction
53.	Fair and simple is really important for regulations.
54.	Have you ever tried to get a permit from the county? Can take years.
55.	Having an adequate and funded agency for processing and enforcement of rules should definitely be a primary focus
56.	I don't think it is high priority.
57.	I think there are more important issues.
58.	I totally agree with simplifying rules.
59.	If activities are expanded then yes if not it's probably not a higher priority than transportation congestion issues for example.

60.	If it is to be done, it needs to be done right with clarity at the application stage. No ambushes by code gurus seeking to exploit a wrinkle in the code.
61.	If nothing new is being added, then you don't need new criteria or applications.
62.	It is not a priority now.
63.	less controls and permits as long as food service rules for safety are followed
64.	Let people create what they would like. Stop overreach.
65.	Make the permit process easier cut the red tape and speed the process along; Leave no loop holes with the permit, state what they can do and cannot do.
66.	More important things to think about than this
67.	No
68.	No comment
69.	No new forms needed
70.	No- we do not need to bring more traffic and tourism to the area. We do not need to end up like auburn valley. Preserve our land and farming practices as is!
71.	No, they should not be a priority for the county. There are much more important things that we should be focusing on, like crime and competitive pay for our sheriff's office and deputies.
72.	Nothing at this time
73.	Once again, enough with the government control
74.	One form with the following one question: does this property file a Schedule F with the IRS? If so--do your agribusiness best.
75.	otherwise the door might be open for some ""event"" to get out of hand"
76.	Permits are a government scam.
77.	Please see my original comments and questions. ; I am just not sure about this.
78.	Please simplify the process!
79.	Regulations may stifle entrepreneurial spirit of young farmers
80.	Seems this could drive more local business and develop communities as long as the resources are ; Better development for the county.
81.	Shouldn't this be the goal in any County activity?
82.	The clear defining of the event which may limit some is a function of the County.
83.	The county needs to keep its hands out of business and focus on the safety of buildings.
84.	The County needs to put a halt to all existing violations to the current code.
85.	The county should also follow up and make sure they follow the rules.
86.	There are other, more important priorities than code enforcement. See my earlier comment about government. Please understand, I understand the necessity of government. We need it. But not more than necessary.
87.	There are so many other issues to deal with, I don't know who's behind all this, but you can bet it is selfishly driven for the advantage of few rather than all.
88.	There is no compelling reason to rush this process. There is no crisis here.
89.	There is no enforcement other than complaints.
90.	This is a MUST if rural character is to be preserved.
91.	This should be a step in the direction of improved efficiency for all parties.
92.	This should have already been done. Typical county blundering.
93.	This truly would make a difference - good plan!
94.	To the extent that something is allowed, sure. However, shouldn't it be a priority for the County to provide clear definitions and criteria for all land uses?
95.	We always need to plan for the future.
96.	we do not need more enforcement. we need to allow our farms and farmers to thrive. not get bogged down with permits and overregulating

97. we don't need any more gov. oversites
98. We need farmland
99. Well defined applications and regulations are key.
100. Well defined is a good thing.
101. While there are other higher priorities, the better definition of regulation and enforcement of agriculture deserves to be included among priorities as this is a heritage industry for our region.
102. Without monitoring and enforcement, there is no real regulation. We hear arguments supporting "property rights". Well, open space and farmland receive tax benefits for current use. That alone is reason to enforce zoning requirements.
103. x
104. Yeah, again, losing faith that any of this paperwork will make things clear, as I'm again confused by the question."

105. Yes
106. yes
107. Yes
108. Yes
109. Yes
110. Yes
111. Yes- a
112. Yes, choice A
113. yes, option a
114. Yes, this should be a priority"
115. yes. Duh
116. Yes. The clearer the better. Shorten the forms, keep fees for permits low.
117. Yes. The people here need to be the priority.

Most would exempt low impact agritourism activities from permit requirements.

25. Exempt seasonal, low use, low impact activities like u-pick from permit requirements.

Response	Total Share
Yes, this should be a priority for the County	72%
No, this should not be a priority for the County	28%

n=363 respondents

Exempt low use, low impact activities, please explain:

1. "b
2. "Yes
3. a
4. a
5. A
6. A
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. a
11. A
12. A
13. A
14. A
15. A, I guess. I'd like to see it happen, but as far as priorities go, this isn't high on the list of many other more urgent issues like homelessness, puppy mills and more.
16. A see above
17. A this should be fine
18. A yes.
19. A) I'm in favor
20. A, exempt low impact uses
21. A. low impact is minor
22. Across the board exemptions are dangerous - again monitoring would prevent the activities from disrupting farming.
23. again the problem is in the definition of ""low impact"". "
24. All income-producing activities impacting the public should require a permit.
25. allow as much as the business needs
26. Are we siding with the little people or the big people?
27. As long as no increase in footprint to the facility.
28. As long as they have adequate parking.
29. b
30. b
31. B
32. b

33. B
34. B
35. B why would you do that? Make permit easy
36. B, not a worry
37. B. I think this needs to be informed by the views of the businesses working this. Is the permitting process so onerous? If so, then the County needs to improve its process.
38. b. There should still be a permitting process for this. Keep things safe and of high standards.
39. B. They should all be subject to permitting.
40. B: While U-pick can be seasonal, it can impact farmland if not keeping with rules.
41. Cheaper for consumer
42. Continue requiring permits
43. do you need a u-pick permit? I don't think so.
44. Don't focus resources on small businesses struggling to survive.
45. Don't overregulate the small stuff. If there is a problem, you will hear about it.
46. Driving a local economy.
47. Ease the burden on farmers!
48. Equity and access to fresh foods is important
49. Everything shouldn't have a permit. Low impact activities are one of them.
50. Farms that depend on it, should be allowed to do so, as long as they can follow the guidelines and requirements that allow them the seasonal visitors.
51. How many new u-pick places are you expecting?
52. I agree they are ok, but I don't see why this should be a priority for the county.
53. I am ok with this but don't see it as a priority
54. I don't know enough about the requirements to know if this is a significant limitation for low-impact activities to need improvement.
55. I guess, what's the law currently? What's wrong with the current law/process?

56. I totally agree with simplifying rules.
57. I want to know if sign says 'Organic' for example, then that obligation has been met.
58. If duration and parking are limited in scope yes
59. I'm fine with U-pick, at least they are growing food.
60. Just make the process easier. Permits should be a must, they have to meet the requirements the permit states.
61. Keep as much of it as simple as possible. U-pick, as indicated, is mostly local.
62. Keep it simple.
63. Let the farmers farm, not do tons of paperwork.
64. Low use, low impact translates to not a high volume of income. I would rather make this easier on the farmer than harder.; Low use, Low impact seasonal activities usually translate to not much money coming in and therefore I am sure the farmer would appreciate having some of the red tape and regulations waived.
65. Make it as EASY and APPROACHABLE as possible.
66. Make it easier for farmers to generate income without heavy administrative burden.
67. Make it easy for the farmer if they would like to provide this option to people.
68. Making new rules that require additional enforcement staff seems like a poor use of the county's limited resources.
69. most of these permit requirements should be removed
70. No
71. no
72. No
73. No comment
74. No exemptions.
75. No permits should be required for "you pick activities"
76. No, this should not be a priority. This is a good activity though and should be supported.
77. No. Farmers should be able to determine what and who is best for their land.
78. Not enough explanation to answer your question
79. Not sure of the impact of u pick farms.
80. Not sure.
81. Nothing at this time
82. option (a); as stated
83. Option a, no permit for seasonal U-pick.
84. Parking, traffic, liability etc must be controlled
85. Permitting is needed to ensure the property owner knows and agrees to the rules.; .
86. Provided viable farmland is not lost to parking lots
87. Seems like this would free up a lot of staff time for something that is happening organically in neighborhoods
88. Seriously? a priority?
89. Small use permits but limited applications; Good business practice
90. some of these questions are confusing and misleading.
91. Streamline permit process.
92. Thank you
93. The businesses that are doing this business have been at it along time. They should be grandfathered in but limit the new businesses going into this sector, not taking away from farmlands to create parking.

94. The county should only be involved in what is absolutely necessary.
95. The idea is good, but if undefined it could create more of a mess.
96. There is limited demand for U pick. Is a pumpkin patch U pick?
97. there is no reason to regulate these low use/low impact activities.; there is no reason to regulate these type of activities
98. This is dictated by the growing season .and the crop success
99. this is direct ag -tied use, and often supports low wage and teenage workers that is important to preserve.
100. This would quickly get out of hand as people push the boundaries.
101. Too much permitting rigamarole may inhibit small scale farms. Keep it reasonable!
102. U pick seems like normal farm activity and is especially great for locals
103. waste not want not as well as a good opportunity to learn where our food comes from as well as supplement our food sources and support the farmers
104. We assume the health requirements for U-pick activities would remain even if permits were not required. Who determines what low-use low impact is? Are those definitions given public scrutiny or simply implemented by county administrators? What is the goal of this removal of this permit requirement? Are new venues treated the same as existing? More information and data are needed to make an informed decision.
105. Without monitoring and enforcement, there is no real regulation. We hear arguments supporting "property rights". Well, open space and farmland receive tax benefits for current use. That alone is reason to enforce zoning requirements.
106. x
107. Yes
108. yes
109. Yes
110. yes! I think there are plenty of low impact activities that should be exempt from permits
111. yes, helpful to protect farming use
112. Yes, small time farming, family fun, organic wholesome food to our people is more important than an arbitrary law or enforcement campaign. Govern where it is necessary and do it well , but government needn't be involved with every aspect of our lives, ask Orwell .
113. Yes, this seems fair.
114. Yes, this should be a priority"
115. Yes, unless the county has experienced 'bad actors' or unscrupulous vendors in the past
116. Yes, why not??
117. Yes. Because it keeps the county out of it.
118. Yes. This should not require a permit.
119. Yes. Really? Why should we require a permit for people to pick berries or cut a Christmas tree?

Most support an annual self-certification form after initial approval.

26. After approval of a land use permit, require an annual self-certification form, in which the operator is required to provide information that they are still meeting the requirements of their permit (size, number of events, or proof of farm income). This would help ensure that events are operated consistent with the permit, do not inadvertently grow in size or complexity, and that farming is still the primary use of the land.

Response	Total Share
Yes, this should be a priority for the County	77%
No, this should not be a priority for the County	23%

n=363 respondents

Annual self-certification, please explain:

1. "Really, self-certification, nope
2. "Self-certification"? What could possibly go wrong? Can I self-certify to the Sheriff's office that I always obey the speed limit?
3. "We only answered no because this is written with the assumption that the primary use of the land would be farming.
4. "Yes
5. (a) as stated,.
6. 100% this should be an annual process for both the businesses and the country to do to ensure things are still within the permit standards.
7. a
8. a
9. A
10. A
11. a
12. A
13. A
14. A
15. A
16. A
17. A
18. a
19. A
20. A
21. A
22. A of course you can always review if necessary
23. a safety feature to avoid turning farms into amusement parks"
24. A we don't want it to get out of hand
25. A yes as this could cause problems if not kept in check
26. a yes, but maybe every three years instead of every year
27. A) yes, I think it's a good check to ensure things don't get CRAZY
28. a. why have rules without any oversight?
29. A. Seems best.
30. a. There should check ups and re-certification once a permit is issued.
31. A... This makes sense
32. A: In order to make sure these types of activities are regulated to keep Ag land the way it should be.
33. Again, see my original comments. I would really like an answer to my questions. We are farming on rural reserve and not farming on agriculture and we do certify for our open space taxation.; If the property is zoned and the regulations are outlined, then the owner should be aware of what they can do. Some of our property is open space

and we are well aware of the documentation that is required and that we need to keep a farming income.
34. Also need periodic inspection
35. Although I'm not sure that this would work. Enforcement is going to be necessary, regardless, and conditions may need to be added as time goes on. How would this be enforced?
36. annual review seems reasonable
37. Annual self-certification is fine, so long as it doesn't place an undue time and/or financial burden on the operator, and does not simply become an unchecked bureaucratic exercise.
38. Annual self-certification sounds reasonable
39. As with licensed professionals, those who wish to operate a business on their farm with a permit should be annually certified to provide that service.
40. Ask if they filed a Schedule F. If no, then shut them down. If yes, take the tax revenue and good will that is generated and leave the agribusiness owner alone.
41. b
42. b
43. b
44. B
45. B
46. B, is self-certification going to be reliable and effective?
47. B, not a worry
48. B. I think the County probably has more important things. Neighboring properties will serve as the police and the County should not be spending resources auditing this
49. B. I think the county has more important issues to worry about.
50. Being zoned AG/NRL, does not mean that it's an active farm. However, the zoning SHOULD allow for agritourism."
51. C. It's a good idea but there are many priorities in the county deserving attention.
52. Checks and balances.
53. County can't let a slide of the original use to become something else.
54. Do not allow
55. don't over regulate this process; minimal regulation is almost always best
56. expanding uses with no staff for enforcement is a step backwards
57. Farmers should self-certify without over government involvement.
58. Good idea.
59. good luck with self-certification. Never works if there are no checks and balances. County will have to field lots of complaint calls

60.	Good policing of the process helps people engage in the process.
61.	Great idea.
62.	How does the county plan to "enforce" this without spending more money?
63.	However, a random check from county should be done to ensure that the information obtained from the "self-certification" is not self-serving.
64.	I feel size of event shouldn't be an issue as long as farming isn't effected
65.	I think you should only respond to complaints if they are generated by local surrounding property owners.
66.	If county permit employees are doing their job and establishing relationship with the farmers they permit, the submission of an annual update should not be necessary. Updates would be submitted only if the farmer is changing his services/accessory activities or there is a pattern of complaints or concerns.
67.	If not adequately monitored there will always be those who seek to circumvent the guidelines for their own gain. This should be a bare minimum as long as these forms would be reviewed and verified every couple of years for each location. This will, however, require more county resources.
68.	If we have a permit, we need to have a way to hold people accountable.
69.	It may seem like a hassle to the owners/operators, but this is consistent with keeping the focus on maintaining our current farmland.
70.	It should have already been done. No thought process I guess.
71.	let the area grow without restrictions
72.	Maintain control.
73.	Neither. Self-enforcement isn't enforcement
74.	No
75.	No comment
76.	No, the county should not be involved.
77.	Not a bad idea, but not sure it needs to be a priority for county staff to review and verify all these reports
78.	Not a priority, but only because there is no guarantee of truthfulness. And what would be the "punishment" for dishonesty? If there really is no punishment, it probably would have no value.
79.	Not sure.
80.	Nothing at this time
81.	One and done please - no annual certifications.
82.	only if a yearly fee is not required
83.	Option A, if the property is large , and has multiple events.
84.	Perhaps a self-certification every few years followed by a government certification. ; .
85.	Please make any reporting requirements easy for busy farmers to complete.
86.	Reminders are important
87.	Requiring farm income precludes the business on the property from using all of the agricultural production of the land it is on. Self-certification is a good idea and should otherwise include information certifying they still comply with their permit.
88.	seems weird to self-certify themselves. Isn't there enough paperwork involved for some of these activities? KISS
89.	self-certification does not work. It is a way to feel like you are regulating and monitoring things when you are not. If want to do this, randomly pick a percentage to audit annually
90.	Self-certification with an unscheduled visit from the county. People lie.

91.	Self-Certification? Are you crazy? You think people are going to follow the rules? Hire people to ensure that people follow the rules.
92.	Self-report leaves room for error.
93.	Self-reporting is the first step to understanding. Make these reports public and much of the "enforcement" will be by the industry itself.
94.	Self-certification? That's pretty weak.
95.	Simplify the process after approval ; Otherwise outside companies could permit and push out farmers
96.	Skagit County may want to implement this form, but not to expand the types of activities or permits, rather to gather a baseline to determine if changes are actually needed and what changes, if any, do the farmers/producers actually want and why.
97.	Sure, where a permit is necessary.
98.	That sounds reasonable.
99.	The County should be monitoring this since they are the regulators of land use.
100.	The size will grow every year unless restrictions are in place.
101.	There should be an annual certification process, but I think a self-certification is problematic.
102.	They must follow the permit rules. ; Yes they need to be held accountable.
103.	This should be a no-pain way to maintain oversight of the use of the property under the permit.
104.	This would be a prime example of burdensome administrative/record-keeping requirement.
105.	Tracking growth or reduction of such businesses makes sense.
106.	trust property owners to mind the rules
107.	Ugh
108.	Why regulate it not enforced
109.	With random county checks for compliance
110.	Without monitoring and enforcement, there is no real regulation. We hear arguments supporting "property rights". Well, open space and farmland receive tax benefits for current use. That alone is reason to enforce zoning requirements.
111.	x
112.	Yes
113.	Yes
114.	yes
115.	Yes
116.	yes Duh there are always cheaters.
117.	Yes, but don't make it complicated.
118.	Yes, but maybe two years.
119.	Yes, each year or perhaps three, with drive by monitoring or something on that scale ,but nothing akin to spying.
120.	Yes, if a permit is required, this seems a reasonable way to renew.
121.	Yes, this should be a priority"
122.	Yes. Keep the one or two businesses that want to circumvent the law from doing so.
123.	Yes. Keeps the farmer honest.
124.	Yes.... geez, again, who else would be in charge of this??
125.	You guys are hung up with permits and forms as usual. As if that equals anything. It's easy to get a permit and fill out forms. It's harder to maintain compliance.
126.	You make the permits, you make the rules and penalties, then you be responsible for following through with enforcement. Asking neighbors/others to report on possible violations is downright dangerous. "

Most support a programmatic permit for several years.

27. For temporary uses, or uses with high activity levels, provide a limited term programmatic permit (e.g. 5 years that ensure the use is managed but does not necessarily continue with a new owner or is re-evaluated periodically).

Response	Total Share
Yes, this should be a priority for the County	79%
No, this should not be a priority for the County	21%

n=355 respondents

Programmatic permit, please explain:

1. "Managed". I doubt it. By whom, in what form, what intervals???	42. conversions back to Ag are difficult and rare
2. 5 years is a long time to fly under the radar if this is abused	43. ditto
3. a	44. Do not over-manage. Allow the time for business to succeed or fail.
4. A	45. Do not permit uses with high activity levels.
5. a	46. Don't let this get out of control
6. A	47. Establishing the criteria of the programmatic permit should be done in a public process where farm operators and county staff present the results of their reporting forms for at least a year along with the outcomes of each decision point and choice. Re-evaluating programmatic permits seems like a make-work job if there is no ownership change. Are there other changes which might apply to these permits other than ownership change? What are they? Should owners have to have a permit for activities that they already conduct informally for friends/neighbors? Is this a solution looking for a problem or a way for PD&S to get additional funding for permits that may not be needed? What are you trying to achieve here, why and for whom? More information needed in order to determine positive or negative review.
7. A	48. Exactly what I was thinking above.; .
8. a	49. Follow the permit's criteria
9. A	50. Get a complaint then check.
10. A	51. Good idea.
11. A	52. I do not approve of the idea that a business could invest in infrastructure and then have the permits pulled a few years later because they are successful at running their legally approved business
12. A	53. I guess this could be a good solution to ensuring growth is sustainable. I assume county staff have spent way more time looking at options. I'd want one that reduced burden on staff, landowner, but keeps actual acres in farmland. so, if a property was 75% farmland and 25% agrotourism, and that 25% supported the landowner being able to keep the rest in farmland, great!
13. a	54. I think only with change of ownership.
14. A	55. I totally agree with simplifying rules.
15. A	56. If okayed my neighbors and change to a one-year permit that can be renewed if approved
16. a	57. If this activity is handed down, such as in a family farm, then the progression shouldn't need to be limited or re-evaluated. Most people buy a property for the use that it is zoned or is being used.; It would be a worry that what you have been doing for the last 5 years, might be changed. If a new owner buys the property, usually they are aware of the zoning and the use of that property.
17. A	58. If you don't do this, the County will quickly lose visibility and it will become hard to manage long running events.
18. a but absolutely is not attached to the land it is attached to the person/landowner/land manager.	59. I'm afraid this will get out of hand. Once a use is established, it will be difficult to restrict it. This is why I keep pushing for licensing which may also help fund enforcement.
19. A isn't that good management ?	
20. A, manage for smaller and more farm specific uses	
21. A, see above, who would do this?	
22. A. Five-year review of prior usage sounds quite reasonable.	
23. a. if it turns out there are unintended results, options are easier	
24. A. High activity levels should definitely be re-evaluated often, possibly more often than 5 years.	
25. a. Yes for the same reasons as the previous results. recertification is necessary in order to keep things from straying from the original permit.	
26. A... 5 years is too long, should be shorter	
27. Again, maintaining control while allowing creative choices.	
28. Annual reviews would be better.	
29. Annually	
30. Anything that makes permitting more difficult to limit commercial activities on farmland to preserve the character of the valley	
31. b	
32. B	
33. b	
34. B	
35. b	
36. B	
37. B	
38. B, not a worry	
39. But 5 years is too long. Reduce this timeframe.	
40. but not 5 years, should be done annually	
41. C. Again, when asking if this should or should not be a priority is too simplistic. Come on. Make better questions!	

60.	I'm not sure limiting the ability to pass on event permission is a good way to support the value of farmland.
61.	just make the goals of the program clear and have the regulations fit to support the regulations
62.	Large-impact events need to ensure that the infrastructure still exists.
63.	Na
64.	Need an example of....
65.	Needs compliance checks and review, not just one time. That way, if there are problems they can be corrected.
66.	Needs to be evaluated on a yearly basis.
67.	new owner = new permit
68.	no
69.	No
70.	No
71.	No comment
72.	No opinion
73.	No opinion
74.	no, because what if I build a barn? Those cost a lot. Once something is a permitted use it should be assumed it can be used whenever for that use
75.	No. It should be up to the new owner if they want to continue with The permit to use or not.
76.	Not a high priority
77.	Not sure.
78.	Nothing at this time
79.	objection to this is that a new owner should cause a new review or evaluation
80.	Once farmland has been converted, the horses have left the corral.
81.	option (a) with a two-year review.
82.	Option A, for high activity levels.
83.	Periodic re-certification is a good idea, but needs to be done in a way that does not effectively undermine the value and/or financial viability of compliant businesses.
84.	Periodic review should be mandatory so that non-compliance is "nipped in the bud."
85.	Permits should not convey with the property when it is sold. In the same way Schedule Fs don't convey...
86.	Providing for periodic re-evaluation under terms and conditions stated in advance will enable the County to

	maintain a viable agri-tourism program that adjusts with changes in population, consumer interests, and farmers' needs.
87.	Regulations should be enforced ; Enforcement is good applications complexity doesn't guarantee
88.	See above.
89.	Seems like a logical step.
90.	Skagit is an agricultural county. keep it that way!
91.	stop county controls of access use of farmland
92.	Stop destroying farmland
93.	Sure.
94.	There should include an anonymous complaint mechanism so problems of non-compliance can be addressed quickly, not every 5 years.
95.	These permits should be reviewed annually
96.	This seems very reasonable and is consistent with the stated goals.
97.	Unused permitted operations should be ended.
98.	We need to keep this in check
99.	Without monitoring and enforcement, there is no real regulation. We hear arguments supporting "property rights". Well, open space and farmland receive tax benefits for current use. That alone is reason to enforce zoning requirements.
100.	Work on other things like homelessness and housing.
101.	x
102.	Yearly renewal is a better format to follow so businesses don't misuse the privilege of selling to the community.
103.	Yes
104.	Yes
105.	Yes
106.	yes
107.	Yes
108.	Yes
109.	Yes, but not 5 years. Maybe 2 years.
110.	Yes, sort out a win/ win process for county ,owners and neighbors. All need input, communication is Essential.
111.	Yes, this seems reasonable.
112.	Yes, this should be a priority"
113.	Yes. To ensure the agriculture is not compromised

Two thirds felt the County should improve code enforcement.

28. The County should do better code enforcement to address those who run agritourism operations without permits.

Response	Total Share
Yes, this should be a priority for the County	64%
No, this should not be a priority for the County	36%

n=349 respondents

Better code enforcement, please explain:

1.	"Absolutely! What good are laws/permits if not enforced?
2.	"don't know
3.	"Need more input to answer questions
4.	"other things are more important, like homelessness.; Work on other things like homelessness and housing.
5.	A
6.	A
7.	a
8.	A
9.	A

10.	A
11.	A
12.	A
13.	a
14.	A
15.	A
16.	A
17.	A yes another obvious requirement
18.	a. absolutely necessary if the goal is to protect the nature of our beautiful county

19.	A. Explain
20.	a. These people could potentially cause issues and should be enforced. At the same time, the permit should not be difficult to obtain so that non-compliant individuals don't have an excuse.
21.	A. We all have to follow rules as to not disturb others or important agriculture land.
22.	A. Yes.
23.	a...agritourism should be managed to insure that activities remain consistent with preserving farmland
24.	A: if the county is issuing permits, then they need to be consistent in the permitting process for all agricultural related permits.
25.	A; If the county enforced current code we wouldn't be having this discussion. It makes me angry that I have yield to folks who knowingly and willingly operate illegally. It's wrong.
26.	Absolutely!!!
27.	Again good policing shows that the county is focused on county growth.
28.	Again, unless there are financial penalties for violators, there is no point in enforcing codes.
29.	Agritourism should already be allowed so enforcing the ban now is just a waste of time. Focus on putting in proper regulations for agritourism and then give a grace period for any currently operating business to come into compliance.
30.	As the code is written if there are violations, there should be code enforcement. If the enforcement is selective, say against smaller operators, but not larger ones, that should be changed. Or if the enforcement is based on venue income or other inequitable criteria. If the goal is to have everyone now running an agritourism operation to be compliant with the current code, then yes, the County should work to get operators in compliance. The cost/benefit analysis from such an activity should also be reviewed to determine whether there are other ways to assist operators to achieve code compliance. More public process, data and program reviews are needed to address new operations in a way that does not disadvantage one venue or another. The criteria needs to be applied equally, not selectively by the code enforcer.
31.	b
32.	B
33.	b
34.	b
35.	B
36.	B
37.	B
38.	b no
39.	B, if violations are egregious, get after them, but don't be petty about minor infractions.
40.	B, not a worry
41.	B. The County should be ready to respond if they get complaints. Otherwise, to be frank, I am not really interested in my property taxes going up even more considering the rate increases of the last few years.
42.	B... This presently isn't a big deal
43.	B; If the county isn't aware it's probably so small it's not a concern.
44.	Bring the hammer down on repeated scofflaws
45.	Code enforcement will ensure those to violate policies can be educated and, if needed, fined.
46.	Code is not good without a plan for enforcement!
47.	Complaint generated code enforcement.
48.	Costly but necessary
49.	County should do better with agrotourism people that "do" have permits'
50.	Depending on the size of the events, it should be a priority. Farmstands and U-pick should be low on the priority scale.
51.	Do not know enough to know if this is currently a problem for the county.
52.	Do not allow any more ag tourism activities.

53.	do not overregulate. these businesses are just trying to stay financially successful in the face of ever changing economics and environmental regulations.
54.	Does not seem to be a problem anywhere in the valley
55.	Enough with the government control
56.	Fairness across the board
57.	For the safety of all involved.
58.	Free enterprise; Enforcement only if there are significant number of complaints. Otherwise it is existing operators using restraint of trade.; Your form does not put my comment where it was placed
59.	I am a law-abiding citizen and I would expect those who want to have this privilege to agritourism should be as well.
60.	I believe that there are other priorities for the county.
61.	I do not see this a big problem, and the code enforcement cost burden would fall on everyone else.
62.	I don't know enough about this situation to comment.
63.	I don't know if this is a high priority problem.
64.	I feel it should be monitored
65.	I had never heard of a single one of these permits prior to this.
66.	I have not heard about any problems
67.	I see compliance issues routinely. The county needs to put more effort into spelling out requirements and noncompliance rather than just adding permit process.
68.	I think there are higher priorities than this.
69.	I would imagine the county is understaffed. People want the county to do everything, but not ask for more money from citizens to accomplish these tasks. I'm sure there are better ways for staff to spend their time than tracking down rogue u-picks
70.	Idk
71.	If it becomes a toxic event, then the county should be able to step in. If it is just a busy-body minding everyone else's business, then I am sure the county would rather not be involved in that.; The county should be involved in situations that are toxic to the zoning, however, I am sure they don't want to be involved in a complaint that is from someone minding their neighbors business and not valid.
72.	If not done, greedy folks who do not share our rural values will exploit Skagit County.
73.	If you're going to revamp it should apply to everyone.
74.	Investigate complaints or observation of advertised use that is not permitted. But snooping into farm activities to try to catch misuse seems unnecessary
75.	Is there currently any abuse of the permitting requirements?"
76.	Is this a problem?
77.	It's not fair to those who follow the rules if people get away with running businesses without a permit.
78.	Leave the controls to safety of participants by health department
79.	Less government!
80.	Make sure the products are from the farm not purchased outside ; Just keeping up with permits ; Making sure it's actually an owner operator
81.	Na
82.	No
83.	No comment
84.	No opinion
85.	No, there should not be a priority. Code enforcement should be focusing on nuisance properties and their clean up.
86.	No. Permits shouldn't be needed in many of these cases. Let people make a living.
87.	Not a priority but still have enforcement it is important that the general public has an appreciation and knowledge of where their local food comes from. Keep promoting local agriculture.
88.	Nothing at this time
89.	Option b. Farmers should be able use their land as they see fit as long as the agriculture is not adversely affected

90. Perfectly asked. If the county is not doing a good job to enforce now... how could that possibly improve?
91. Permits should be required for everyone
92. Protect the farmland.; If a permit is required, the County must stop unauthorized activity within reason. Don't close down a kids lemonade stand.
93. Regulation is always important.
94. Seems like the county should address reasonable complaints and obvious offenders, but not necessary to create a new agency or overhaul/audit the whole county
95. Skagit County is known for having a weak backbone. Please hire an enforcement agent that is willing to stand up for what it right.
96. such as? Some examples of this situation would be helpful
97. The county could do a better job of informing the farm owners, and the public, as to when a permit is needed and why.
98. The county hasn't been doing this obviously. I'm starting to see nothing but a money grab here with the county. Based on this survey, it appears that this will be a complex, complicated process to have some event. My biggest concern is the traffic congestion/controls on the county roads, which so far has been under managed. It's a constant irritation for us locals who have to travel these roads.
99. The County should do better code enforcement ACROSS THE BOARD! Targeting agritourism and non-commodity agribusinesses is tantamount to institutionalized due process violations and LITERALLY selective enforcement.
100. The county should not be prioritizing increasing code enforcement with our local farmers.
101. The people that go through the appropriate process are at a disadvantage to those that just do it and don't get any approval, don't "follow the rules". Too much "good old boy" or "money speaks" versus everyone meets the same requirement
102. The people who break the rules ruin it for people who follow them.; .
103. The priority should be on protecting farmland and the environment while helping farms stay profitable
104. The system only works if everyone is held accountable.
105. The way I see it the county doesn't do any code enforcement
106. There is currently a double standard. Either don't enforce it across the board, or stand for the code.
107. there is no use for a code which is not adhered to. enforcement is not the only way,
108. They must have a permit or be closed down. Keep our farmland , there is little left for farming , a lot if the farm land is gone being developed into housing. People buy the house in the middle of farming and then complain of the smell the farm equipment being used. Or how late they are farming. Stop the taking if farmland fir developers. Help the farm

instead if taxing them out if farming. ; No permit no event and should be fined fir putting on an event without a permit. The fine should be enough that they won't put the event on without a permit
109. This could be an issue for businesses without proper permits. It should not be allowed without it. Plus, the funds that come from the permitting helps staff the country workers who insure we are looking out for the main goal, preserving farmland while promoting it at the same time.
110. This should be the biggest priority!
111. To retain the agricultural nature of the county, the single most important resource for the future, the standards (the code) must be enforced.
112. Understand county is short staffed so problem is, will be hard to really enforce this
113. What exactly are you asking here? This is so open ended that I could fall down the rabbit hole.
114. Whatever rules are put in place cannot be applied selectively; they need to apply equally to all land-owners and businesses in the County.
115. While I believe in less government control I still strongly believe that everyone should be expected to abide by the same rules and laws put in place. What us the purpose of this survey if not everyone is affected by it.
116. why else would you have a permit process and codes if it is not accountable
117. why expand uses if there is no enforcement on current operations?
118. Without monitoring and enforcement, there is no real regulation. We hear arguments supporting "property rights". Well, open space and farm land receive tax benefits for current use. That alone is reason to enforce zoning requirements.
119. x
120. Yes
121. Yes
122. Yes
123. yes
124. Yes
125. Yes Skagit is too valuable and this should help to control the situation before bad actors ruin it for everyone.
126. Yes, as long as the permits are not unreasonably denied.
127. Yes, option A, but one can understand the difficulties.
128. Yes, this should be a priority"
129. Yes, this should be a priority;
130. Yes.
131. yes. Can some run agritourism without permits???? That shouldn't be.
132. Yes. Pay attention to what's in place

Other

29. Comments: Is there anything else you would like to share with us about agritourism in Skagit County?

Open-ended

1. "I quit answering this survey as it is too long and the questions become redundant. It is a wonder you can get people to do any of it. Or that you can draw conclusions from what you acquire	
2. "I think a more robust process would help build growth within the county.	
3. "I work for Pacific Party Canopies and have not been reached out to by any of participating groups that have created this topic. As an Event Company that has been operating in Skagit County for over 30 years, suppling and donating to not only	
	the city and county, but to the nonprofits for Auctions and other activities, the schools, and many residents. We also work with a lot of the venues in the area and have created trusted relationships. We feel that our opinion should matter and would be open to having a deeper conversation about how farmers, and producers can work together with events and how everyone can win, including the county.
4. "Many counties in our country, and farms throughout the world survive because of Ag tourism, and they are mostly small farms.	

5.	"The citizens have already said no. Why are the county commissioners wasting more time and money on this unnecessary survey.
6.	"This survey feels like a continued attempt to break existing zoning that has kept Skagit county Agriculture strong and productive.
7.	"Yes for Agritourism, I u-pick, I farm stand, I've been member of CSA, I avoid large festivals, but that's just me. Anything that keeps Skagit farming is what I want, but not at the cost of fish or septic development or timber conservation. What's that new one? FCCs. All these developments and more, are your (county administrator) responsible. I want you to follow though, no matter what is decided, please. Thank you for the opportunity for me to share my opinion.
8.	.
9.	; The county should focus on county growth."
10.	Agritourism is a huge benefit to Skagit. It helps shape out county and give us character. Open this up. Let people make businesses about keeping our farm character and open spaces. All of the agritourism beats out golf courses and tacky McMansion communities. Agritourism is a way to keep the best of Skagit.
11.	Agricultural opportunity is one of the reasons I moved to this area. Maintaining and supporting the use of the land for that purpose is important, as is promoting that use to non-farmers.
12.	Agriculture is a very important business in this county. Tourism is the death of agriculture.
13.	Agriculture is important to the county, and clear, easy to use governance should be a priority in the county.
14.	Agriculture is the focus and appears to be a money generator for the farmers. U- pick and produce stands (that the farmers have grown there) are reasonable . Anything else takes the focus off productivity off a working farm. It's hard enough farming without dodging a bunch of traffic. Keep the valley farm centric NOT car nor tourism centric.
15.	Agritourism adds value to farmland but should not become the driving motivation for agriculture
16.	Agritourism could generate significantly greater economic activity for our area, while not detracting from farming as a whole. We can figure it out. It just takes common sense and some open-mindedness, which I believe we have.
17.	Agritourism is like a value-added product and should be seen as an important opportunity to help farmers stay profitable and stay in farming.
18.	Agritourism provides an amazing opportunity to connect members within and outside of our community with farming practices. It also allows families involved in farming to make it sustainable in the future. Having the ability to have a value added feature to one's property provided additional income to the family farming the land.
19.	All non-farming activity should recognize Agriculture first, tourism second. Farm land is worth preserving, there are other properties that can be used for tourism and the ancillary marketing of agricultural products there is no reason we NEED to convert farmland to parking lots, septic drain fields, and the like.
20.	Allow agritourism without county interference. There are already too many rules and regulations...typical for government. Leave the private sector alone.
21.	Allow agritourism. Encourage agritourism.
22.	Allowing for restaurants or coffee stands on ag land or rural resource is a slippery slope and will damage the overall character of the Valley.
23.	Are we trying to turn Skagit county into a place like the movie "city slickers"? Uh no thanks. But please stop micromanaging the businesses that are already thriving with farm stands.
24.	As farms disappear elsewhere, Skagit Valley will be beacon of joy for families, getting away from the asphalt jungle.

25.	As this goes forward there needs to be flexibility to address "unintended consequences" immediately!
26.	Better traffic routes and more enforcement. Don't put up cones to try and stop people from making a left turn, put up a jersey barrier. It's horrible on memorial hwy during tulip season.
27.	big job: good luck, we are all counting on you
28.	Continued preservation of Skagit Farmland needs to stay the top priority. Once it is developed you will never get it back!
29.	Couldn't the county have figured out a way to send 1 postcard per address? Did you really need to send us 3 postcards? More waste from the county. Spending our hard-earned dollars. We're tired of it! Property taxes are climbing so high, it's tempting to sell and move out of state. We are being taxed to death in Washington State!
30.	County is already unable to enforce codes and GMA and comp plan policies are being ignored. "
31.	Don't make this SO complicated & keep fees etc low so that our agricultural farmers can survive, thrive and provide employment and protect our farmlands! Look at what happened to the Kent Valley
32.	Don't make it harder for farmers to farm. We want to steward the land, not wade through red tape. Always consider the impacts on very small family farms. Let's empower individuals in our community to connect with local farms, and make their own decisions about how they spend their time and money.
33.	Encourage and prioritize sustainable farming practices.
34.	Ensure any permit process is timely.
35.	events, farmstands, farm stays etc should not be restricted if done in full harmony with the farming activities and are using existing structures and minimal footprint
36.	Every day, I go through this county, from north to south, and east to west and back, and I grin. May this survey keep this county agriculturally beautiful. After moving here from Snohomish/King County, the first activity that was acted upon was volunteering for environmental non-profits, and it's a pure pleasure to live here...
37.	Explore and expand the thought of visitation and enjoyment of the magic of Skagit without limiting it to the mainstream activities: farm stays, stands, tasting rooms, weddings, food, events. Why is birding not included in this survey? Is that not an accessory, tourism activity tied to the land and supported on farming fields? There is SO much more that Skagit has to offer than the cliché Agritourism activities. I'd like to see this be a priority for the County. Thank you for all you do to keep this rare environment open and ever wilding, this land is a treasure beyond price.
38.	Farming is already hard enough to make a go of ...the county needs to support rather than manage uses consistent with our agricultural roots.
39.	Finding balance is always challenging. This is a beautiful valley. Having watched the Kent valley disappear, I sure hope that doesn't happen here. Widening some roads for safer bicycle routes would attract additional tourist. I apologize for not commenting on the latter questions. Got to run!
40.	Go Skagit!!!
41.	Help farmers as much as possible in meaningful, productive ways.
42.	Help our wonderful farmers stay afloat! Allow them more options to make money!
43.	Historic Skagit valley buildings that would otherwise disappear can now find new life. And what a great opportunity for small farms to succeed.
44.	I agree that agrotourism is a good thing for Skagit and growers. I disagree with the survey's focus that the activities take place on ag soils in floodplain. Not only are ag soils better used for farming but we should not be encouraging more development or infrastructure in floodplain. Focus ag

	tourism out of floodplain. Create a space for its airport on hill. Why does survey not look at other options like this?
45.	I am concerned with excessive government regulation and a loss of our property rights and freedoms. As government regulation increases, our constitutional rights as property owners is threatened.
46.	I appreciate the opportunity to participate in Agritourism and think the farmers should have the discretion to supplement their business. However, they see fit as long as it is safe.
47.	I believe that agritourism is compatible with farmland preservation, and more importantly provides additional income on top of a low-profit industry that needs other avenues to support both farmland and farm production.
48.	I don't support expanding agritourism!
49.	I live on Pleasant Ridge just outside of La Conner. I grew up on the Swanson Farm. Leave the farmland alone.
50.	I love Skagit County & don't want to see it go the way of King or Snohomish County. I want to give options to farmers to help their revenue stream but don't want to see Skagit County made into a Disney land of farming or lose its rural character; I love Skagit County & don't want to see it go the way of King or Snohomish County. I want to give options to farmers to help their revenue stream but don't want to see Skagit County made into a Disney land of farming or lose its rural character
51.	I LOVE Skagit County. My Mother was born in Clearlake in 1919. My family purchased property on Big Lake in 1972, we still own/use/enjoy it. I do not want to see our beautiful county lose its rural feel and heritage. Tourism must be a part of maintaining small family farms/ranches. If we lose our farmlands to developers we will NEVER get them back!
52.	I support agritourism that has an education component that does not require added building on crop growing land.
53.	I support it.
54.	I think it is good that the county is going through this process.
55.	I think it should preserve Skagit county as a lifeline resident with farming ties this is important but it should help farmers and not be targeting population growth which is counterproductive. Help the farms don't increase the population as a result of it.
56.	I think that if there is tax revenue from agritourism, it should be invested in grants and programs to support new and existing farmers in the valley. Tourism can be a side benefit of rural charm, but real agricultural production needs to be at the foundation of the land use. This means we need to support actual farmers in being able to make a living from their farmland.
57.	I think there are many ways to creatively make Skagit County a vibrant and sustainable place that still maintains agriculture as its leader.
58.	I was born in Skagit county 80 years ago. There have been many changes and not all for the good. In 1973 I went to work at Sanjuan Packers. At that time there was 40,000 acres of Green Peas. Now there are none. There was also sweet corn, green beans, carrots and table beets. Now there is none. Processors did not leave Skagit valley because they wanted to they left because they were driven out. It got so every time we mover equipment the cars that follow honked their horns and gave us the finger. It got to be scary.
59.	I would like the current county requirements and codes to remain as they are currently
60.	If in doubt keep it small or agritourism can grow and become a problem for farm country. Things seem good as is.
61.	If that maker of the rules, don't follow though and check for themselves "
62.	I'm all for it!
63.	I'm excited that "agritourism" can help supplement farmers' incomes and share what we do with the public. I'm in favor of any help the county can lend to make that easy for farmers. Again, I appreciate protecting farm land and helping farmers.

	I fear that too many regulations will make it unlikely that we will have time and money to jump through the hoops to have a farm event or farm to table dinner sometime in our busy summers. Again, I think the county should make simple reasonable rules... i.e.. any farm can have a few numbers of small events with onsite parking... and then we don't need to spend several days trying to find some form and pay for some inspection to share what we do.
64.	It is critical that touristic activity not detract from agricultural uses of priceless Skagit farmland.
65.	It is mighty hard these days to make a living with small-scale farming - without direct marketing measures. I don't know anyone who wants a few big corporate farms buying up this valley. Therefore, it seems inevitable that agritourism must be embraced. If done reasonably and with practical sensibilities we can keep our open spaces, preserve our way of life and stimulate our economy through agritourism.
66.	Its 2022, almost 2023. Time to think about economic sustainability - more agritourism makes sense and helps our economy.
67.	It's a damn buzzword meaning almost anything. Promote farming more. Tourism less. Protect against land use. Tax it higher if it's not really being used for agriculture.
68.	I've lived in this county for 55 years. Lived on farmland. Worked on farmland. Worked for u-picks, farm stands and farmers. I think these experiences need to be shared with people. And farmers need to be able to grow their businesses. Diversity is key to survival. And agritourism benefits all business in Skagit county.
69.	Just don't let restaurants and bars sneak in because it cannot be reversed
70.	Just go home once your hope is restored and your contributions have been made to support Skagit Family Farms.
71.	just have less time and funds used by county to control business in farmland
72.	Keep development out of the floodplain. Not against agritourism but make sure it is "on hills". Make a large agritourism area at Port of Skagit County. We are creating headaches for the future by encouraging more development of any kind in these farmlands in flood plain
73.	Keep it as natural as possible! It's nice farmers can find other ways to bring in income, but it needs to stay very rural/farm like. Neighbors don't want active businesses next door to their homes. They live in farmlands/ the country for a reason--not to be next to active businesses with noise or traffic.; no
74.	keep it strong.
75.	Keep up the good work and embrace the free market by making it easier to do business responsibly.
76.	Keeping the country feel to Skagit county is important to me and my family, especially as the mindset and behaviors of Seattle is slowly traveling up the I5 corridor, farming is being pushed out of the area. I think maintaining it should be a priority here.
77.	Lately I've been to highly impacted regions where busses are used to keep car congestion to a minimum. It might be good to re-look at how we can keep more vehicles off the roads.
78.	Less permitting would be nice. Let people do what they want with their land as long as it's not hurting anything. Make permits that *are* needed easy and affordable. It's crazy to think that you need county permission to do some of these things with your own land.
79.	Less regulations please. More land use options :)
80.	Let the farmers make money how they need to. Our farmers need all the support they can get.
81.	let the people do what they want as long as it is legal and does not take away from farmland.
82.	Let's make Skagit Valley a fun place to visit...not just April/tulips. Husband and I moved here 8 years ago for the beauty and low-key lifestyle but we miss the 'very cool'

activities of our last Colorado home. Skagit could work to this direction easily.
83. Let's do what we can to allow this in our county.
84. Letting others in Washington see agriculture in Skagit County is wonderful and should be encouraged as long as it doesn't destroy farmland. When I ran a Christmas tree farm, the sales in Dec. 2020 almost doubled with everyone wanting to get outside during Covid.
85. limit high density housing in all forms, or agritourism and farming will be strangled by the inability to access either
86. Lived in central Texas for many years, have seen what unbridled development can do to an area. Preserving the beauty and peace of the Skagit Valley is paramount and will require constant vigilance.
87. Love it!
88. Make sure it is all have permits. Are being inspected and are flowing the rules if the permits but make the permit process easier and faster. Don't just leave the applications sitting on someone's desk.; Do this right and not screw up the works by red tape and make it easier to get a permit or a qualified reason ss to why a permit will not be issued in a timely manner.
89. Making it allowable and easier for agritourism will benefit farms, and bring additional income to other businesses in the county.
90. Maybe if there is a specific points person that exclusively works with farms for agricultural events, stands, etc. Maybe that person could also be with SPF so that it's not exclusively a county issue but fellow farmers and other SPF members that could share the work, efforts, and dreams of farmers and what future events, etc they could do with their properties will taking the burden off the county. I really want to ensure that farmers get the creative and supportive vision they need to keep their farms financially afloat within the rules written. I also want to ensure that whatever rules the county decide do not lead to a slippery slope from outside influences coming in and making their choices with our land too.
91. More signage on fields to tell someone passing by what the crop is.... who's in charge of this??
92. Move with caution. Mass tourism is a time bomb.
93. N/A
94. Na
95. No
96. No
97. No
98. No
99. no
100. No
101. No
102. No
103. no
104. No
105. No
106. No
107. No comment
108. No farms; ¡No food!
109. No.
110. No. Thanks for the effort!
111. Not to knock the big boys, but my guess is the big potato growers, Skagit Valley Farms (tourists get in the way of their robots!), and the seed growers are not so keen on ag tourism, because there survival does not count on it. But the 20–100-acre farmers need help.
112. Nothing at this time
113. Open the dikes to biking and walking. Huge opportunity missed!
114. Opening more dikes to walking and perhaps to cycling would be a huge boon to tourism without taking away farm land. We are paying our taxes for the dikes yet have little access to most of them. There are many birders who come to the

Valley. Accommodating them can bring tourist money into our economy.
115. our counties to the south give us a perfect picture of the results of letting zoning erode!"
116. Our rural lifestyle should be recognized as a "highest and best use" in its own right. Monetary gain should not be the only criteria for "highest and best use" of agricultural land in a world that will increasingly be prone to food shortages as populations grow.
117. Owners should be allowed the option and flexibility to change the existing facility uses consistent with health and safety regulations, however, the expansion of facilities and eventual conversion of farmland should be the goal. This includes gravel parking lots, permanent buildings etc.
118. Please do not allow our farmland to be rezoned-it is incredible and dicing it up into farm Disneylands would be tragic
119. Please feel free to reach out to me at Jill@pacificpartycanopies.com
120. Please keep the suburbs away especially Fromm farm to market north of hwy 20 and at that point east of I5, keep the chuckanut valley small and rural. Thank you for this opportunity.
121. Please lower the speed limits on Best Road. It is not a highway for tourists
122. Please maintain the character of our region as primarily farming and not tourism.
123. preserve and add farmland for farming
124. Priorities are protecting the soil. Vehicle runoff and sewage being the top contaminates of precious farmland we must protect above anything else.
125. Providing opportunities for locals to patronize farm stands and u pick should be emphasized. Always chasing tourists and having large festivals makes it difficult for locals to patronize our farms. I don't go anywhere near the flats when there are tulips but I would like to ship at farm stands during harvest
126. Put a gravel parking lot in the wetland area off of Bayview Edison rd in bow for bird watchers and fishing for Samish river. People park all over the shoulder of the road and it is unsafe. Again, tourists do not make good decisions.
127. Raise the number of acres needed to build another house on an existing farm from 40 to 100 acres.
128. Really, we would like to have a wedding venue, either by change of zoning or by change of the definition of agriculture. It would be nice to be able to share the beauty of the site with other people.; I would really like to have an answer to our particular problems on our agricultural land. Perhaps the river front would be better under a buffer designation rather than agriculture or a carbon free designation.
129. Remember the residents that you serve. We live in the country for a quiet, back to nature lifestyle, which will be lost to agritourism.
130. Restrictive zoning is the only way to preserve farmland - all policies should be centered around soil conservation.
131. See my suggestion for siting an agriculture hub in a UGA - perhaps in abandoned commercial space with lots of parking. I support the idea of enhancing the community identification with agriculture through agri-tourism but we need to be mindful not to convert real farmlands into large-scale commercial uses.
132. Seek out similar areas to learn best practices
133. Seems like you are dealing with a changing of generational control and new landowner needs with this issue. I hope there can be compromise and a realization among community members that things will change, and will need to change, in some ways to keep farming sustainable for small farmers and new farmer/agro-producers.
134. Should be encouraged and supported... not regulated so much it actually harms local economy.

135. Simple, Government doesn't need to dictate every little thing. If land owners want to do something that will drive tourism to the area and they're not building a bunch of houses and buildings then that's their right...
136. Skagit county agritourism is being made to hard by the county . we have purchased our farm and are farming with a small side business to help us survive. we don't need to get tied up in so many permits, regulations and such
137. Skagit County is the gem of the northwest. We certainly want to see it remain that way. Poor planning and inadequate rule enforcement have destroyed many of our national treasures. We need to work together to ensure that doesn't happen here. Thank you for this opportunity to provide input.
138. Skagit County still has a vibrant commercial agricultural economy, along with support businesses farmers need. This should be protected as the county is still able to produce food for the surrounding communities. Other counties have turned to agritourism after they lost their agricultural economy. We need to ensure we protect the commercial agriculture we still have. Skagit County should be the leader in these policies and the county the entire country looks to for protecting agriculture.
139. Small farms like ours are very dependent on agritourism for financial success. Successful models from Europe should be looked at with open minds to help small farmers survive in Skagit County. So much of the vibrancy of Skagit county comes from independent small farms with products that attract local and out-of-town commerce as well.
140. Snohomish County has the baseplate program that would serve Skagit well.
141. So many dilapidated old farms in our county. Let folks dress them up and use for agritourism.
142. Stay the hell out of business
143. Support the farmers. If they need to add agritourism to their business model. Support farmers keep their farms profitable
144. Survey seems biased in favor of agritourism
145. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment
146. Thank you for allowing me to comment.
147. Thank you for conducting this survey. Please don't open the door too wide, or the character and value of Skagit county will be forever lost.
148. Thank you for creating this survey and allowing those within Skagit County to offer feedback and a voice.
149. Thank you for seeking our input.
150. Thank you for taking the time to provide this survey. One of the reason we love Skagit County is due to the farming and agriculture in the area. Skagit County could be a model for other communities if they do a better job of linking this food producing organizations with the Puget Sound Food HUB to expand local distribution of food to those in need. A good model nationally to look at is the Livingston Food Resource Center in Montana.
151. Thank you so much for doing this survey. Our Farms and farmers are the gemstone of Skagit County. While we need to innovate new sources of revenue, I think it's important to ensure that the character of Skagit isn't subsumed by this. A balancing act indeed!
152. Thanks for allowing public unput
153. Thanks for asking.
154. thanks for this survey. I live in RR zone, Bay View. I haven't had any negative effects from existing agritourism
155. The buzz word agritourism sounds all trendy and what not, but look beyond that. It's a Pandora's box waiting to be opened. If this goes through, it won't benefit but a few who already have the pockets to push on this!
156. The County needs to have a modern outlook. That means preserving Farmland, but also making sure that a visitor from a more urban environment, such as Seattle or even Everett, has an opportunity to understand what Farming is actually

about. This visitor gets that experience by e.g. attending a wedding on a farm.
157. The goal should be to embrace ideas that support farming, particularly small farms and farmers.
158. The Skagit Valley is unique in that is one of the few places where agriculture is active and large. We need to keep it this way and not be developed into something else. Agritourism can be an important part of that if done right. It helps the farmers and shows people where their food comes from. I personally like buying for local farm stands than buying in grocery store!
159. The threat to the farmland in our county is the absence of profitability of the farmland. Do your best to increase the profitability of the farms in our county and that will ensure their existence. Tax breaks for putting in septic systems if they want to have RV's stay with them or accommodate customers for a sit down tasting or buying their produce. Understand that the events and small businesses these farms are trying to create are a direct result of the lack of profitability. They don't want a ton of people around, but sadly this is becoming a necessary to maintain their rural lifestyle they love so much. Support them do not legislate them to death.
160. The top priority must be protection of Skagit County's agricultural land. Too many nearby counties are allowing development to take over ag land and we lose what makes this area special.
161. There are 3 key, related areas that are missing from this survey: (1) communication requirements with neighboring properties; (2) freedom-to-farm, hold-harmless provisions for neighboring properties (esp. related to sprays, dust, noise, labor movement, timing, food safety); and (3) dispute resolution mechanism in the event that issues develop. Agritourism represents an important element of building the broader Skagit brand and serving the longer term necessity of preserving farmland, but the interface issues with established operations (esp. in the fresh fruit and veg areas) are very real and need to be called out and protected. It is surprising that none of these issues are addressed in the survey. I regret that I was unable to participate in any of the workshops due to my travel schedule. On a high level, the survey seems to be taking a defensive posture (i.e. what could go wrong and how do we prevent it?) rather than exploring how to open things up and encourage investment. This is understandable, but regrettable. Having worked in other areas of the country facing the same concerns and trade-offs, a defensive posture will not further the larger goals of the ag community and landowner base. When all of the hard work is over and the insights are translated to modifications to regulatory and code language, I hope there will still be room for creative business people to see sufficient upside to justify putting their capital to work for the good of Skagit agriculture.
162. There are already too many rules and regulations. Many are not enforced as it is NO more are needed!!
163. There has to be an equal emphasis on trash and litter control. In the spring before the roadside grass and weeds grow, the trash is everywhere before and worse after the Tulip Festival and other events. Hwy 20 from Burlington to Anacortes is an eyesore. The main entrance to our valley off I-5 is overgrowth. With weeds. Ivy and trash. Fix up our entrances so tourists feel welcome to a safe clean space and not a trailer trashy valley.
164. there is a great opportunity to create an extremely profitable yet green and sustainable agritourism economy in Skagit Valley. It takes forward thinking, creativity and the balls to change how things are done here now. Agritourism allows for a much more diversified business model for farmers and agricultural producers that can help create financial stability in the community. I would bet a tasting room has more employees than a typical farm yet pays better wages to its employees. What would happen if disease wiped out the tulips one year and the valley had none. What's the economic

impact of that scenario? now apply it to potatoes. let's do better!
165. There is a question that needs to be framed regarding the purpose and value of farmland. Then how best to support such.
166. There needs to be a balance that protects farmland but doesn't hinder the farmer from front trying different things to survive
167. There needs to be accountability of the landowner to comply. How will this be managed?
168. Things are great the way there are now. People should be allowed to have farm stands, food service and other small-scale business or hobby businesses on Agriculture / county land. More festivals, more events, more stands, more farming, there is room for everyone!
169. This has been a long but needed survey. If residents are needed to discuss in person I would love to be a part. Wes Proudlove twoproud2002@hotmail. Com
170. This is a great opportunity for Skagit county to revitalize the agricultural industry in our beautiful valley. My encouragement to the officials try to be as transparent as possible with offering quality information so this can become a true success!!!
171. This should be the number one priority for the county. Tulip farming may not always be around in which case we need to diversify the agrotourism offerings here in Skagit.
172. This survey is lengthy and too many people who aren't farmers will answer that every event, etc. should be happening in Skagit County on its farmlands - they don't see the problems extensive tourism can cause, and they aren't affected by it. If things get out of hand, they can just move away to another county or city. Farmers can't do that. They are stuck with ineffective laws, and the risks of damages to them, the farms, and those who visit. I'm opposed to "Agritourism" beyond what we already have.
173. This survey is set up to force black and white answers to very grey issues. I appreciate it's difficult to gather data this way, but I'm disappointed at the jilted format.
174. Times get tough let people utilize their resources to get by
175. Top priority is to keep farms profitable for the farmers and make consumers aware of the local resources.
176. tulip season traffic traps us away from the 98273 area & brings down the air quality
177. Tulips are toxic in so many ways and the county needs to step up and address this. The idea that we just have to accept it as is because of the economy is outdated thinking. I'd love to see support for an organic tulip farm in Skagit.
178. Until there is an accurate baseline of the economics and activities currently considered agritourism in Skagit County, it is myopic to propose changes to the existing codes. Decoupling permit income from permitting and enforcement would remove the incentive to develop and/or promote permits as a way to fund County planning staff. Skagit County Commissioners need to re-visit the "user pays" model that was adopted more than 15 years ago and budget for good planning out of the General Fund. Any changes which weaken the GMA, Comprehensive Plan, policies and codes should NOT be considered, not matter how much a proposing party wants this to happen. The farmers and producers in Skagit County should determine if changes are detrimental to farm operations before planning staff or other parties propose these changes. Using the Ag Advisory or other

temporary committee in an advisory capacity is a good suggestion before staff time is used to develop an idea that may not be feasible or wanted. Thanks for the time and work to gather data and opinions from the public, also important.
179. We are fortunate to have citizens interested in exploring these possibilities WHILE MAINTAINING & PROTECTING SKAGIT FARMLAND. Leave overcrowding to King, Pierce & Snohomish. Keep Skagit rural.
180. We believe that agritourism can help promote and secure the legacy of farmland in Skagit County. This can be achieved by having integrity around what's allowed and how code is enforced. By allowing tourists to have a front row seat to farm and natural resources land, crops and animals and even John Deere tractors will benefit the long term preservation of Skagit County's contribution to the world.
181. We live and work in a beautiful part of the country. And we are happy to share it with visitors but that's it. No more development of farmland. We need to maintain the quality of life for the Skagit residences without too much traffic and events.
182. We need to see more planning and implementation priority toward bicycle and pedestrian friendly roads and streets within Skagit County
183. We own property surrounded by protected farmland and this survey is very important to us because of how valuable our beautiful land is.
184. We really appreciate our ability to buy foods directly from the growers. Whether that is considered agritourism or not, that facet of our community should not be changed!
185. What has been going on now is working just great. We can always use more farming events for educating and experiencing how the farmers grow and work together.. also the migration of birds that come to the valley would be a good Festival to bring out more tourism
186. Yes, make this a reality yesterday. Allowing agritourism will increase visitors, tax revenue and appreciation for what Skagit County has to offer. Arbitrary limitation will not change the inevitable change that comes with increased population in the county. It is always better to get ahead of changes rather than burying our heads in the sand.
187. Yes, need to clearly define and validate what and who are a commercial working farm. It should not be someone with a large garden or too many eggs!
188. Yes. The goal should be to support and preserve agriculture. Find out which places are succeeding at preserving agriculture and assess what they've done right. Find out which places are failing to preserve agriculture and avoid doing what they've done wrong. In most cases you may learn that "agritourism" is little more than a smoke screen for those interests who'd like to obtain rural land for urban use, and at a price that has been artificially made cheap by the very laws they seek to change. I guess that works for the first few people who get their foot in the door. In the long run everyone else will lose. Skagit County has clearly been doing something right when it comes to regulating agricultural land, don't screw it up now!
189. You must remember every situation/location is so unique. There will not be a 'one size fit all' answer that will please everyone. And give credit to the business owners, that they know what they are doing. Realize that they love the farmland in Skagit County just as much as anyone, and will treat the natural resources with respect.

30. Additional Correspondence

A commenter (Jensen) provided a letter in November 2022 going through the various types of agritourism and their thoughts about each. They also filled in a similar survey from May 2022. Please see attached.

Attachment: Jensen Correspondence.

RECEIVED
NOV 08 2022
SKAGIT COUNTY
PDS

Farm and Fowl LLC and others
15356 Produce Lane
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-770-5133 cell

Skagit County Administration- Agritourism
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

November 6, 2022

Dear Agritourism Survey person,

I am writing this letter in response to the post cards that I got recently. Since it was not dated nor was there a post mark I am uncertain when it was sent.

I looked up on line and was not able to answer the way that I wanted so decided to print the form and write a letter in response.

Anyway here are my responses to the various questions and my comments.

To be clear there the objective that I answer is to promote agriculture and this means making it profitable for small, medium, and/or large farms. If there are no farmers then in my mind there are no farms. The other goal should be to build a relationship with non-farm urban public as they are the ones that will control the profitability of farmers. If we as a farming community do not teach the public about our needs for water, labor, fertilizers, chemicals, drainage, Irrigation, the importance of local food supplies, and most of all the ability to generate a profit then there will be no farms in the future as they will regulate us out of existence. Today the biggest problem is over regulation, over taxation, and too much of our time in managing government risk and too little time in being able to produce income from our farm.

1. Agritourism Uses:

This is really much easier than what I think government is trying to make it. Anything that promotes the use of the land to produce, process, and / or market the items produced on the land within the region and the auxiliary uses to enhance additional revenue as part of the farm experience and education of agriculture (agriculture in its fullest meaning to include forestry, fishing, etc., etc). Examples that should be allowed are u-pick, walking trails that teach about farming, uban/public harvest parties, hunting, country kitchens, music festivals in conjunction with activities of the farm production, process, or harvest, wedding and reunions using existing buildings, tasting experiences. There are so many parts its hard to name them all but generally the idea being that it should be left up to the farm so long it is uses the real agricultural assets for the promotion of the agricultural operation.

2. Farm Stands, U-Pick, and Farm Tours:

To me it is not the counties business if the farm enterprise has 50 customers or 50,000 customers in a year. If we are going to have a diverse size of farmers we are going to need a diverse size of operations and diverse range of activities otherwise we will end up with either no farms or a very few very large farms (less than 10) on land that cannot be developed because of earlier protections like I have done to save agricultural resource lands. Presently we are heading to a crisis of over regulation and being forced out because we are missing the opportunity to build a relationship with the urban public that controls our very destiny. If we don't build that relationship and teach them about the regulations that they contemplate and the effect on our operations we will lose by default. We need more freedom for the creativity of individuals to build this educational bond with our urban neighbors.

3. Farm stays:

I think farm stays are hugely important to bring the urban public to the farm and build that relationship we need to be profitable and to get favorable legislation we desire for an ongoing farm.

4. Tasting Rooms, Restaurants:

I am for Tasting Rooms, and Food preparation areas that can add value for the farm and build the relationship with the urban public. It's a great way to protect agriculture, add profits to farmers, and teach the public about the farm by allowing the time to have with the voters that control the destiny of farming in the Skagit and elsewhere in Western WA.

5. Weddings:

This should be an allowed use if in existing buildings and perhaps some requirement if an additional building is being built for this purpose. Again it is a good way to bring the urban public to the farm and add profits to farming that continues to struggle.

6. Seasonal Events- Festivals, Farm to Table, Farm Tours:

Yes, this is part of promoting the farm and promoting agriculture. It should not require a special permit. If a tire store, a paint store, or any other business has a sale to sell its products the store does not need to go to the county to have a special sale permit. Why should this be any different? If you are going to over regulate the farmer you take up too much time and expense to deal with all the regulations and less time to deal with making a great experience and tasty farm products. Start with the idea that the county wants to be an advocate for success of the farm and how can that happen as easily and quickly with the lowest cost possible and you will have a vibrant farm economy. It seems all too often it is about saying no rather than saying yes.

7. Permit Process and Criteria Improvements:

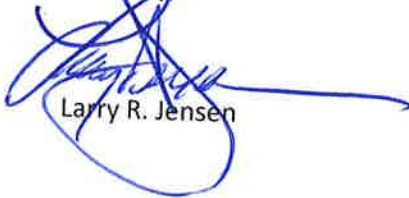
I am in agreement to trying to minimize sprawl and covering land with asphalt or concrete. I think Agricultural business should not have a sunset period or review period anymore than Costco should have a sunset period or review period.

We need less government intervention as there is never a consistency and this adds to uncertainty for investment of time and money. We need a basic framework and then let the farm go do its thing to bring great things to market and provide great on site experiences. This sort of thing will be good for the farm, good for the community, and good for a local, secure food supply.

I have been involved in on many levels of commercial product from small farm to large, from food processing, fresh market packing and merchandising, distribution, u-pick, and sales. It is absolutely clear to me that if we do not find a way to build a link to the urban public we will lose our farms to development and regulations because they do not understand our needs. The best way is to have a healthy component of Agritourism in our county that builds this bridge with the urban public.

This would be my response for the several survey cards that you sent to my entities of Larry R. Jensen, Farm and Fowl LLC, Rainbow Ranch Properties LLC, Tulip Time LLC, and others.

Sincerely,



Larry R. Jensen

1. Agritourism Uses:

Goals for the agritourism code options include the following. How important is each goal to you?

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Each desired agritourism use should be defined in the Skagit County Code and clearly identify associated activities that are agritourism in nature.	<input type="radio"/> Not Important	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Somewhat Important	<input type="radio"/> Important	<input type="radio"/> Very Important
Each agritourism use should have a relationship to onsite agriculture, particularly in zones that are designed to promote long-term commercial agriculture (AG-NRL and others), consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and Growth Management Act.	<input type="radio"/> Not Important	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Somewhat Important	<input type="radio"/> Important	<input type="radio"/> Very Important
In rural zones, agritourism uses should promote rural character as established in the County Comprehensive Plan and Growth Management Act	<input type="radio"/> Not Important	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Somewhat Important	<input type="radio"/> Important	<input type="radio"/> Very Important
The agritourism allowances should be based on an understanding of business models and their size and capacity.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Important	<input type="radio"/> Somewhat Important	<input type="radio"/> Important	<input type="radio"/> Very Important
Permit criteria and conditions should be developed for adequate water, septic, and parking.	<input type="radio"/> Not Important	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Somewhat Important	<input type="radio"/> Important	<input type="radio"/> Very Important
Agritourism activities should be subject to clear rules and permits as well as enforcement. This may include renewable permits and scaled fees.	<input type="radio"/> Not Important	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Somewhat Important	<input type="radio"/> Important	<input type="radio"/> Very Important

2. Farm Stands, U-Pick, and Farm Tours

Skagit County allows farm stands called "seasonal roadside stands" in most rural and resource zones. The purpose of a farm stand (seasonal roadside stand) is to offer onsite products for sale. The Skagit County Zoning Code (SCC 14.16.400) limits the size of a seasonal roadside stand to between 300 and 5,000 square feet. The permits are tiered: 300 square feet outright permitted, 2,000 square feet allowed by administrative special use, and 5,000 square feet allowed by hearing examiner special use. Parking must be located onsite; parking may be required at 1 stall per 300 square feet as a retail activity.

U-pick and farm tours are allowed as accessory uses to farm in most rural and resource zones. U-pick operations allow customers to pick their produce in the fields. Farm tours allow visitors to see the farm as is for educational or recreational purposes.

Studies have shown that over half of customers of farm stands are local. They may have up to 500 visitors a year by themselves. U-pick operations could support about 400-2,000 customers per year (size 1-5 acres) depending on the type of crop and acres planted. Farm tours could attract up to 2,000 visitors depend on class sizes and seasonal use.

Following is a snapshot of new policy proposals for farmstands, u-pick, and tours - tell us what you think.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
Retain current allowances. Improve definitions and permit procedures. Simplify land use permitting for small farmstand, u-pick, or farm tour activities to encourage compliance, e.g., if no structures are involved or if they are small.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Update parking standards for farmstands, u-pick, and tours. Encourage parking location in developed areas. Encourage low impact design (e.g., pervious materials).	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like the current code and changes are unnecessary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Too Restrictive

Low impact to soils yes

Share your ideas for Farmstands, U-pick, and Farm Tours

Yes - we need more & more diverse experiences and deeper more meaningful experiences to get the feeling of "ownership" by public & the educational aspects.

3. Farm stays

Skagit County allows bed and breakfast operations with administrative special use permits. Similar uses include farm stays, which are accommodations on a working farm. A producer could request approval of a bed and breakfast on their farm. Bed and breakfasts are allowed to have up to 5 rooms. Between 2 and 10 people could be onsite at any time in a bed and breakfast. If a bed and breakfast is operated year-round on weekends, for example, there could be about 520 visitors per year.

A type of overnight stay that is not directly addressed in the Skagit County Code is a temporary farm stay with an RV, popularized by Harvest Hosts. Following is a snapshot of new policy proposals for temporary farm stays – tell us what you think.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
Allow temporary farm stays if there are limited days of visits (e.g., max stay of 30 days) and limited numbers of RVs (no more than 1-2 vehicles).	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Unsure / No Opinion
<i>Too small</i>					
Allow temporary farm stays if operated to be low impact (such as no tents, no dumping of wastewater, parking area does not impact farm soils, etc.)	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Unsure / No Opinion
<i>There is no viable economics & no scalable chance to reach urban public</i>					
I like the current code and changes are unnecessary.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Unsure / No Opinion
<i>yes to stay but not sure of definition of low impact. - Tents?</i>					

Share your ideas for Farm Stays.

Stays - yes short term stays where customers could get first hand experience of what farming is about

4. Tasting Rooms, Restaurants

In Skagit County, currently, restaurants and wineries, breweries, or tasting rooms are allowed in several urban zones, rural commercial zones, or rural industrial zones, but not in agricultural resource zones or rural residential zones.

The State of Washington allows one tasting room on premises with a winery. The typical size for tasting rooms varies from less than 100 square feet to over 2,000 square feet. As of 2019, tasting rooms in Washington had an average number of monthly visitors of about 924 (x 12 months would equal over 11,300 annually).

Where allowed County land use and building permits are required to operate or build a restaurant or tasting room. Stormwater review would be required for parking areas. Building permits are required for new or altered structures. The Health Department requires permits for food. To serve food, public water connection is required. Adequate septic service is also required.

Following is a snapshot of new policy proposals for tasting rooms or restaurants – tell us what you think.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
Option A: Accessory Uses. Ensure "permanent" agritourism uses are accessory and connected to farms. Allow more flexibility in uses provided there is a connection to the onsite farm, and the farm remains the primary use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A-1. Allow limited food service as a permitted accessory activity and no seating such as part of farm stands or farm-based business.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A-2. Allow small tasting rooms provided grapes/hops/fruit of at least 10 acres are grown onsite.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Option B: Overlay. In a defined area along major roads, separated from cities/villages, and where there are water systems allow for:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Handwritten notes:

- Next to A-1: *Kind of crazy*
- Next to A-2: *Too Restrictive*
- Next to A-2: *Definitive*
- Bottom right: *Mountain What you are saying*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
B-1. Food service: Food service must be accessory to working farm, with seating up to 75 seats; there must be use of produce onsite. The parcels should be least 10 acres in size.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
B-2. Tasting rooms: Allow tasting rooms (3,500-5,000 square feet) if the operator grows products onsite or on contiguous lands of at least 20 to 40 acres.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
Option C: Rezone.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
C-1. Allow rezones of parcels on a case by case message as Small Scale Recreation and Tourism (SRT) without allowing them in the resource zones. Restaurants and tasting rooms would be allowed in the rezoned parcel.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
I like the current code and changes are unnecessary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion

*Why sure
agreement?*

Share your ideas for Tasting Rooms and Restaurants.

*The question is if Agriculture or is it not?
Is the primary purpose related to Ag?
Does the entity file a sch of Gov Tax
return for example?*

5. Weddings

Skagit County allows temporary uses in agricultural and rural areas, if related to agriculture. Wedding facilities have not been allowed as temporary uses to date in the county.

Weddings may attract around 250 guests on average and depending on if it is allowed as a temporary or year-round 6,000-13,000 visitors per year.

Agritourism uses may be allowed under state laws if they are compatible with the onsite agricultural use (size, scale, intensity) and if located in an already developed areas or less than 1 acre in size; some counties allow wedding activities in existing barns or as temporary uses limiting size and frequency.

Following is a snapshot of new policy proposals for weddings – tell us what you think.

Option A: Accessory Uses. Ensure "permanent" agritourism uses are accessory and connected to farms. Allow more flexibility in uses provided there is a connection to the onsite farm, and the farm remains the primary use.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion

A-1. Allow wedding facilities with an administrative special use permit as a temporary use with a programmatic permit provided it is happening in already developed area/existing barn.
Limit number per year.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion

SB ok in existing barns

Option B: Overlay. In a defined area along major roads, separated from cities/villages, and where there are water systems allow for:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion

Why the restrictions?

B-1. Allow year-round, on parcels with at least the minimum lot size of the zone where accessory to farm, meeting resource land siting criteria (e.g., in developed areas or no more than 1 acre), and subject to hearing examiner special use permit.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion

*Why all this control?
If it's accessory to the farm then ok*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / No Opinion
Option C: Rezone.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Unsure / No Opinion
C-1. Allow rezones of parcels on a case by case message as Small Scale Recreation and Tourism (SRT) without allowing them in the resource zones. Wedding facilities are not expressly allowed today, but this would be added to the zone.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Unsure / No Opinion
I like the current code and changes are unnecessary.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Unsure / No Opinion

Allow Weddings

Share your ideas for Weddings.

They should be an allowed use in existing Bdey.

Strongly
Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly
AgreeUnsure /
No
Opinion

After approval of a land use permit, require an annual self-certification form where the operator certifies that all the use-specific requirements continue to be met. The County requires this of special uses in SCC 14.16.900(3), but it could be expanded to all agritourism uses that require a land use permit (potentially including exempt uses). This can ensure locational or operational standards continue to be in place and avoid expansion of uses from less intensive to more intensive without review. This form could include an annual fee and be reviewed by code compliance staff.

Strongly
Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly
AgreeUnsure /
No
Opinion

For temporary uses, or uses with high activity levels, provide a limited-term programmatic permit, e.g., 5 years that ensures that the use is well managed but does not necessarily continue with a new owner or is re-reviewed periodically. This also can ensure uses do not inadvertently evolve.

Strongly
Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly
AgreeUnsure /
No
Opinion

I like the current code and changes are unnecessary.

Strongly
Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly
AgreeUnsure /
No
Opinion

Share your ideas for the Permit Process and Criteria.

We need only a frame work not bars to break through or hurdles to jump in order to run our business.

Additional Comments

If you have other comments, questions, or concerns, please tell us about them here.

I am for a wide range of activities on the farm to promote agriculture and to enhance farm profits.

Sidebar Content

COMPLETE

Situation Assessment

Skagit County staff conducted a situation assessment to define current agricultural activities in Skagit, agricultural economic trends, engage with local farmers, and document case studies from similar jurisdictions. The situation assessment report was completed in 2021 and can be viewed [here](https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/Skagit%20County%20Agriculture%20Situation%20Assessment-Final_2021_0913.pdf) (https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/Skagit%20County%20Agriculture%20Situation%20Assessment-Final_2021_0913.pdf).

LIVE

Policy Options

Using information gathered during the situation assessment, staff compiled definitions for agritourism activities and several policy options the Skagit County Board of Commissioners could pursue on agritourism. The County is now collecting feedback from the community and relevant stakeholders on which policy options would be preferable.

PLANNED

Legislation

- With feedback from the community and stakeholders, staff will develop legislation and code language to present to the Skagit County Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will deliberate on the options and approve a recommendation to be sent to the Board of County Commissioners.

PLANNED

Adoption

After the Planning Commission approves a recommendation, the Skagit County Board of Commissioners will deliberate and vote to approve a policy/policies on agritourism.

Documents

- **Agritourism Policy Options Report**
(https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/Options_AGT%20Intent%20and%20Scale%20and%20Options_2022_0315_rev.pdf) (3/15/22)
- **Agritourism Situation Assessment**
(https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/Skagit%20Co%20Agritourism%20Situation%20Assessment-Final_2021_0913.pdf) (9/13/2021) – Now includes updated Skagit County producer demographics, public engagement survey, local discussion groups, and a new agriculture map.
- **2021 Survey Results**
(https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/AgritourismSurveyResults_2021-0519.pdf)
- **Focus Group Summary**
(https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/Agritourism_FocusGroupSummary_2021-0519.pdf)
- **Public Outreach and Engagement Plan**
(https://www.skagitcounty.net/PlanningAndPermit/Documents/agtourism/Agritourism%20Outreach%20Plan_2021_0114.pdf)

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Skagit County Agritourism Event Summaries

Introduction

The purpose of the public engagement events and survey was to gather how residents and agricultural producers felt about agritourism in Skagit County and how best to allow for agritourism while protecting agricultural land and compatibility with rural character.

Four meeting events were held including:

- Agriculture Leadership Lunch and Agritourism Outreach Event, November 2, 2022
- Sedro Woolley Senior Center, November 10, 2022
- Maple Hall in La Conner, November 16, 2022
- Summit in Mount Vernon, December 6, 2022

This document summarizes what was heard at the meeting. Presentations, handouts, and flip chart notes taken during the engagement meeting are provided in the Attachment. For more information regarding this process please see the project website at:

www.skagitcounty.net/departments/planningandpermit/agtourismmain.htm.

Agriculture Leadership Lunch and Agritourism Outreach Event | November 2, 2022

Monthly the Agriculture Leadership Lunch is held by WSU Extension and producers at The Farmhouse Restaurant by Shawn O'Donnell's west of Mount Vernon on SR 20. On November 2, 2022 the agenda included a discussion session on agritourism. About a dozen persons attended.

The discussion focused on how to make agritourism educational for those who are visiting Skagit County. Several members involved in agricultural leadership recognize a farmer can make a lot of money through agritourism, but there needs to be a way for the primary use of this protected agricultural land to stay with farming.

The discussion included how to regulate farming and agritourism. There were suggestions on how to make sure people learn about farming while they visit Skagit County, with some expressing interest in an agricultural education foundation to help visitors learn about farming. When discussing certain types of agritourism the participants thought activities like farm stands are not an issue to begin with, but that these things may grow into larger agritourism spaces.

Some did not see weddings as agritourism, but as more of a cultural or spiritual event. There were suggestions on how and when these events could happen to ensure they do not disrupt the primary use of farming.

Meeting at Sedro Woolley Senior Center | November 10, 2022

The format of the meeting was a round table discussion with some guided questions but more for the 11 participants to share their thoughts on certain topics for agritourism, such as what is defined as agritourism, and what priorities we should take into consideration when drafting policies. Notes taken during the discussion and a copy of the boards displayed at the meeting are attached.

The themes from this engagement event focused on county enforcement, and how there can be rules for community members participating in the agritourism industry to follow. The enforcement was for those already participating and those looking to do so in the future, as well as what should be considered agritourism.



Many attendees thought it was the county's responsibility to enforce and monitor with clear rules and codes for how farmers can utilize the agritourism industry in the county. Participants at the engagement event also wanted it easy for residents to report those not following the county's rules. Since there is a lack of clarity with these regulations the participants understand how it is difficult for the County to regulate, but they believe a better permitting process will lead to better regulation and a paper trail. Through better regulation participants hope there will be better safety measures put in place and make it, so the farmers do not take matters into their own hands, such as disrupting an event purposely.

Through the permitting discussion, people brought up their thoughts on agritourism, and the majority saw it as an accessory to the primary activity/revenue which is farming. There was not an issue with farm stands or u-picks since this relates to farming. What participants see as the primary goal of agritourism is teaching people about what farming is. Farm-to-table restaurants, food trucks, and weddings do not

have a clear place as part of Skagit County agritourism (since less related to farming or education). Some felt that there should be less regulation and property owners should have freedom while others thought that proper regulations of land uses was necessary to protect neighbors and farmland. Some people brought up special use permits for events like these but wanted clear rules for what is allowed. Concerns over current use taxation on agricultural land and not being taxed on commercial activities were raised; farmers make more money through agritourism than with farming.

Meeting at Maple Hall in La Conner | November 16, 2022

The meeting at Maple Hall included time before a meeting to review boards, a presentation, and a question and answer session. The presentation addressed the goal of the Agritourism exploration and analysis effort, current conditions about agritourism, the different scales and level of activities of different activities, and questions for the 25 to 30 participants attending. The audience was able to share their thoughts and concerns with the County staff and the BERK consulting team. See notes taken during the discussion and a copy of the presentation in the attachment.



Several participants were in support of allowing a wider range of agritourism. Attendees showed support for events such as large festivals and farm-to-table restaurants on site or near where the foods are grown. Some felt that Skagit Valley is changing, and there needs to be flexibility for how agritourism can fit into future growth; look to how other regions in the country maintained rural character in areas with increased population growth. Some felt the State Growth Management Act and the history of Skagit County farming should also be considered for the parameters of what is allowed.

The discussion also included agricultural viability; a priority is to make sure the farmer is able to continue to farm for future generations. People did not want small farmers to be left out; with smaller farmers, the owners already work additional jobs to keep the property up and running. Property owners can have additional sources of revenue off their land than traditional farming. Yet, there needs to be a line drawn

with what is allowed, because, for example, a farm-to-table restaurant could eventually lead to a chain restaurant opening on agricultural lands near a highway.

Summit in Mount Vernon | December 6, 2022

Skagit County hosted an agritourism panel to share viewpoints from long-standing and newer producers. Some of the panelists participate in agritourism, and some do not but they all see the effect of agritourism on their business, community, and the agricultural economy. The event had standing room only, with over 50 people attending in person and others online as well.



The panel was facilitated by Don McMoran, Director of Washington State University – Skagit County Extension. The panelists included:

1. Leo Roosen, who was representing RoozenGaarde as well as Washington Bulb Company, both contributing to tulip farming and events in the valley.
2. Jessie Anderson, owns Maplehurst Farm in Mount Vernon which is a six-acre farm that hosts special events.
3. Andrea Xavier is a lifelong farmer in the county and is a producer in Big Lake.
4. Annie Lohman who was previously the chair of the Skagit County Planning Commission and a member of the Skagit Agriculture Advisory Board. She owns Lohman Farms in Bow with her husband and primarily farm seed crops.

5. Terry Sapp who has been a member of the Skagit Agricultural Advisory Board since 2015. Terry also owns Hoehn Bend Farm and Fender Farm with his family where they primarily raise cattle.

The panelists were led through a discussion with prepared questions; see the attached recording link and transcript. At the end of the facilitated discussion, panelists took questions from the audience.

One of the opening questions that made panelists excited was what made Skagit County special. All of the panelists regardless of their stance on agritourism saw the beauty and the importance of the county is a place for agriculture in the State of Washington and beyond. When asked how to show visitors these special things, many of the panelists saw the importance of agriculture education. Agritourism is a gateway to showcase what the “1% of agriculture producers” are doing. Safety was another key point here. Making sure agritourism showcases what work happens in the county without creating additional threats to agriculture was discussed.

Many of the panelists saw that agritourism is not going away, but that there needed to be regulation on it to ensure it does not overtake agricultural land, such as seeing agritourism as secondary to the primary farming activity, but not limiting small producers from earning income off their land through agritourism.

When given the opportunity to ask questions, audience members asked about avoiding overregulation, supporting the local economy, and also allowing agritourism while minimizing adverse effects. Ensure that farmers do not get penalized for farming. Ensure that there would be a process in the future where Skagit County can have more control over these activities and protect farming.

Appendix

1. Presentation Posters



Public Meetings on Agritourism

Meeting 1

When: Thursday, November 10th, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Where: The Sedro-Woolley Senior Center

Meeting 2

When: Wednesday, November 16th, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Where: La Conner Maple Hall

Meeting 3

When: Tuesday, December 6th, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Where: Agritourism Town Hall in Skagit County
Commissioner's Hearing Room

Take the Survey!

www.skagitcounty.net/SkagitAGT

The Goal

Skagit County is reviewing what agritourism means to the County's agricultural community, rural residents, and other stakeholders. Skagit County will explore and analyze agritourism activities in Skagit County to develop a report on the economics of agritourism, a current assessment of County policies, and relevant case studies. The study addresses the current situation with farm stands and value added activities, agricultural recreation, and options for other types of agritourism, such as potentially allowing food service on farms, wedding venues, temporary event spaces, etc.

The Assessment

The situation assessment documents current agricultural trends and conditions in Skagit County. The study evaluated current practices for agritourism activities and contrasted them with case studies from other jurisdictions. The study also shares the results of discussion groups and an online survey to develop a common understanding of agritourism and the public interest in the direction of the study overall. The Situation Assessment Report was released in September 2021 and was shared with local stakeholders, such as producers, businesses, and local residents.

The Options

After the situation assessment report was released, staff evaluated public response and developed three policy options the County could pursue for agritourism activities. These three options were released in a report in March 2022, with details on which activities would be allowed under each option and the benefits and drawbacks of each policy proposal. Staff hosted multiple public workshops to hear feedback from the public on the three options and released a second survey for additional comments. The public engagement and survey responses were compiled into a report, which was published in June 2022.

The County developed a second online survey and virtual workshops to hear ideas and concerns. To share the study and questions more widely the County shared a postcard and a more streamlined survey in fall 2022 and is holding in person discussion sessions (see left). Please share your voices.

Next Steps

Based on feedback from research and policy proposals from County staff, a legislative proposal to potentially amend County policies, zoning, or development regulations will be developed for consideration by the Skagit County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners with opportunities for public workshops and hearings.

Key Questions

- › What kinds of agritourism should the County allow?
- › Where is the best place?
- › How can agritourism support farming as a primary use and avoid negative effects on neighboring properties?
- › What is the best way to maintain commercial agriculture and rural character while allowing for agritourism?
- › What is the best way for the County to enforce its rules and keep the permit process transparent and fair?

Skagit County Process



What is Agritourism?

Agritourism is generally considered "a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owner." (UC Davis)

› Western Washington Examples



Farmstand



U-pick



Farm Stay



Wedding (Temporary)



Wedding (Year Round)



Tasting Room



Combo U-Pick, Corn Maze, Restaurant, and Distillery

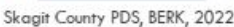
Typical Annual Visits Per Year

Farm Stands	500
U-Pick	2,000
Farm Tours	2,080
Farm Stays	520
Tasting Rooms	11,304
Wedding - Temporary	6,000
Wedding - Permanent	13,000
Farm to Table	2,600
Festivals	20,000

BERK, 2022

SKAGIT COUNTY AGRITOURISM ■ 2022





2. Survey Post Cards





Skagit County Administration
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273



Use the QR code or visit our website to view the policy options report and take the survey!

Skagit County has published a report with options for new policies regarding agritourism. Please take our survey to provide your input on how the County moves forward!

County staff will also be hosting public meetings this fall to hear from you on agritourism. Check out our website for more details:
skagitcounty.net/agritourism



3. Meeting One Agenda



Skagit County Agritourism

Agriculture Leadership Lunch and Agritourism Outreach Event | November 2, 2022

Agenda

Time	Topic	Lead
11:30-11:35	Introductions	Hal
11:35-11:40	Proposed Timeline/Process for Agritourism	Sarah
11:40-12:00	Presentation on Agritourism Concepts	Lisa
12-12:30	Comments/Questions	All



4. Meeting One Flow Chart Notes

Ag. Leader Lunch Outreach Meeting 11/2/22

Notes from Meeting

What is Agritourism?

- Is u-pick tourism?
 - Farmers generally don't have a problem with this
- Why is it viewed as tourism?
- Is it a cultural activity?
 - Weddings might be a cultural activity although not an activity that is tied to farming
- Why are certain activities tourism and not others – for instance hunting?
- Does the County define it or do we let someone else define it?
- Can agriculture benefit?

What is an accessory use?

- When or how can you determine when an activity goes from being subordinate to the main use of a property?
 - An example was given for Snow Goose produce – it sells fish, ice cream and baskets and small items that have nothing to do with farming, even though the intent originally (I think?) was as a produce stand.
 - Does the activity detract from farming (Don McMoran for example asked adjacent farmers not to work during his wedding because of dust) or traffic that gets in the way (could there be limits on agritourism for certain seasons that are more intensive for equipment and farming?)
- Is there a difference between direct retail vs Agritourism? Do our regulation and code need to reflect that difference? Could this line be drawn or is it too fuzzy?
- Sakuma farms gets complaints about traffic when there pickers go out – so be careful when you look at impacts.
- What causes harm over time? Brandon Roozenguarde gave an example that creating duck clubs over time is an impact. This causes productive land to be taken out of service over time.
- Does the tourism activity negatively impact agriculture?
- Timeframe (are there better times of the year?)
 - An example was given as a rotational schedule (potato farmers)
- What is agriculture and what is tourism?
- Actual impacts vs. perceived impacts?
 - Do we have data to help connect the dots (take traffic counts around agritourism activities? Do a parking inventory of different Agritourism venues?)
 - Are there indicators of impacts?
- Is a wedding considered a spiritual/cultural event?
 - Hunting could have a greater impact on ag. land than a wedding.
- When people from out of town come to Skagit County they get a connection to Agriculture. This helps them understand it and (hopefully) advocate for it when they go home. (Mark K. PC)
- Don Moran – when a Wedding venue can get \$3K for an event, how can Ag. compete with that?
- Mark K. – doesn't think a wedding venue is something that is connected to Agriculture

Lisa Grueter posed the question to the group: What is quintessential agritourism?

- Someone answered festival of farms (this event is about education- not necessarily about farming)

Terry Sapp – Wish we could create an Agriculture Education Foundation – to help put people on farms and learn about farming. He gave an example of a farm stay that he hosted where his guests learned all about farming. He contrasted that example with his neighbors that hosted loud parties that had spill over effects of people parking and trespassing on other farms.

- Educational activities that will preserve the connection and education to agriculture and learn about farming.
- Degree of impact and cumulative effects are a concern
- Enforcement- how many VBROS are on Ag. land? Also Hip Camp.

Definitions

- Festivals?
- Bird watchers (this is an organization directing people their property and they have to deal with constant trespassing.)

5. Meeting Two Agenda



Skagit County Agritourism

Sedro Woolley Senior Center Agritourism Meeting | November 10, 2022

Agenda

Time	Topic	Lead
10:30-10:35	Introductions	Hal
10:35-10:40	Proposed Timeline/Process for Agritourism	Sarah
10:40-11:00	Presentation on Agritourism Concepts	Lisa
11-11:30	Comments/Questions	All



6. Meeting Two Flow Chart Notes

Sedro Woolley Senior Center Outreach Meeting 11/10/22

Concerns

- Comprehensive Plan amendment for expansion, no enforcement for codes/policy changed.
- Unhappy with survey – believes it has a certain outcome . Needs to clearly say what Ag. tourism is. Define what this is.
- Comment that Agritourism has had a negative impact in other Counties.
- Farms too many going into this business and the County cannot support it.
- County need to enforce this; clear rules so that everyone can follow.
- Consistent
- Public information on how to report people not following code/policies
- County police unable to enforce or intervene
- People are having unpermitted events, they started small and have grown.
- Can we measure the impact on neighbors?
- Can we measure the impact on neighbors?
- Safety – management of large events
- Annual permits? Other Counties have done this; allows for a paper trail, yes other counties have done this.
- Farmers should be able to do their business
- Events should not stop people
- Farmers purposely do things to disrupt events
- Farm Country

Questions

- County data on people hosting events? Are they accessory to the farm or are people making money off this only?
- Does leasing out the property matter?
- Can we get this info?
- Permits- property rights/floodplains elevation is subdivided away from Ag. lands
- Trespassing is seen as tourism? Lot sizes and reasonable use permit?

What Ag. Tourism Fits?

- Farm Stands and U-pick are a fit and benefit the economy.
- On-site experience for people to understand a working farm
- Keep it an accessory use – primary revenue from farming
- Do utilities matter? Certain road size, water, etc.
 - Monitor size, certain amount of farm activity onsite (Spokane given as the example)
 - Wedding onsite but keep it a farm
- Team an ask on Farmers feedback
- Code change for parties
- Lawsuit against the County, but does not represent every farmer but challenges to the code
- Growth management for review and allowed to continue
- Lack of enforcement
- Environmental issues also impact party venue
- Spray issue – this is covered by the right to farm ordinance

- Disrupt potato harvesting/Ag.
- Time and money spent on these processes
- Permits should show farming comes first
- Wedding events should not be part of agritourism
- More showing what people are applying for
- Allow special events, not specific uses
- County staff to figure this out
- Need clearer rules on what is allowed – better defined
- Food Trucks? Does this count?
- A restaurant is not part of the farm
- Wedding Venues – there are so many, can we cap this? Are they allowed? Are the existing ones grandfathered in? Can we limit the areas that they are permitted?
- Have we got any feedback from the operators?
- Need a balance: limiting farmers money from their land
- Parking? (can be fixed?)
- Taxes are paid on farm activity, not commercial/market rate
- Would not allow strip mall development, why allow all of this business?
- Define limits
- Where do we go with Ag in the County?
 - Farmers make more money not farming.

7. Meeting Three Agenda



Skagit County Agritourism

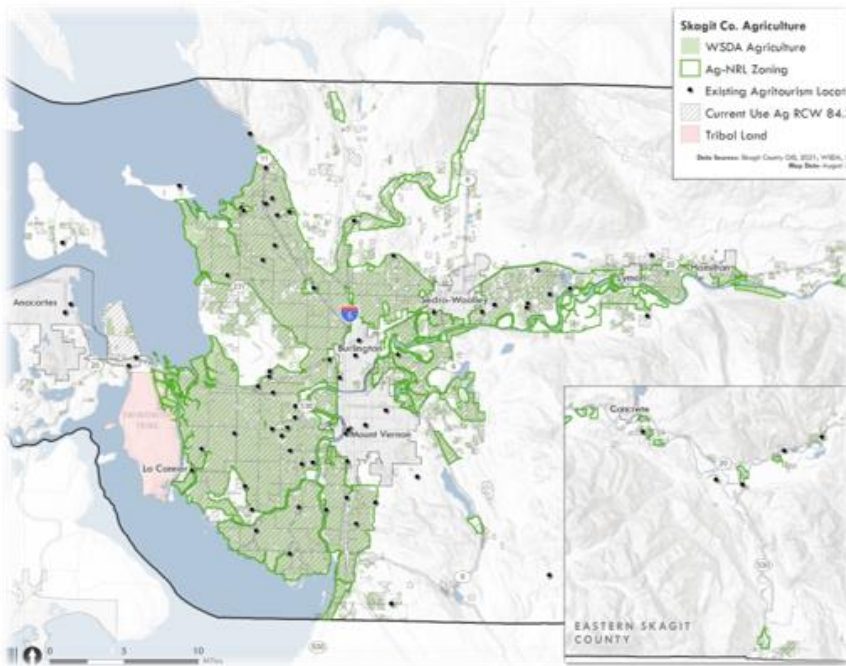
La Conner Maple Hall Agritourism Meeting | November 16, 2022

Agenda

Time	Topic	Lead
6:30-6:35	Introductions	Hal
6:35-6:40	Proposed Timeline/Process for Agritourism	Sarah
6:40-7:00	Presentation on Agritourism Concepts	Lisa
7-7:30	Comments/Questions	All



8. Meeting Three Presentation Slides



Current Agritourism

Common agritourism activities in Skagit County:

- Events, roadside stands, u-pick, accommodations, wine tasting
- Around 70+ operations
- Requests for: food service, weddings, temporary events

A common definition

Agritourism is generally considered “a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owner.” (UC Davis)



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



Farmstand



U-pick



Farm Stay



Wedding
(Temporary)



Wedding
(Year Round)



Tasting Room



Combo U-Pick, Corn
Maze, Restaurant,
and Distillery



Scale & Intensity

Based on intensity consider appropriate location, scale, frequency, conditions, etc.

Understand Scale, Intensity, and Relationship to Agriculture and appropriate standards

Typical Annual Visits Per Year

Farm Stands	500
U-Pick	2,000
Farm Tours	2,080
Farm Stays	520
Tasting Rooms	11,304
Wedding - Temporary	6,000
Wedding - Permanent	13,000
Farm to Table	2,600
Festivals	20,000

Based on business models and available studies/data, or code parameters.

Consider relationship to AG, temporary or permanent nature, footprint, location, services, etc.



Situation Assessment & Engagement



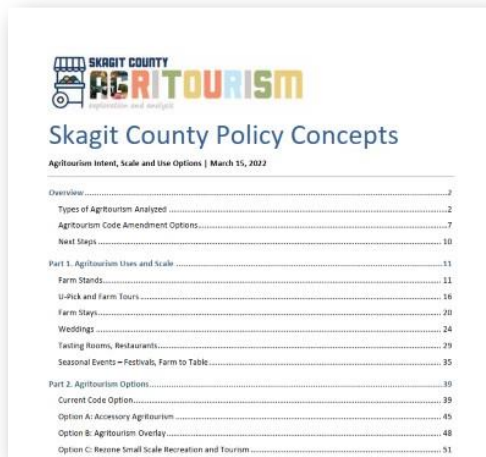
- ✓ Agritourism Definitions and National Trends
- ✓ Skagit County Agritourism and Economics
- ✓ Case Studies and Example Policies
- ✓ Engagement

Project Website & Materials
Interviews
Survey and discussion groups
Agriculture Advisory Board Meetings
Planning Commission Meetings
BOCC Meetings



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Policy Concepts & Engagement



Postcard to
17,000 Addresses



Survey Online



Meetings Around
County

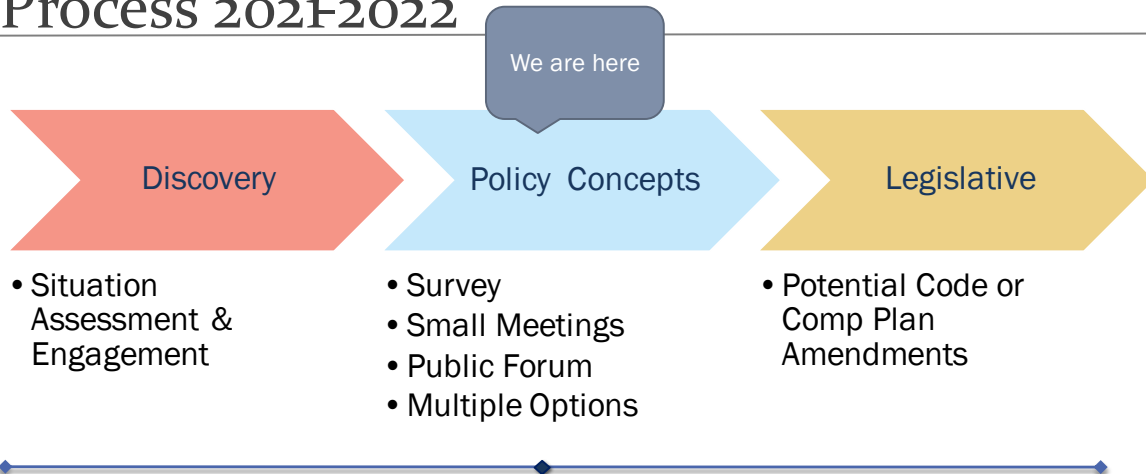


Agritourism Town
Hall

www.skagitcounty.net/SkagitAGT

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Process 2021-2022



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES





Questions for Discussion

What kinds of agritourism should the County allow?

Where is the best place?

How can agritourism support farming as a primary use and avoid negative effects on neighboring properties?

What is the best way to maintain commercial agriculture and rural character while allowing for agritourism?

What is the best way for the County to enforce its rules and keep the permit process transparent and fair?



9. Meeting Three Flow Chart Notes

Notes from Maple Hall 11/16/22 Agritourism Public Outreach Meeting

- A discussion of the timeline for adoption. Goes to PC first and then County Council; Estimate is mid-2023 to late 2023 depending if it is just code changes or needs policy changes as well and also depends on how much iteration back and forth with Planning Commission and BoCC is needed.
- What kinds of Agritourism should be allowed?
 - Member of audience described how 20 years ago people pushed back on large festivals with big name music. He thought this would be a good way to pay for needed infrastructure upgrades and help Skagit gain economically.
 - He thought this was a creative way to make tourists love it here but still go home.
 - He thinks we need to think about return on investment for agritourism
 - A few large festivals a year (special events)
- Farm to table restaurant – source from local farms and it can be a showcase for what is grown here.
- A question was asked, “Would the County get into the business of organizing and promoting events?” The response was that no this is just a discussion of land use policy around agritourism
- There was a comment that farm stands allow owners to make money off of their land. An example was given that the resident has an 18 acre farm but does not make money off of it. They have other jobs besides the farm. This shows the importance of having a farm stand for value added.
- A comment was made that they do not want restrictions on land owners.
- Size limitation impacts smaller farmers for needed added value with other activities.
- A comment was made that wedding events do not increase traffic. No new structures.
- There was a comment that people should be able to do what they want with their land.
- There was a comment that we need to draw a line somewhere; do not want a Denny’s but a greenhouse is impervious surface and infrastructure and that is seen as okay but not a farm stand.
- A comment about moveable structures; prevents farm stands to allow to be farms and not make a parking lot.
- There is a comment that regulations need to be open enough to allow for the fact that agritourism is evolving and we don’t know what ways it will work and needs to be flexible for future growth.
- There was a question from the audience of how many of the listed agritourism sites on the map, how many of those are permitted. The response was that when the inventory was done they did not check whether the establishment was or was not permitted so it is unknown.

- Comment: guidelines have to be set because once the gates are open, they are hard to close.
- The Valley is under pressure (for growth) after GMA and it should be compared on a national scale to see how other communities (like California or other areas) have handled agritourism with increased population and growth.
- A comment was made that we need more input from all.
- Farmers first, keep it around for future generations.
- There was a comment asking how do we make sure that these regulation help small farmers, small family farms?
- What can we do with agritourism to maintain rural character?
- Survey – a comment was made that while he agreed that the activity should be subordinate or accessory to the use of agriculture there needs to be exceptions for very small lots that do not allow for farm producing income; these lots should be allowed to have agritourism as well.
- The farm first, in ag. zone value added in Ag. would be a good use.
- Planning and permitting is already a process;
- Comment about a support structure for farming and value added farming from a model at the Maryland airport. There are different levels of development; look at land use and economics
- How can we operate in a positive way and invite agritourism to work with generational farmers
- A question was asked of whether the County has a definition of rural character. The response was that it does, it is a long definition that includes open space and other descriptive aspects.

10. Panel Discussion Facilitator Guide



Agritourism Town Hall

December 6, 2022 | 6-8 PM | Board of County Commissioners Hearing Room

Meeting Objectives

- Share diverse perspectives on agriculture and agritourism in Skagit County

Agenda

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 6:00-6:10 pm | Welcome – Hal Hart, Director, Planning & Development Services, Skagit County |
| 6:10-6:20 pm | Overview of Agritourism Effort – Sarah Ruether, Long Range Planning Manager, and Lisa Grueter, BERK |
| 6:20-7:20 pm | Panel Discussion – Facilitator Don McMoran, Director WSU Extension <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jessie Anderson – Maplehurst Farm2. Terry Sapp - On Ag Board3. Leo Roosen - Tulip Festival4. Annie Loman - Formerly a Planning Commission member & farmer5. Andrea Xavier – Farmer |

Panelist Questions

- Introductions
 - What's your name and who are you representing tonight?
 - How long have you been working in agriculture in Skagit County?
 - What is your relationship to agritourism?
- What makes Skagit County a special place for agriculture? What do you believe the county is known for?
 - How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things to visitors and residents?
 - What might be a threat to what makes the county a special place for agriculture?
- What does agritourism mean to you? What types of agritourism would you like to see in Skagit County?

- What is the best way to ensure agritourism is related to the primary use of the land for agriculture?
 - What are the opportunities and challenges of:
 - 1. Tasting rooms/restaurants? 2. Wedding venues? 3. Special events?
- Do size requirements come into effect when creating these regulations? Or dollars made by agritourism should be secondary to the farmers?
 - Is there space to allow small farms to host agritourism activity to make them more viable?
- How do you feel about the current Skagit County approval process and code enforcement?

7:20-7:50 pm Audience Q and A

7:50-8:00 Summary and Next Steps

Agritourism definitions vary and involve five types of activities – education, entertainment, direct sales, outdoor activity, and hospitality – which differ in depth of connection to the primary agricultural activity at that site.

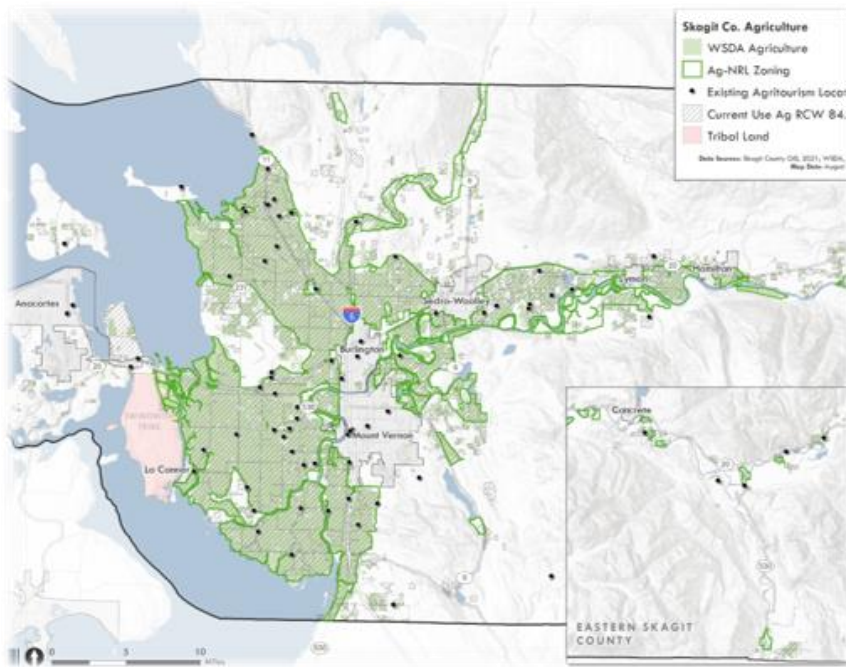
11. Panel Discussion Presentation Slides



Topics

Background – Agritourism in Skagit County
Panel Discussion





Current Agritourism

Common agritourism activities in Skagit County:

- Events, roadside stands, u-pick, accommodations, wine tasting
- Around 70+ operations
- Requests for: food service, weddings, temporary events

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

A common definition

Agritourism is generally considered “a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owner.” (UC Davis)

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES





Farmstand



U-pick



Farm Stay



Wedding
(Temporary)



Wedding
(Year Round)



Tasting Room



Combo U-Pick, Corn
Maze, Restaurant,
and Distillery



Scale & Intensity

Based on intensity
consider appropriate
location, scale,
frequency, conditions,
etc.

Understand Scale, Intensity,
and Relationship to Agriculture
and appropriate standards

Typical Annual Visits Per Year

Farm Stands	500
U-Pick	2,000
Farm Tours	2,080
Farm Stays	520
Tasting Rooms	11,304
Wedding - Temporary	6,000
Wedding - Permanent	13,000
Farm to Table	2,600
Festivals	20,000

Based on business
models and
available
studies/data, or
code parameters.

Consider
relationship to AG,
temporary or
permanent nature,
footprint, location,
services, etc.



Situation Assessment & Engagement



- ✓ Agritourism Definitions and National Trends
- ✓ Skagit County Agritourism and Economics
- ✓ Case Studies and Example Policies
- ✓ Engagement

Project Website & Materials

Interviews

Survey and discussion groups

Agriculture Advisory Board Meetings

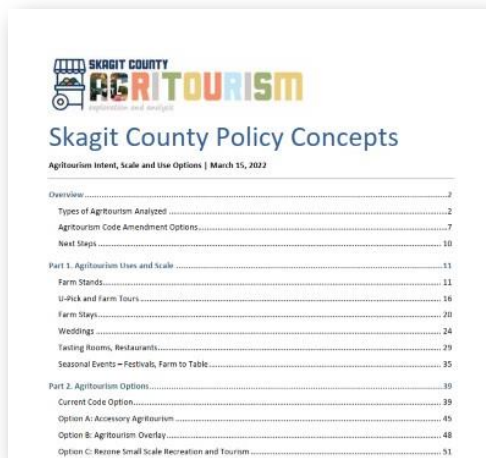
Planning Commission Meetings

BOCC Meetings



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Policy Concepts & Engagement



Postcard to
17,000 Addresses



Survey Online



Meetings Around
County

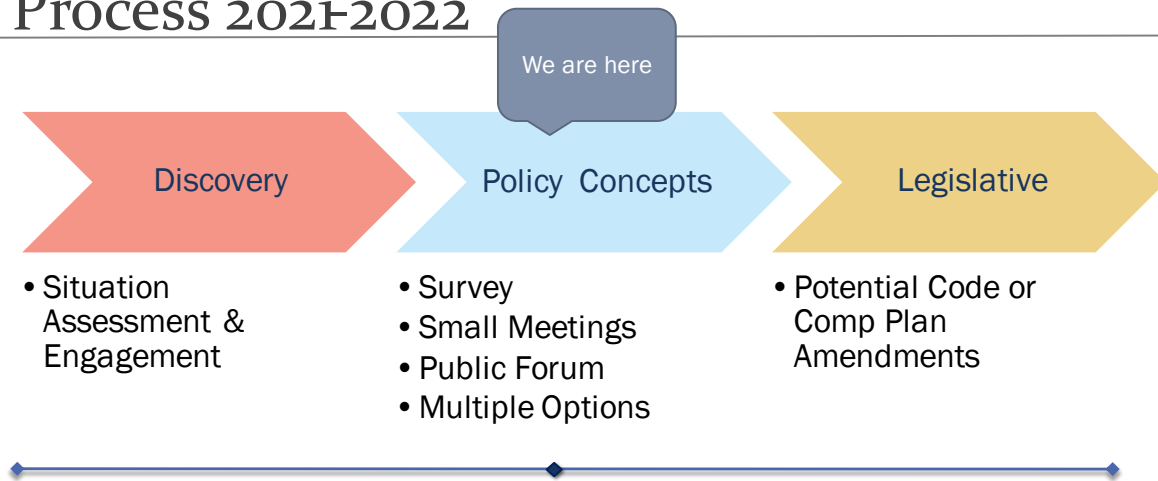


Agritourism Town
Hall

www.skagitcounty.net/SkagitAGT

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Process 2021-2022



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



Panel Discussion

Facilitator Don McMoran, Director WSU Extension

Example Discussion Topics:

- ❖ Panelist Introductions
- ❖ Skagit County – Uniqueness for Agricultural Production
- ❖ Agritourism Activities
 - ❖ What is agritourism?
 - ❖ Which ones are a fit for the county?
 - ❖ What are some opportunities or concerns?
 - ❖ Which ones support agriculture, culture, or local economy?
- ❖ Improvement to Regulations and Enforcement

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



12. Panel Discussion Transcripts

Skagit County Planning and Development Services Agritourism Town Hall December 6, 2022

Planning Staff: Sarah Ruether, Long Range Planning Manager
Jenn Rogers, Long Range Planner

Consultants: Lisa Grueter, BERK Consulting
Adam Greer, BERK Consulting

Facilitator: Don McMoran, Director, WSU Skagit County Extension

Panelists: Jessie Anderson, Maplehurst Farm
Terry Sapp, Skagit Agricultural Advisory Board
Leo Roozen, RoozenGaarde
Annie Lohman, Lohman Farms
Andrea Xaver, Producer, Big Lake

Questioner
From Audience: Owen _____

Sarah Ruether: Good evening, everyone. Thank you for coming tonight. I'm Sarah Ruether. I'm a long range planning manager. And welcome to Skagit County's Town Hall event to discuss agritourism. First I want to thank our panelists and Don McMoran for volunteering to be a part of this effort. Don has been willing to answer any question that I've had, being new to Skagit County, so I'm very grateful for that, and I'm really grateful to him for being our moderator. I also want to thank all the panelists who volunteered their time to be here and their willingness to share their experiences so that we can all learn and understand each other better with this issue.

Skagit County has a long history of being proactive envisioning its future, especially with the preservation of agriculture. In 1965, Skagit County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan and in 1979 Skagit County increased the minimum lot size to 40 acres for agricultural properties. This planning and foresight is what allowed the rural character of Skagit County and the preservation of ag land that we enjoy today, and without this planning and this intent to preserve ag lands, Skagit County would look much different today.

So Skagit County with this event continues to plan for the protection of agriculture and its rural character. It has established the Farmland Legacy Program in 1996, which buys conservation easements and permanently protects agricultural land. The Farmland Legacy Program has resulted in 14,212 acres of protected ag land to date.

So this work is to continue giving agricultural planning and continue visioning. And the work of all these groups and the participation of citizens like you in creating boards and programs have contributed to the beauty of Skagit County. And the work we're doing tonight continues these efforts to intentionally grow Skagit in a purposeful way that accomplishes a community vision. And having these conversations and understanding different perspectives makes it a richer process and gives better solutions to problems. And it's the work of volunteers and citizens who participate

that helps contribute to creative and better solutions. So I want to thank you for coming and participating.

And I want to say with that, thank you for being here tonight. And we have postcards in the back, if you haven't taken the survey yet and you would like to, and we will also have cards to give questions that we'll pick up later. So if you have questions we'll have a Q and A session at the very end. And I would like to thank Jenn Rogers, our long range planner. She helps me with all those really important details to make this happen so I'm really grateful for her help. And I would also like to thank Lisa and Adam from BERK Consulting. Their technical advice and help has also been really great. And with that, I will introduce Lisa, who's going to give you a background in some of the work that's been done.

Lisa Grueter: Thank you, Sarah, and good evening. I have just about 10 slides that gives you a lot of the information that's in the handout on the back table. And so I'll just remind you of the overall agenda. There's a detailed agenda on the back table, but in general I'm just going to give you some quick background. Don's going to lead a panel discussion, and as Sarah mentioned, there's a Q and A. This is what the back side of the postcard looks like. There's a white space you can put a question and Sarah and Adam will pick up these cards along the way. If you're on Zoom, there's a Chat function and Jenn will be watching for the Chat and you'll be able to submit a question at that point.

So this is a map that shows the Ag-Natural Resource Land zone, Ag-NRL zone, in the green, and the little black dots are what we inventoried as agritourism type activities in Skagit County. We had about 70 of them identified in the Situation Assessment that's on the project website that is at the bottom of the comment sheet. You can go to that weblink.

A definition: The County doesn't have a specific definition of "agritourism" but generally it's considered a commercial enterprise at a farm that's conducted for enjoyment of visitors and for income for the owner. It may also involve education and boosting agriculture as well. The types of agritourism we've been reviewing in the Situation Assessment and the policy work over the last couple of years is represented by this range of activities here, from a direct sale farmstand, U-Pick, farm stay, which is a temporary type of accommodation. The County does allow for bed and breakfasts already. There's weddings that may occur on a temporary basis in some counties or some counties may allow for that year around. And then tasting rooms for grapes or hops. And then there's other examples in the region of a combination of these different activities. As we've been looking at these different activities, we've been looking at the footprint of them to look at what scale or intensity they are on the landscape, but also the level of visitors that may be generated to look at what's a fit for agriculture in Skagit County. And this is all in that policy paper, but looking at both the activity and the footprint has been part of this work, and so some activities have less annual visits than others.

So the policy paper is on the project website. The weblink is down at the bottom there, skagitcounty.net/skagitagt. As Sarah mentioned, we've been in the middle of some additional engagement this fall. There were postcards. The ones you have on the back table were sent to about 17,000 addresses. A survey has been online and we have over 600 responses at this time. As was mentioned, the survey's going to close soon – at the end of this week, I believe. That was put out in the press release. So if you haven't taken it, this week would be a great time. We've had – this is the fourth meeting that we've held around the county, and this town hall kind of caps off some meetings we've had in Sedro-Woolley, La Conner, and elsewhere.

So the process has been one of educating the County and comparing to other counties and looking at different agritourism activities here and across the state and in other states, and conducting some engagement. That was in 2021. In 2022 we've been doing additional engagement and put out different ideas, but trying to get more input so that we can come up with the best options that are a fit for Skagit County. And after this effort, we'll take stock of what we're hearing and seeing and there will be some draft code or Comp Plan amendments likely to be looked at next year.

So we're going to turn now to a panel discussion and Don is going to lead it with our panelists. On your agenda are the detailed questions we provided to the panelists ahead of time. This is just a summary. The panel is going to introduce themselves. They're going to talk about what makes Skagit a unique county for agriculture, and talk about agritourism and what it means to the county: What's a fit and what are some challenges, and then what might be some improvements to County regulations or enforcement?

So with that, I'll pass it over to Don.

Don McMoran: Thanks so much, Lisa.

Ms. Grueter: Thank you.

Mr. McMoran: And thank you for all of those of you who were able to join us tonight. I really appreciate it. So I'm Don McMoran. I'm the director of WSU Skagit County Extension. I'm also a fourth generation farm kid from right here in Skagit County. I grew up on a 2,000-acre diversified potato farm in west Mount Vernon. So when I had the opportunity to think about tonight and to think about, you know, this process, it really brought me back to our founding fathers and them creating the First Amendment in which everyone has the freedom to free speech. And so I want you to be thinking about that tonight. You know, you might not necessarily agree with our speakers, but tonight I want you to do your best to be respectful and try to leave some of your biases at home and listen to what the speakers have to say because they're bringing different perspectives to our community. And also, just a reminder that no decisions are going to be made on the subject tonight. That really falls within the Planning Commission as well as our County Commissioners. We do happen to have a County Commissioner in the room tonight, so Peter Browning, if you'd wave your hand so everybody can make sure that they seek out meetings with you in the future to fully vet this situation as we move forward.

So tonight I want to introduce some of our panelists. I just have a short blurb on them and I'll ask for them to add to what we have on board here as we move forward.

So our first panelist is Leo Roozen of RoozenGaarde. Leo is one of the owners of Washington Bulb Company and Roozengarde, which farms approximately 2,000 acres of land for mostly tulips. Leo, would you care to add to that?

Leo Roozen: I can later.

Mr. McMoran: Sure. It sounds good. Second panelist is Jessie Anderson from Maplehurst Farms. Jessie Anderson has owned Maplehurst Farms in Mount Vernon with her husband Jeffrey Anderson since 2008. The six-acre farm hosts special events and weddings for the community.

Jessie Anderson: Yes, thank you.

Mr. McMoran: Thank you.

Ms. Anderson: I will elaborate a little bit on that.

Mr. McMoran: Sure, go ahead.

Ms. Anderson: I think we have kind of a similar background, hearing you say that you're fourth generation. I'm also a generation – fifth generation, actually – farmer here. I grew up at Hayton Farms on Fir Island.

(inaudible voice)

Ms. Anderson: Oh, sure. So my name is Jessie Hayton Anderson and I was born and raised here in the valley. I grew up at Hayton Farms on Fir Island and began working in the fields at a young age harvesting cauliflower, packing cucumbers, weeding berry fields. My sisters and I began selling produce at my parents' farmstand, and in high school we started to deliver and sell direct at farmers markets throughout the greater Puget Sound area. And that helped fund our college education at the University of Washington. After my undergraduate degrees, I attended Seattle Pacific University and earned an MBA and then I moved to Los Angeles and worked from 2005 to 2008. In 2008 I realized that the Skagit Valley was where I wanted to settle and so I moved home and married my husband, Jeffrey Anderson, and he also grew up – he's third generation farmer here – grew up on a farm in Conway. And so we were lucky enough to buy a six-acre portion of his grandparents' home place, their farm, on Dike Road. And so we bought that in 2008.

I worked for my parents at Hayton Farms from 2008 to 2012, and after we had our second daughter I was motivated to work from home and I'd always been entrepreneurial so I decided to try hosting some events at our property on Dike Road. I continued to work for my parents. My husband had a separate career path. It was a parttime venture that we've grown over the past 10 years into a wonderful family business. And so we do host weddings. We also host memorials, reunions, church groups, youth group meetings, school auctions and dances, quinceaneras, also many nonprofit groups such as Skagitians to Preserve Farmland, Children of the Valley, and the Skagit Valley Community College. Many of our clients are locals – friends, neighbors, and members of the community – as well as other clients from the greater Puget Sound area. My husband and I do believe in giving back to the community and we coach youth sports and use our venue to donate free events and also host discounted events annually for organizations such as the Festival of Trees, the Skagit Valley Hospital Foundation, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services of Skagit Valley, and other local schools and nonprofits. We manage five acres of lawn, mature trees, and gardens; maintain a historic mansion, and a barn. We have taken no land out of agriculture and farming for our venue; however, we will be farming 10 acres this year on top of the venue – aside from the venue, and we will be selling grass hay bales and also bring fruits and vegetables for our two daughters, who are six generation farmers, to sell at my parents' produce stand.

So I think that's all that I need to say for now. But I'm happy to be here, and thank you for the opportunity to discuss two things that I'm very passionate about: agritourism and farming in the Skagit Valley.

Mr. McMoran: Great! Thanks for being here.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: All right, our next panelist is Andrea Xaver. She's a producer out at Big Lake. She's also a huge supporter of agriculture. Andrea, do you want to elaborate on that?

Andrea Xaver: Well, I'm the fifth of seven generations on the same farm that we've owned for 121 years. And we're in the process now of training the seventh generation. Hopefully they'll grow up and want to do what we're doing.

I'm adamant about saving farmland in Skagit County and I don't want to do anything that upsetting to someone, but, being one of the oldest people on the panel probably, I'd like to just let people know that – some of the history. Since 1940 we've lost about half of our farmland here in Skagit County due to other conversions. In the mid-1990s, some County commissioners did away with the zoning called "Agricultural Reserve." You'd think with the population increases we'd need more agriculture land held in reserve because in 1996 when this took place the world's population was 6.79 billion. Now we're up to eight billion. Skagit County's population in 1996 was 93,772. Now it's 132,047. And I read an article the other day that said one percent of the people feed 100% of the world. Maintaining agriculture land in Skagit County is crucial, plus it's some of the richest farmland in the world. And that's hard for other counties in other states to say. So we need it all.

I'm respectful and I like our venues that we have. It's been very nice and fun to drive around and see, but the devil's in the details, as far as the future. How many people want to do something, as far as agritourism? What will they be selling? Would it be strictly off the farm? Would they be importing other things to sell? How much space would they need? Would they be taking out more farmland? Would that then further erode the farmland that we currently have and take more of that away? And what are the farmers that do next door or around in that area? What will they have to do? Do they have to get better insurance? Do they have to get security? And the reason I mention that is because about three years ago in Whatcom County – had nothing to do with agritourism whatsoever – but a little girl ran away from her parents unbeknownst to them. She went out to the barn, climbed up on something that was kind of heavy – some machinery – and it was kind of teetering back and forth and it fell over on her and killed her. What I would hate to see would be something like that in this county or anywhere else. Do we sell there again? Do we have to hire more security? Would a busload of kids drive into the wrong farm, thinking it was part of the agritourism thing, run around, get loose, and then here comes a big tractor towing a bunch of heavy equipment comes around the corner of the barn or runs over maybe a half a dozen kids? It's a possibility and I don't think that would be good for anyone.

Like I said, the devil's in the details. How much land is going to be taken up or converted to uses to sell goodies and knick-knacks? The things that we have right now are pretty much connected to larger farms and the products are grown there or whatever. So, there again, I'm pretty adamant about saving what we have because we don't have that much left really, when you consider it.

And there was another article in the paper that talked about in the next 40 years farmers will have to produce as much food as has been produced in the last 10,000 years. That's pretty mind-boggling when you consider the rate that the population is increasing and so forth. We need agricultural land for agriculture.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. Our next panelist is Annie Lohman. Annie Lohman was previously the chair of the Skagit County Planning Commission and a member of the Skagit Agricultural Advisory Board. She owns Lohman Farms in Bow with her husband Dave, and they primarily farm seed crops. Annie, do you care to elaborate?

Annie Lohman: Hi. I am not a second generation, third generation. I am a first generation farmer. My husband and I purchased a 40-acre farm, kind of a little low on the heel, back in 1989. And we at that time raised dairy heifers and we also grew seed crops. And then eventually we sold out our dairy herd and focus now on vegetable seed crops.

But we did it the old-fashioned way. There was an elderly lady who was – her place had kind of gotten away, and it was an opportunity for a young person of 25 years old. We put a ton of work. We had open station tractors. We had some pretty rudimentary and pretty crude implements to get started. I think of Jerry Rindall putting together a beginner package for us and I wonder what he really thought when we pulled out of his lot! But it was a ton of hard work and there were years when we didn't make anything. There were years where we made barely enough. And back then you were advised that you need to save for yourself because there isn't going to be any social security. We didn't even have 100 bucks sometimes to put towards retirement. So we put everything in that. Flash forward 30 years and we are still here, and it's because of the opportunities that Skagit County visionaries – other farmers and other community members – put on looking towards the future. And I thank God for that vision, because I wouldn't have had it. It is not an easy path to take. It's tough. You plan in multiple years; you don't plan in single year or half-years. You don't take vacation. You give up an awful lot, but it's worth it. It is such a rich reward. And this is the last place left on the whole west side of the Cascades. And you think about that. It looks like there's an awful lot available here for those kind of opportunities, and that's only because I-5, Chuckanut Drive, Highway 20, Cook Road, all the major arterials in this county happen to go, unfortunately, right through the valley, right through the ag sector. That ag sector – all of the zoning, including going upriver east of I-5, is only less than 10% of the county's land base. But the perception coming down Conway hill or coming from the north from Bellingham, the perception is the vast majority of the county is that wide-open agricultural vista and wide-open space, and it is not. It's less than 10%. The majority of this county is timber.

So I just want to remind people that it's because of our reluctance to sell out, subdivide like our neighbors to the south in Snohomish and our neighbors to the north in Whatcom, and even further – King County and other counties where they made it five-acre, 10-acre. Anything less than 40 even. I'm not even sure 40 was actually enough but it was a start. The opportunity to have generational farms of long term significance, and even opportunities for newbies, like me, they're not going to be there. Do we want to keep these opportunities in the next 10 years, 20 years, 30 years – even looking 50 years down the pike: Do we want to be able to have that opportunity? And I hope we do.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Annie. Our last but not least –

Terry Sapp: The latest!

Mr. McMoran: – member of the committee is Terry Sapp. So Terry has been a member of the Skagit Ag Advisory Board since 2015. Terry owns Hoehn Bend Farm and Fender Farm with his family, where they primarily raise cattle. Terry.

Mr. Sapp: True. Hello. I am happy to be here. I've been in this room lots of times out there, looked up here, and there were always the important people up here! And so –

Mr. McMoran: So welcome to being an important person, Terry!

Mr. Sapp: Well, I don't know if that's true, but what I learned is that if you come late you get ushered right up to the front. So that's the new trick. In all deference, Commissioner, I'm here and it seems warm in here.

(laughter)

Mr. Sapp: So fellow panelists, not all of whom I have met, I'm eager to hear more from each of you, and rather than give an opening comment here, I'll just introduce myself with a few more notes. I indeed farm east of Sedro-Woolley. For those of you who haven't been up there that recently, that's just before you get to Lyman. And we farm beef cattle primarily. We grow grass and feed it to cattle. I speak with the plural pronoun because I do so with my very farm member partner and my wife, Jean Eagleston. You can do this, Jeannie – there you are. Jeannie is a great partner in our endeavor, and it wouldn't be as enjoyable without her.

I will just say that I have had – without detail; maybe will have opportunity later to say more about involvement in agritourism – but I have two specific connections. One is that Jeannie and I created a farm-stay on our farm – *mostly* Jeannie created a farm-stay on our farm – where we had visitors come from afar to farm with us. The main activity for those visitors was that they were up in the morning when we arrived – we didn't live there – and worked along with us most of the day. I'll get into that later.

The other way, number two, that I am involved in agritourism is that I am on the Agricultural Advisory Board and have been for a number of years. And the Agricultural Advisory Board has indeed been involved in this topic for a couple of years. And I've worked with Lisa. Lisa, sorry I missed your presentation. I think I've heard much of it previously. But my apologies, nonetheless. And with Sarah; through the Agricultural Advisory Board, we have been involved in this topic. And the Ag Board – if you will allow for short – has established policy positions and some recommendations that have been expressed and shared with the functional operatives – that isn't a very good word – those of you who have been working on this more intensively than we at the Ag Board. But we've been real involved, and I think we'll have opportunity to get into that later. I'll try to clarify when I speak and if I have opportunity when I am speaking from my experience and representation of the Ag Board and when I speak regarding my personal experience. Thank you, Don.

Mr. McMoran: Perfect. So I think we'll kind of – we'll go right to left and then left to right. So, Terry, back to you. First question is how long have you been working in agriculture in Skagit County?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah, I don't have a number of years for that. I grew up on a farm also where we now farm. I am third generation. I grew up farming in the morning and the evening after school. Both of my parents worked off-farm, so we *all* worked mornings and evenings, and, of course, weekends. And then I went away elsewhere to do other things. I had a couple of careers and came back when I had a – I grew up enough to have a choice. Jeannie and I have been farming for –

Jean Eagleston: Since 2008.

Mr. Sapp: Thank you. How many years is that? So for a while.

Mr. McMoran: Annie, you already made mention of how you started out in 1985, correct?

Ms. Lohman: Yep. Well, my first job out of WSU – I had to put a plug for the Cougs –

Mr. McMoran: Go Cougs!

Ms. Lohman: – was as a cow breeder, mostly in dairy, in north Snohomish County. And then my late husband was a son of a farmer in Stanwood and then I moved to Skagit. And so all my adult life has been in agriculture. When I was a little kid, I picked berries for Tom Shane, so that was my very first actual paycheck that wasn't written by Mom and Dad.

Mr. McMoran: Awesome. And Andrea, how long have you been involved in agriculture in Skagit County?

Ms. Xaver: Well, like I mentioned earlier I think, my family's owned the same farms for 121 years, and when I was a kid I learned my multiplication tables feeding the cows out in the barn because my mom or my dad would go, What's 7 times 9? What's 2 times 4? And so on and so forth. So I had chores to do, had to go to school, had to do all the stuff – help my folks seven days a week. We milked cows twice a day and then when we had time we hopped in the car and we'd take tours and go around Skagit County and visit our friends and family that were all over the place and involved in farming. I drive around now and there's some places that bring me to tears. Things have changed so much because of all of the things that have taken the place of agriculture land. And that's why I'm concerned. I'm not involved in agritourism. I do – like I said, I do appreciate some of the things that we do have here today, but as I also mentioned earlier, the devil's in the details. We don't know what the future will bring and how much more erosion that will have an impact on farmland. So I hope we can do another 121 years or beyond that.

Mr. McMoran: Yeah. Jessie, how long have you been involved in ag in Skagit?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I mean, my dad drove me around when I was a baby in his pickup truck with him, but I worked as soon as I could – around 10, you know – on the farm. My first paycheck that wasn't from my parents was from Alf Christianson Seed Company __ spinach. But then I worked for my parents after that until I – well, through high school and college I continued to work at the farm, and then I was in Los Angeles working for three years but returned after that. So most of my life I've been here. I'm 41 years old now.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Leo, how long have you been involved in agriculture in Skagit County?

Mr. Roozen: Well, Don, my whole life, as people say, but I think I got my first check – we started getting paid – you know, I'm preaching to the choir to a lot of people here and I'll try to be, you know, somewhat brief because we've got a lot to cover. I'd be happy to answer more questions later, but my older brother's sitting here and he might correct me, but I think we got our first check I think when I was eight years old. He might have got his earlier. I'm not sure. But that's 62 years ago because I'm 70 now. And we've – my whole life had been in agriculture. If we weren't in school or turning out for sports or studying – and some of that stuff we didn't want to do anyway – we were working because there was always way more work to do than there was time in the day. So I think I can talk to a lot of this stuff just with practical experience, but again, I'd be happy to answer more questions later, but most of my whole life. Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: Perfect.

Unidentified Voice: Don, could you put the microphones closer to perhaps the women on the panel? I can hear the gentlemen on the end but _____.

Mr. McMoran: I don't need one, do I? I spent too much time on a tractor so I can't hear and I talk loud. I hope.

Same Unidentified Voice: The men are doing great. _____.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Perfect. All right, so back over to you, Leo. What's your relationship with ag tourism?

Mr. Roozen: Well, most of my relationship and our relationship at Washington Bulb Company is with the Tulip Festival, and we've got hands-on experience there, of course – and just clarifying earlier when it was – you'd mentioned 2,000 acres. Most of that is not tulips. We're diversified. But we're known most for our tulips, I guess.

Mr. McMoran: That's right.

Mr. Roozen: That said, most of our hands-on experience – and that's why I agreed to be here is to share what I know firsthand – is with the Tulip Festival and with the Festival of Family Farms in the fall. And we're quite involved in those two and, you know, maybe I can add some information a little bit later. But that's my experience with ag tourism.

Mr. McMoran: Jessie?

Ms. Anderson: Okay, so as I mentioned, you know, some before, I own Maplehurst Farm with my husband and we host weddings and other events at the six-acre property. None of that land was ag land, although we are surrounded by his family farm and my family farm is just five miles from our property. But we host events together and then we also will be farming 10 acres for grass hay and then also to supply our daughters' produce to sell during their summer vacation at my parents' farmstand. And so I help them manage that. I'm the adult that helps them run that stand and that was one of my first jobs and something that they take pride in and something that will help them learn to love agriculture like I do.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Jessie. Andrea?

Ms. Xaver: Can anybody hear me?

(sounds of assent)

Ms. Xaver: Okay. I really don't have any association with agritourism. As I mentioned, when I was a kid my folks and I would drive around through the farmland and visit people and go look at things from one end of the valley to the other, because we knew so many people and had relatives and friends all over the place. So that was tourism, I guess you could say in a way. But then to kind of mix and mingle agriculture with tourism is kind of a different slant. Tourism, okay. Agriculture, fine. We need it. But to put those two together is kind of a sticky situation, I think. And, there again, like I said, I don't know what the future might bring or how much more land would be taken – essentially – out of agriculture.

Ms. Lohman: I'm a fulltime farmer and it's not a hobby farm, but we have been involved with helping with FFA and 4H. I was a dairy superintendent at the Skagit County Fair for several years. And so while it's really kind of not tourism per se, it's almost like ag advocacy and kind of self-preservation to kind of sow the seed for the next generation and give them a taste of it. But I suppose you could argue that that also is a potential opportunity with tourism, with farm-stays,

farmstands, and other opportunities to expose the public to our farms and our work ethic and all of that. And also we have had a WSU Ph.D. student living with us for the last several years and kind of exposing a city kid from LA to a more rural, day in/day out type lifestyle. So while it's really not ag tourism, that is about as close as I physically have gotten to it.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Terry, you want to share your experience with ag tourism?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah, I can be very brief because I already said some of it. Jeannie helped start a farm-stay at our farm. We had an extra house and two farm properties and so this became very active – and here's my pitch for agritourism – a *great* experience, *fabulous* experience. I said enough already maybe, but we had people from – I think, Jeannie, 17 countries who arrived to help feed our cows and goats and all, and almost all of them with kids. They were almost entirely people who came to stay who had small children and signed up to get their kids exposed to farms. That suited us. I had a career as an educator also so it was fun being around kids – teaching, talking about farming. So I'm wearing my personal hat now. I said I had two; the Ag Board is the other. But we also had a very sad and unfortunate traumatic experience with ag tourism next door. And I can go into that later, perhaps, as we get to some of the other issues –

Mr. McMoran: Sure.

Mr. Sapp: – but it was very mixed, a very mixed experience. Personally positive with our customers and then very troublesome next door.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Well, we'll definitely come back to that. The next question is: What makes Skagit County a special place for agriculture? What do you believe the county is known for, Terry?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah. Yes, the obvious things. I'm going to defer.

Mr. McMoran: Okay.

Mr. Sapp: Leo and others are ready for that question better than me. I love farming here. I love that experience. I chose it late in life but having started with ____ also, all good.

Mr. McMoran: All right. Annie, do you want to fill in?

Ms. Lohman: Well, at the risk of repeating myself, I believe it's our – the Skagit County's commitment to prioritizing the ag land and rural lifestyle, and that's pretty tough. And here we are in 2022. That's a pretty tough commitment to have made and stuck with when you look around and where it's gotten away. So what makes it special and what are we known for? Well, outside of the general public, but in the ag world we are known for our seed crops. There's well over 100 years of experience growing vegetable seeds, cabbage, spinach, a variety of other seed crops.

Mr. McMoran: Don't forget your beet seed.

Ms. Lohman: Yeah, don't forget the beet seed. I mean, and we are a world player in those seed crops and we are national certificates in those seed crops, so they're not any small potatoes. While the acreage may be small if you compare us to Nebraska and all that cattle in Kansas and all that wheat in someplace else and all that corn, we are – acreage-wise it might seem small. And then what else are we known for? Well, our red potatoes. We're kind of pioneers on red potatoes and everybody else had to catch up. And ours were special. We're also known for our tulips. But it's mostly our soil and our latitude and the kind of gentle maritime climate that we

enjoy. It doesn't take a lot of irrigation. I mean, while there *is* irrigation, it's not, like, in the basin or other places where you *have* to have irrigation going continuously. Ours is kind of –

Mr. McMoran: Supplemental.

Ms. Lohman: Thank you.

Mr. McMoran: You're welcome.

Ms. Lohman: So I think about all those things that – and that's God-given, Mother Nature, dumb luck – I don't know. Plus a long term visioning. So that's – did I answer all those questions?

Mr. McMoran: Yeah, and others can fill in too. Andrea?

Ms. Xaver: Well, first of all there has been mentioned several times: It's the soil. Some of the richest in the world, and not too many places can say that. And then I'd like to chime in with what Annie has said about all the crops that are being grown and the weather and so forth. And it's written down but I'll mention it, that I'm on the Farmland Legacy Program with the County and I've been on that program since 2007, and we've saved over 14,000 acres of farmland from conversion to other uses. And that's pretty critical because, like I say, we keep losing it. But then I believe the county is also known for – when you drive around and take a look at farmland, you're also looking off into the distance and you see not only the farms but you see forestland, you see places to fish, you see wildlife that's settled – comes in in the wintertime and they tromp around and our little birds and fly around on the farmland and so forth. So you see the wildlife, you see their habitat, and you see incredible views that are uncluttered by something that looks like the Kent Valley.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. I know Jessie wants to add her father's berry crop as well as brassica production into this list of the mix. So Jessie, go ahead.

Ms. Anderson: Yes, let's! Yeah, I would say definitely on top of being known for tulips and the beauty and the history, berries – strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, cucumbers, cauliflower, of course potatoes. There's just a tremendous amount of incredible food that is grown here. And the history. But I think it's interesting that, you know, currently just within a few miles of my small farm there is, you know, an alpaca farm that has – that sells in a little shop on their property they sell hand-made woolen goods. There's an apple cider barn that sells fresh-pressed cider. There's a nursery that sells plants. And then my family has two farmstands on Fir Island and there are others. My venue – there are other venues. You know, with the farmland there are also agritourism businesses that have grown locally and they're contributing to the local economy. And they're also a method to teach visitors about the rich history that we have here. We have guests that attend events at our venue that have never seen farmland, that don't know how their food is grown. They don't know how important it is to buy local. And getting those visitors to come and see how special the valley is and how important it is to preserve it is important too. And so I think agritourism can work together with the farms to achieve, you know, mutual goals.

Mr. McMoran: Right. Thank you, Jessie.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: And Leo, I know we missed some flower production because you do more than tulips.

Mr. Roozen: To the question: Okay, what makes the valley special? My dad always said it's God's country. And so what does that mean? I mean, but if you look, we've got this mild maritime climate. As people ask me, I just go down the list. We've got the rich – the silty loam and the clay loam soils. We've got the temperature-buffering breezes or winds that just – they don't just protect us from the high and low temperatures but so many other things that don't like those breezes and winds: aphids and that type of thing; bugs that – you know, some of those things – it keeps things – it helps us. If you go down, we have a moderate amount of rainfall at the right times. At times we have to do a little bit of irrigating but not necessarily that much. So then you go into the crops. Where else do you have a diversity of crops? We've mentioned a lot of them, but what it shows us is we're growing 80 to 100 different kinds of crops here. We've got vegetable seed production, grain crops, vegetable crops, ___ crops, and dairy, beef livestock, horticultural crops, nursery crops, forage crops, rotation crops, and you can go on and on. It shows that what is the valley special for, what's it known for – it is truly unique in a lot of ways. With what can be done here – and when we talk about sustainability, what *has* been done in the early days with the pioneers and what *can* be done in the future, *if* we have – what we're known for – a lot of farm ground. We're known. The county and county-supported organizations have been very proactive in their approach to preserving and protecting farmland. We're *known* for that. Nothing that anybody's talked about here is going to continue if we don't preserve and protect the farmland. But maybe as important as anything is, we're known to have the cooperation of all these different agricultural producers that are growing all these different kinds of crops or raising livestock or nursery products or whatever. These people are all working together in cooperation towards a common goal to try to help every other individual succeed – trading ground, working, renting. Doing all the things that you all do – and I'm talking to the choir in a lot of respects. But, yeah, that's not that common either. And so we're known for that cooperative, proactive, really cutting edge thinking that is really outside the realm of maybe some people in agriculture. But I think this valley is setting an example in that, you know?

Mr. McMoran: That's great. So the next question is: How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things to visitors and residents?

Mr. Roozen: Well, you know, it comes down to, you know, the who, what, why, where, when, how. I mean, okay, who do we want to showcase this to? I mean, who are the visitors? And *what* do we want to showcase? And where are we going to do this? Are we going to do it in some auditorium or are we going to do it on the farms or on venues? When are we going to do it? Is it going to be seasonal or are we going to do it year around? And why are we going to do it? Well, one of the main reasons maybe we want to do it is because – I might touch on it a minute – is we're going to survive in ag, you know, you go back 75 years, 50% of America was rural. Today we're talking about 1% of the people that are producing all these crops.

Well, if we're going to do it, why are we going to do it? Because we need to educate. We need to show people what we're doing. We need to inform people. How are we going to do that? Well, I guess – how would we – I can only talk to what – we've learned a little bit in our companies. We need to provide information on the products that we produce or grow and sell in the world. We need to produce information on those. You know, how are they available? Where can they be purchased? How are they grown? I don't necessarily – I'm not going to go into this, but we have – we produce – we've got a website that we've got frequently asked questions that I think we're going to have to address if we want to get into agritourism and stuff. The questions that most people have – there's about 20 questions that most people have about almost anything, and if we're going to do that, how are we going to – we're going to have to make a commitment. The county and people involved in how this develops down the road, they're going to have to make a

commitment, and that's going to take a lot of time and thought and human resources and money and effort. That can be beneficial to everyone but that's – I'm just here maybe to share a little bit of what we've learned and the things that we've been involved in, the Family Farm Festival and the Tulip Festival. And we've learned a lot about people. And people want to know what we're doing and, really, our salvation is in education. The more people know about what we're doing and why we're doing it – and I'll get into it at one of the later questions, the complexities involved and that type of thing – the more they respect that and understand that there are parameters that we all have to live within. There's common ground we have to find and there's give and take. And so this is – I think this is – as I've watched this thing develop over the last few years and where it's going, I think that's going to be a key.

Mr. McMoran: Jessie, I'll repeat the question for you.

Ms. Anderson: Sure.

Mr. McMoran: How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things to visitors and residents?

Ms. Anderson: That's a good question. I think it's important for the County to support farms of all sizes and be open to agritourism businesses to support the local economy and also, you know, what was recently discussed, the partnerships that we have with our neighbors and other business owners. Support that network. And I think it's important to realize that with the many challenges that farms continue to face in this day and age, we have to be open to new ideas and new sources of income and education – overtime laws, regulations, competition from larger conglomerates, global warming. These are just a handful of the many things that family farms are facing. And so agritourism is a way to provide an opportunity for additional resources, income, and education not only within the valley but to those who visit it.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Thank you. So Andrea, how would you like Skagit County to showcase agriculture to visitors and residents?

Ms. Xaver: Well, I agree with Mr. Roozen: from the perspective of education. I think there's been a big shortfall within the state educational system of telling kids or educating kids about all of our resources, whether that's farms, fishing, forestry, or what have you. And I see the same problem here in Washington in Skagit County. There needs to be more education available on a regular basis to remind kids, because you usually have to tell people three times before they remember anything. Certainly me, anyway. But more education for kids so they know what's going on in this county. And agritourism: There again I get a little – kind of get a chill because I don't know. Like I said, we don't know enough about what the future might bring or what this really means for agritourism and how it might impact us. So we need more details. How many more of these sites are we going to have? How much parking is going to be needed on farmland? What will the traffic do? Will there be more traffic – an increase? Is it going to make it hard for the farmers to run up and down the roads with their tractors and equipment, or are they going to be stuck in a traffic jam? We need more details. Meanwhile, you could put people on a bus and drive them around Skagit County. Maybe they'd learn a thing or two here and there. That'd actually be kind of fun as long as they don't get off the bus and go onto the wrong farm and get run over by a tractor.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. Annie?

Ms. Lohman: I guess I took the question literally. How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things? And I've been elsewhere – other states – and I've been to some large cities where

they've got an ag showcase and they're proud of their agriculture or their community, and we really don't have anything. We don't have anything in downtown Mount Vernon, for example, or Burlington that is dedicated to this ag community. We kind of let it go piecemeal and let the farmers or those that have venues kind of take that ball, but it's kind of destroying it. There might be a map showing where a variety of U-Pics or opportunities are, but really we don't have anything coordinated that's year around. And, you know, for me, I'm never going anywhere in the summer, so is there something that somebody could do in the winter? We don't really have anything. And I'm kind of reluctant to pass that baton and put the onus on government, and so I would almost rather see the ag groups – and we have a whole bunch of them – take on that task and figure out how to staff it or do something, rather than rely on a government entity to do it.

I think about when my daughter was an intern for Donnie at Extension. She was the only OSU student at WSU; I thought that was pretty funny back then. Anyway, but she had the job of doing the voice for that agritourism sign as you come into Skagit – that blue information sign. Maybe we need some more placards. I know there's a little bit of placarding around La Conner where it shows what's growing in the crops. Well, if you down to Oregon you see placards as you're going down I-5 along the fence lines or along the right-of-way there saying what's in the fields. Maybe we should consider expanding that to not just be along around La Conner but maybe out towards Bow-Edison and out towards Sedro-Woolley and, you know, kind of broaden that so it's a little more than just people driving by – you know, *while* they're driving by. Maybe they'll look and see.

So I guess I go back to I just don't want to put the whole onus on Skagit County.

Mr. McMoran: Fair enough. Terry?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah, thanks. I don't want to repeat the things that people have already said and the people out in the audience here probably already know and maybe jointly believe about Skagit County. And Don, I'd really like to think maybe we could – or maybe I'm going to jump offside and get a penalty here, but I'd like to think that with our precious time here, and people who have come to visit or listen and offer ideas perhaps, that we could dig into the weeds a little deeper here. And I want to do that because on the Ag Board we've spent a lot of hours and a lot of time trying to dig into some very serious policy issues, and I know that we're going to go into a legislative writing stage. The Growth Management Act is going to have a very big impact on what we do here in this county. Other counties have tried. Cases have gone before the Growth Management Hearings Boards that are instructive. And so I'm hoping we can get some dialogue going. I think –

Mr. McMoran: I think we get there.

Mr. Sapp: Okay, as long as we don't run out. I don't want to –

Mr. McMoran: We're scheduled to go to 8 p.m., so...

Mr. Sapp: Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: Yeah.

Mr. Sapp: So yeah, all good in ag land in Skagit County and I support it, and I like education. I think that's one of the real important parts that isn't left out of the ag tourism discussion too much and not well enough focused about how we can produce an educative element to add to how people participate here.

Mr. McMoran: Yeah. So the next question might start you down that thread. What might be a threat to the county? So it says: What might be a threat to what makes the county a special place for agriculture?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah. So yeah, you threw the flag on me. I think that agriculture is heavily threatened by many forces coming from many directions. In other forums where I have participated, the discussion is housing. And I know that's an essential issue for the Commissioners as well and county policy-making. It's a *big* threat to agriculture. You need places to build houses. Ag has land. It's an obvious choice. And now I don't want to deter our thinking here, but I'm looking out and I see Commissioner Wesen. Amazing that I'm here speaking to you! It befuddles me!

(laughter)

Mr. Sapp: But I know the policy issues are great and the direct challenges to agriculturalists are great. They're huge in my little community. It's called **SkyU**, halfway between those two places out there – Sedro-Woolley and Lyman – where ag land is being consumed for a variety of other kinds of things. Not housing and not agritourism, but one of the things that's creeping in that I see is the use of ag lands, barn yards becoming construction business zones. The excavators and the dump trucks and the aggregates and the things – obvious good place for those kinds of businesses. They're not agriculture. They are business. They are sources of employment. But the vectors or the directions from which the intention to use agricultural lands for non-agricultural things is tremendous, and we all know by reading the newspaper that building an airport out there is one of them. So they're innumerable. And I think it was said someplace, you know, we just have to put our stake in the ground and address all of them.

Mr. McMoran: Annie?

Ms. Lohman: I think – as I said earlier, I think perception that the majority of the valley is available is a threat and that it's potentially loved to death. Everybody wants to come and live here. I see on our local Bow-Edison group and various ones there's constantly – and I don't mean this in a bad way. People want to live here because we've done a really good job of keeping it as a rural place. We're on the tipping point of switching over from being a rural county to suburban, and that's a completely different mindset, completely – that's a paradigm shift from rural to suburban, and I think we need to think long and hard about do we want to be that. And I feel that is a threat because it's a shift, a major shift.

I also think there's a lot of pressure in the ag community. There's thin margins in any given year. Some years, I mean, you have a banner year and other years it's pretty grim. And you've got labor issues, you've got capital gains, you've got taxes, you've got all these pressures, and farmers tend to be individuals and we don't talk about that stuff much by ourself. So there's a ton of personal pressure on each of our farms. And so that, in a way, kind of contributes to that threat. And I don't want to be a Debbie Downer here, but I also think about the urban vise that we're in between the north and the south, and that's a real thing. And it was really apparent during COVID because people tended to stay home. They didn't stay home! You should have seen Chuckanut Drive! I mean, Burlington and Mount Vernon were ghost towns. They were all up on Chuckanut, where I happen to farm. And that kind of – that COVID kind of revealed that people could live further away from their workplace and kind of telecommute or Zoom or do whatever. Where we farmers, we're already working at home and I have this five-second commute. So that incompatible suburban-rural-urban dynamic that I can't really articulate it very well but I hope you kind of get the feel. The other thing is I feel a need to have some cautions about injecting

incompatible uses. There's an awful lot of what you could call agritourism that is absolutely compatible, but there's also incompatible uses that could be packaged and sold as agritourism or tangentially related to the farm that create incompatibility, and it will always be the farm that ends up having to buffer, set aside property and step back, and I view that as a major threat. Because if you can't take care of your crop you can't make a living and you will fail.

Mr. McMoran: Andrea, care to add to threats?

Ms. Xaver: Yeah, I agree with you, Annie. And the other thing that could happen, of course, is the rezoning because that's already happened. And then in the east of I-5, there've been the threats on farmland because of wild animals. The elk. The elk have come in here and have been imported and so forth and other things, and they're being threatened by hoof rot. And nobody really seems to care except the farmers. Where's all the people who call themselves – and I don't mean to take offense to anybody, but call themselves environmentalists or fish and wildlife people that care about the animals. But they don't do anything about the hoof rot and it continues to spread and it goes and will affect anything that has hooves. So some of these farmers upriver are going to be driven off their property because of all the damage so far from the elk and other animals that want to come in and take over. And then the people who love to come here and take a look, and they move here and so on. They move here to get away from it all but they bring it with them. So hence we have further rezoning issues, possibly. And then upriver, like I mentioned, people will be forced off their farms because they can't farm them anymore – too much damage. So they're going to give up and go away. So I always wonder, What's behind the scenes? Is it someone who wants to move here and then develop everything we have? Then you can kiss farming goodbye in Skagit County.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. Jessie? Threats.

Ms. Anderson: So when I thought about threats, I definitely thought of development, pavement, buildings, things that are, you know, permanent or semi-permanent and they do detract from farming. And since the valley has, you know, such a limited amount of sacred farmland, development is really what I think of when I think of a major threat. And just in my own personal experience, I haven't seen farmstands and U-Pick operations – I'm looking at the list here – the tasting rooms, wedding venues, farm stays. I have not seen those putting down pavement or taking away farmland. I see them working in small areas, you know, *nearby* farms or maybe it is a small farm running an operation on their farm. But they're not paving, taking away farmland. It does seem like there is a great fear about, you know, what we could lose and the challenges for agriculture here, but I don't see a direct connection between many of the local agritourism operations and those – you know, the pavement and development.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Leo, threats?

Mr. Roozen: Well, I think that probably we've touched on most things but no doubt overdevelopment and conflicting businesses in the farmland community, businesses that conflict with farms in farmland are threats. Loss of agricultural diversity is a threat. Loss of farming operations and/or related ag-related businesses is a threat. But maybe the greatest threat could be a lack of the understanding by the greater part of our population the complexity of our agricultural infrastructure here in Skagit Valley. I mean, really what is that whole big infrastructure and how complex is it? What's all involved in – what is needed to ensure our continuity into the future? That's probably the biggest threat – the lack of the general population understanding that big picture. And I think maybe that will – I felt when I made these notes that that kind of plays into our next questions.

Mr. McMoran: It does. In fact, the next question is: What does agritourism mean to you and what are the types of agritourism you'd *want* to see in Skagit County?

Mr. Roozen: Well, I'm not going to try to reinvent the wheel on this one. I've kind of followed some of these discussions over time and I know there's numerous definitions of agritourism. One was up on the screen earlier, and I think just a little more technically, I'm just reading one that I think fits our thoughts. "Agritourism can be defined as a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism in order to attract visitors onto a ranch, a farm, or an agricultural business for the purpose of entertaining and educating the visitors, and generating income for the farm or business owner." I really do believe that the days of that – of *no* tourism of any type are gone, and so the key down the road is going to be for us to define, What is agritourism? What of all the definitions of agritourism are we talking about? And that was the definition that I thought worked best for our type of thinking. That'll play into, of course – is this a two-part question: What types of agritourism would you like to see?

Mr. McMoran: Yeah.

Mr. Roozen: Well, again I'm not going to try to come up with something unique again. We obviously – our farm and our businesses are members of Skagitonians to Protect Farmland. And I think they have a feeling – they have a position that any kind of agritourism must be tied to an ongoing farming operation and be evaluated by the following criteria: It must relate to and support the primary use of agriculture at the site. It does not interfere with the surrounding agricultural operations and practices. It will provide experiences that promote and enhance Skagit agriculture overall. It does not result in the conversion of agricultural land. Done properly – we talked about education earlier. How do you get to all these people? How do you get them to listen to you? Well, there are people coming *to us*. And to build the infrastructure of auditoriums or facilities or that type of thing to educate these people, we've got an infrastructure here. It's called Skagit Valley Agriculture. And we've got damn good professors and teachers. It's all the guys running these businesses. And so if there's a certain amount of agritourism done properly and obviously with limitations and fit the guidelines that are agreed upon down the road that that's what this whole process is about, we've got a very, very unique opportunity in this valley to – without advertising or trying to get – the public, they're coming to us and they're hungry for knowledge. And they're very impressed by what all of you people are doing, what we're doing in our professions every day, and the more they learn the more they are impressed. And I think, done properly, we are on the road to protecting our farmland and we're on the road to protecting agriculture and we're on the road to protecting our future for generations to come. But it will need to be done with – I guess the definition is, What is agritourism and what are we going to do? And I just personally I think most of the people in our companies agree with these basic bullet points that Skagitonians has said numerous times in the past years of this is what they're all about. And I know there's much, much more and there're people in this room that know way more about this than I do, because I'm just kind of trying to stay up with it all in what we're doing in our everyday businesses, but that's kind of our feelings, I think.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Jessie?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I guess to me agritourism means businesses located on farms, related to farms, or that are located nearby agricultural lands. And I really do believe that these businesses can exist in harmony with local farms and promote economic strength, growth, and education. And that's what I've seen with my own personal experience. The guests that attend our venue are hungry to learn about the valley. They want to walk the grounds. They want to see the land.

They're curious about what's being grown right around the farm, what we have in our field. They want to know about it. Some of them have never seen it firsthand and they leave, you know, getting to spread this to others. So that's what agritourism means to me, and I think if it's, you know, done right it can be a very positive thing.

Mr. McMoran: And any specific types of agritourism that you want to see in Skagit County?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I would say definitely the agritourism operations that, you know, can coexist well with the farms and promote the protection of farmland. The agritourism businesses that I mentioned before that are right in my own neighborhood all seem to be doing very well, you know, with the neighboring farms, or many of them are small farms themselves. And I personally have not seen conflict or negative impacts. It's been a positive coexistence.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Thanks, Jessie. Andrea?

Ms. Xaver: Yeah, I would agree with that. I think, you know, it has to have a positive influence and no negative impacts. And there again, we need more details. How many more of these are being planned and would that actually boil down to harming Skagit County? How many do we need?

Mr. McMoran: Annie?

Ms. Lohman: I think this is probably the toughest question on the page because I don't want to presume to tell somebody what they should be doing any more than I want somebody to tell me what I should be doing and what I should be growing or what color cow, whether it be a Holstein or Jersey, et cetera. So it's tough. I guess my – and I'm damn independent and I don't want to take that away from anybody else. And I'm not a person that enjoys working with the public so I *want* to be on the tractor or the combine. I don't want to be doing a farmstand or running a corn maize and that sort of thing, because that's not me. But it *is* other people. And I understand that and I accept that.

But I guess I would want it to be absolutely tied to the farm. It can't interfere with the neighbors. It can't prevent the greater area from doing their normal business. And I say that very carefully because sometimes we make a heck of a mess. I raise spinach. It is one of the dirtiest things to combine. You don't always get to pick your day. You have to kind of seize the opportunity sometimes, and the wind doesn't always blow your way. And you don't *want* to be a bad neighbor, and I've actually knocked on people's doors and asked them if they wanted to bring in their laundry because I know I'm going to dust it. And I can't help it. So it just has to be carefully thought out and located and – and I'm just kind of thinking back on what Leo said earlier about we're unique in our cooperation, and it extends to that, too. And I'm still struggling with it, but I guess limited with an absolute direct farm linkage.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Annie. And I did want to make mention that a lot of the words that Leo shared with you were created by Terry Sapp. Some of those regulations that he and the committee – the Land Use Committee with the Ag Advisory Board – put together. So Terry, I want to thank you for spending the time on that effort.

Mr. Sapp: You're welcome. And yes, I think some of Leo's words were borrowed from the Skagitians' position paper also. But in answer to the question, I'd start by saying I got very interested in this topic for reasons personal that – this is the personal hat now – that have been described here in part with my wife Jeannie by some of our efforts on our farm. I realized that the

topic was becoming central to discussions in this county by reading the newspaper and going to meetings, and wrote a nine-page letter to the County who was – the party who was leading the topic at that time in its initial stage, coining a phrase at the beginning of my paper which established myself as a proponent of agritourism, big A, little t. Big A, little t agritourism, I intended to mean and went on to try to explain, it's got to be agriculturally related. Agriculture first. Introduce tourism as it might fit those conditions in a general way.

Since that time, I've become increasingly involved not just through the Ag Board but my own personal interest in studying – and I mentioned it earlier – some of the very nitty gritty sometimes dirty details that have to do with how state law directs counties to use their zoning authority and powers to determine what can be done in certain places within a county. And I think, as the discussion evolves, we're going to see – and I think Lisa helped queue this up here – that it has to do with zoning. What zones do we do certain things in? That's the foundation of our land use mechanisms for development in our counties, and it is by nature of the state's *requirement* upon counties. And the state invokes some rules about how zoning can be used within those defined kinds. And in this case, mostly our talk would lead us to trying to evaluate what we do in the agricultural zone. So the big A, Agricultural zone, and what kind of tourism might fit in there. We cannot avoid that. It's going to be a zoning question. It has to be a zoning question. State law requires that it's a zoning question. And so when we start rewriting, when the rules and guidelines and definitions in law and County code begin to be written down on paper and the details are established, we're going to see that it is a question of how we create allowances in certain zones. There are lots of businesses and lots of things we can do that can be sited anywhere – all good things. The big question is going to be: Shall we do them, or which of them shall we do in the ag zone and what shall be reserved for other uses in the ag zone? Mainly the kinds that fit agriculture. So big A, little t. And indeed – I'm not going to go to it right now exactly what the Agricultural Advisory Board policy position was on that zoning question – what to do in the ag zone – but I'm sure we'll get to it. I certainly want to offer it.

Mr. McMoran: Sounds good. Lisa, do you have a question?

Ms. Grueter: Yeah, I just wanted to say we wanted to reserve a little time for audience questions, so I'd like to make a plug: If people do have a question to maybe write it on the back of the postcard. We'll pick it up at the end. While we're doing that, Don, I thought if you want to pick a couple of questions and kind of do a last round, then we can take some from the audience, if that works for you.

Mr. McMoran: That sounds fabulous. All right, so next question – I was kind of hoping we could wrap it all up because Terry really led into this well – is, What is the best way to ensure agritourism is related to the primary use of the land for agriculture? And with that, What are the opportunities and challenges of things like tasting rooms, restaurants, wedding events, and special events? So Terry, you already kind of led us in. Let's start with one of the ladies to lead into that.

Ms. Lohman: Well, the challenge is expectations. When you go to a restaurant, when you have a wedding, there's a bit of a heightened emotional situation, especially on a wedding. There's expectations that you're going to have a pristine, perfect day and a perfect view, but your neighbor might be doing their regular stuff and it's going to rain the next day and they don't have a choice. They're not doing it to wreck the day. They really aren't. They just don't get to pick. And that collision is what I fear or am cautious about, because I don't want to be a bad neighbor, I don't want to ruin someone's day. I got married. I've eaten at a restaurant that was pretty fancy. And so I don't want those ruined for them, but I also – I've got to pay my bills. I put everything in that crop. I need to be able to do my work.

Mr. McMoran: Good. Others?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I guess I would just elaborate on that. And I completely see where you're coming from. I do think it's important when families, businesses, organizations book a wedding at a farm venue they understand that it is a farm venue. And when I give tours of our venue, we talk about the planting, the harvest, what's going to be grown, and we're very transparent about the fact that my husband's family is farming that land actively and that may be taking place when we're hosting an event. My husband and I will also be farming acreage right around the venue ourselves and so, you know, it's a juggle but it's something that can be done with communication and understanding. And it has not presented an issue for our venue. Thus far we were able to work together with our neighbors and our clients to, you know, achieve our goals.

Mr. McMoran: Jenn, do you have some questions?

Jenn Rogers: We do.

Mr. McMoran: Go ahead.

Ms. Rogers: Okay, so the first question is: Farmers file a Schedule F, so if someone is a farmer by that definition and isn't taking any land out of agriculture, should they be told what else they can or cannot do on their farm to ensure their financial future and be able to maintain or sustain their farm?

Mr. Sapp: Sure, they should be told what to do. I know that's not popular. I know it's not the property rights position. But it's a position that needs to be stated. That's why we have zoning. Zoning determines its sites. It is written into law. It is the code in every county. Our county has code that says what can be done in a certain zone. And no, because somebody is a farmer and owns land, it doesn't mean automatically that they can do anything else they want.

Mr. McMoran: Any others want to comment on that question?

Mr. Roozen: I would agree with that, and there would be a process. Does that mean that an individual can't do anything else? I think it was well stated and then there is a process and I think these discussions are part of fine-tuning or developing or drilling down on that process because there seems to be a lot of gray area out there now. And so as this is done, there would be a process that an individual would go through to see if they would qualify to do the things they wanted to do on that land. If I understand how this is all supposed to go properly, so can we – that thing – it's a free country. I can do whatever I want. That is not so. Our country is the way it is because we have processes and rules and regulations and we follow those and we respect them and we honor them and if we need to change them we modify them. And so I think that the answer was probably good.

Mr. Sapp: And if I could just add a point. We're not at the starting point on this matter of policy. That happened 100 years ago. Get current. We have laws in place right now that deal with what we can do with our lands, not just in the ag zone – in the industrial zones. There're a series of rules about what can be done in the industrial zones. Or the residential zones, for that matter. You can't build any kind of house you want. Why can't I build whatever kind of house I want – 10 stories tall? Well, because there are rules about that and we didn't just make them up last year. It's 100 years old.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Terry. Next question, Jenn.

Ms. Rogers: Okay. Aren't commodity farming pressures and regulatory interference the real threats to agribusinesses' viability in Skagit County? And why aren't we talking more about how to create new customers and allies in our urban neighboring communities?

Mr. Roozen: Could you say that one more time?

Ms. Rogers: Aren't commodity farming pressures and regulatory interference the real threats to agribusiness viability in Skagit County? And why aren't we talking more about how to create new customers and allies in our urban neighboring communities?

Mr. Roozen: I think those are threats. The question that was asked, those are real threats. But if I understand correctly, that's not the purpose of what we're addressing here. There could be numerous – the way I understand it, there could be numerous town hall meetings and discussion groups and that type of thing about threats to agriculture in the Skagit Valley, but the purpose of what I understood what we're doing here and where we're trying to go with this particular topic is focused on agritourism. And so there could be a whole other one focused on any number of other threats. But my understanding is that we – if we start bouncing all over, we're never going to get anywhere. So I would suggest we stay with the topic of agritourism.

Mr. McMoran: Looks like we have agreement. I'm seeing some head nods. Next question.

Ms. Rogers: In philosophy it's called the wedge theory. The phenomenon has also been called "creep." Common usage: Give a person an inch and they will take a mile. How can policy be written so that people do not take a mile and keep expanding the agritourism activities? For example, more events, more days of events, more visitors, et cetera.

Mr. Sapp: Exactly! How could that be stated rhetorically more clearly? We're all driven, I think most of us. Anybody who has any entrepreneurial spirit is driven by the idea that we're going to do something *new or more or more productive* next year when we get some time to do it. And so the individual drive, I think, motivates us to run up against the rules all the time. And, darn it, those rules keep getting in the way and that's why we're here. We're trying to – this county has already established all of the rules about agritourism that you would wish to know. They're in the law. They're already in the books. This county has a law that says that temporary events have to be sited in such a way that they are on existing developed property of no more than one acre. Now I look out at my field and I can tell you how much is five acres and – that's 10 acres, I say to – that field out there, Jeannie, we're driving by is – that's about 10 acres. One acre is 208 feet square – on a side – 43,658 square feet, I believe.

Mr. McMoran: 43,560.

(laughter)

Mr. Sapp: Our professor from Washington State University! But it's 208 feet to the east and another 208 feet north.

Mr. McMoran: And for those that aren't aware, it's about the size of a football field without the end zones.

Unidentified Voice: Right.

Mr. Sapp: The existing law says it's not only *County* law, it's *state* law. Growth Management Act, 36.70A.177 says you get an acre when you Counties zone for non-farm accessory uses. You know, we could all be here trying to legislate policy and think what's good for our county or business or agritourism or farming. We aren't starting today. There's already law about this. Are we following the law? That's why we're here. We're not following the law.

Unidentified Voice: We're here to bend the law.

Mr. Sapp: So I admire the tremendous work that BERK Consulting has done and the County staff has done revolving as it is and we start again. We already have a law. I don't think it's acceptable to a lot of entrepreneurs who are out there doing things that aren't within an acre or don't satisfy another 15 of the rules. But that's what we're trying to figure out until we rewrite the rules.

Ms. Anderson: Well, it sounds like we do need to keep an open mind because things have changed, I mean, since the rules were created. I mean, my great-grandfather settled my parents' farm after the Civil War. It's a different time now, and it sounds like we're here to discuss how things are changing, and there will be changes made to the laws. We need to respect them but also keep an open mind because our needs are changing. It's a changing economic landscape and that's reality.

Mr. Sapp: Can we have a little dialogue? I totally agree with that, except that it's not like let's just make it up new. There's state law in place right now.

Ms. Anderson: Sure.

Mr. Sapp: Go talk to your legislator who wrote the Growth Management Act and ask them why they put one acre in there and if they'd like to change it please.

Ms. Anderson: Well, it sounds like Skagit County is working to, you know –

Mr. Sapp: They can only go as far as the state allows because a higher, greater law.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah. Absolutely.

Ms. Xaver: Well, and you need a certain amount of farmland too. If you have big farms, you've got to have enough for crop rotation and all the things that big farmers need. And if you start chipping away at some of these bigger farms, then they can't exist either. So you can't keep saying, Okay, we'll do an acre here and an acre there and an acre over there, and so on and so forth, and pretty soon you're impeding the work and the viability of the farmers that do contribute so much to this county.

Mr. Roozen: Well, to comment on what's been said – what Jessie said: I think there's – the way I see it, there's some gray area out there and there are people that have bent the rules and bent the laws, and what I understand this process is all about here is that we just maybe need to upgrade and maybe some updates need to be made or discussed because there's no better guaranty for failure than – that's what's – there's an evolution – whether we're talking about sustainability – what sustainability was called a hundred years ago and what it's called today is different. It's still very sustainable, and for agriculture in Skagit Valley to continue to be sustainable and for us to do what we want to do, that's the purpose of why we're here to have dialogue and have discussion and to say, Okay, where do we want to go and what are we trying to do and is there room for updates or improvements? And, you know, some people are – you can't satisfy all

the people all the time. But you have to – we have to continue. I mean, that's what life's about. When there's enough noise and there's enough – I don't want to say dissension, but there's enough disagreement on – and different factions start going like this, it's time to get together and say, Hey, we need to talk about this. And what do we want to do and how are we going to get where we want to get and still continue to have what we want to have?

And so you're right. I mean, until we do that, the law's the law, you know? That old story that until we – that's why we're here. That's how our country's built. If we don't like it we have to get involved in the process and try to make changes. And until that's done, the law's the law. The rules are the rules. But we are here for that and I don't think it's – this has been going on for a while and I think it's going to continue. I personally – for those that want a fast fix, I think there's going to be disappointment because it's real hard. And the more you get involved and start digging in, you know, the more stuff that comes up. And done improperly, we've all seen new rules and new regulations that are passed and then there's unintended consequences that we just didn't see. We didn't want that. We didn't expect that. So thus the discussion. And sometimes maybe debate and maybe even, you know, a little bit of emotion involved. But I've followed a lot of this stuff. I haven't been to a lot of these. I've never sat up here. But I do think it's good stuff and I encourage everybody here to – I know there's some very, very active people in this room that are saying to me right now: Why don't you just shut up because you're not here half the time.

(laughter)

Mr. Roozen: You're not here half the time and I am, and so why do you have anything to say? But, you know, that's the way the world works. I mean, there's a lot of people out there and it's not just the 10 or 15% that show up that can make all the rules. We have to be aware of all the people out there and all the factors and then we have to encourage input or you get unintended consequences and then you get big problems.

Mr. McMoran: Agreed. Go ahead, Annie.

Ms. Lohman: You touch on kind of a very uncomfortable question: How to deal with creep. Because in one area somebody's creep doesn't bother anybody. They don't – they're really good people and they're accepted in the neighborhood and it works for whatever reason even though we know it's creep, if you want to call it that. And I don't mean "creep" as in "creepy." But in another place not far from there it's a train wreck. And then you get the guy that is following the rules and he gets the book thrown at him and he can't hardly operate. He can't hardly get going. He can't do the project because it's too onerous. And yet another guy, because of creep or stealth – whatever you want to call it – is able to do exactly what this other guy wants to do legally permitted. Legally and permitted.

So I don't know how to address it. And I don't – and it's a challenge of being fair. The visual that comes to mind is when my daughter, who is very headstrong, was a little girl and I would say, Don't come any closer, and she would inch closer and I would say – and she would want to know, Is it still wrong? Is it still no? And I feel that way when you're talking about creep. And the challenge with it is it can become permanent and then you finally – regulation or authority comes to bear on it to make – and then the challenge is what do you do with it? It's established. And if you just codify it and make it allowed, is that good public policy? And that's the question and it's way above my pay grade. And that balance, I don't know how you deal with it.

But as I was listening to all the discussion and the question and trying to keep the question on the table, I want to make sure, though, that that arguably non-ag creep structure or whatever doesn't

inadvertently marginalize or subordinate the farm activity that's all surrounding it. And that's the danger of creep, when the venue gets bigger and bigger and bigger or the numbers get bigger and bigger. And let's be honest. We farmers are outnumbered. We are vastly outvoted. We are absolutely in the minority. And that's a reality. And so we're able to be here actually by the good will of the vast majority. And we can't hide from that bald-faced fact.

Mr. Sapp: I've got a good example of creep and it comes from another county so we don't have to point at each other or blame one another. It's King County. And Lisa knows this very well. In King County they had a great **interfuge** (sic) of creep, if you will, with wineries, breweries, and distilleries. So this became a big issue in King County and Sammamish Valley. It's basically near Woodinville, where wineries were set up and tasting rooms and things, and it was a hit for tourism. And then they grew outside of Woodinville and into the Sammamish Valley – the rural area which has special zoning by the County, of course – and became a conflict with agriculturalists. An effort was made in that county like we are making here to try to discern what should the rules be. A study was done in 2016, I believe it was begun, that led to further study. Fifty-four winery, brewery, or distillery institutions or enterprises were operating outside of city limits in the rural zone in King County. Fifty-four of them. Fifty of them, the study determined, were *illegal*. The County just wasn't paying attention. In they crept. They were small businesses in garages, in barns, in backyards. Fifty out of 54 did not meet the code. Now what's King County – pardon me again – King County going to do about this? Oh my God. So legislation was written, it was challenged, it went to the Growth Management Board, it came back, it went to the Superior Court, came back. The Growth Management Hearings Board invalidated the law – invalidated King County's rules for wineries, breweries, and distilleries – WBDs – and remote tasting rooms. Another part of the creep was that these garage enterprises set up and brought wine from eastern Washington. And then they became restaurants. Way out of bounds! So poor King County is in the midst now of having *no* ordinance about this because the Growth Management Board invalidated it. Invalidated it both for Growth Management and for State Environmental Protection reasons because they didn't meet what they were supposed to do in the ag lands to meet environmental requirements because they were enterprises that were running sewer and water and all this stuff. No one was watching. Now they've got a mess.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks for that example, Terry. We're down to our last two minutes so we can take one more question and then we'll close things out, because we did agree that we would close things out at 8 o'clock.

Ms. Rogers: Thank you, Don. What is the proper channel for noise complaints regarding alcohol-related gatherings other than informing the Skagit County Sheriff's Office? I'm happy to answer that on behalf of the County.

Mr. McMoran: Go ahead!

Ms. Rogers: We do have a code enforcement team, so that is something that you could call Planning and Development Services that's got some code enforcement. But if there's any other dialogue about noise that you might have? That's our last question.

Mr. McMoran: Anyone?

(silence)

Mr. McMoran: Maybe another question?

(laughter)

Ms. Rogers: That's the last of our questions.

Mr. McMoran: Okay, perfect.

Ms. Rogers: So maybe one more question from the prepared ones, if you'd like?

Mr. McMoran: We could take maybe one from the audience?

Unidentified Voice: (unintelligible)

Ms. Rogers: If you'd like to provide a comment or a question, can you come up to the mic just so anyone that's watching online can hear?

Same Unidentified Voice: Will I be loud enough right here?

Ms. Rogers: No, you will not.

Owen: It's very brief. Hi, my name is Owen _____. Thanks for taking my question. I'm glad to see all these good people in this room and hopefully we can come to some good solutions. I'm sure we will. These people are quite bright in here. I think it's pretty unique. I'm going off-topic here but I think it's pretty unique to get these people in this room here right now. And I think Leo said earlier, these farmers are very bright people so I'm sure we'll get good solutions if we all participate. The question would be: On the enforcement part, is there consideration on the County to eliminate the non-anonymous complaint system? I see a lot of code violations. We've talked about them. There's oodles of them. I can point them out everywhere. I have to write my name down in order to get the complaint to move forward or else it's not really looked at. And I don't want to be a bad neighbor, like Annie. I'd like everybody else to get along and stuff, but we do have rules. We've got a lot of rules on the books. So are we going to follow them? And if we're going to, we've got to police ourselves a little bit. That's kind of where I'm going with that. I think it's good to police ourselves. It keeps us honest. But, yeah, that's what I've got.

Mr. McMoran: Thank you, Owen. Jenn, do you care to follow up on that?

Ms. Rogers: It's something that I think we can certainly pass along to our County Commissioners, but I'm not sure I would feel comfortable giving an opinion on at this time.

Mr. McMoran: Awesome. And I think that's a good plug. We do have two County Commissioners with us tonight, Commissioner Browning and Commissioner Wesen. So as you have, you know, issues that you want to discuss with the County Commissioners, they'll be happy to schedule a meeting with you at a later time and date. I'm sure our panelists will be able to stick around for a few minutes. We are past the 8 o'clock hour so I'd like to adjourn at this time. I'd like to thank all of our panelists. Thank all of you that were able to join us tonight. I think we had some fabulous discussions and will give something for those in Planning to think about as they move forward in this endeavor. So thank you all for coming and have a great night.

(applause)



Skagit County Agritourism Event Summaries

Introduction

The purpose of the public engagement events and survey was to gather how residents and agricultural producers felt about agritourism in Skagit County and how best to allow for agritourism while protecting agricultural land and compatibility with rural character.

Four meeting events were held including:

- Agriculture Leadership Lunch and Agritourism Outreach Event, November 2, 2022
- Sedro Woolley Senior Center, November 10, 2022
- Maple Hall in La Conner, November 16, 2022
- Summit in Mount Vernon, December 6, 2022

This document summarizes what was heard at the meeting. Presentations, handouts, and flip chart notes taken during the engagement meeting are provided in the Attachment. For more information regarding this process please see the project website at:

www.skagitcounty.net/departments/planningandpermit/agtourismmain.htm.

Agriculture Leadership Lunch and Agritourism Outreach Event | November 2, 2022

Monthly the Agriculture Leadership Lunch is held by WSU Extension and producers at The Farmhouse Restaurant by Shawn O'Donnell's west of Mount Vernon on SR 20. On November 2, 2022 the agenda included a discussion session on agritourism. About a dozen persons attended.

The discussion focused on how to make agritourism educational for those who are visiting Skagit County. Several members involved in agricultural leadership recognize a farmer can make a lot of money through agritourism, but there needs to be a way for the primary use of this protected agricultural land to stay with farming.

The discussion included how to regulate farming and agritourism. There were suggestions on how to make sure people learn about farming while they visit Skagit County, with some expressing interest in an agricultural education foundation to help visitors learn about farming. When discussing certain types of agritourism the participants thought activities like farm stands are not an issue to begin with, but that these things may grow into larger agritourism spaces.

Some did not see weddings as agritourism, but as more of a cultural or spiritual event. There were suggestions on how and when these events could happen to ensure they do not disrupt the primary use of farming.

Meeting at Sedro Woolley Senior Center | November 10, 2022

The format of the meeting was a round table discussion with some guided questions but more for the 11 participants to share their thoughts on certain topics for agritourism, such as what is defined as agritourism, and what priorities we should take into consideration when drafting policies. Notes taken during the discussion and a copy of the boards displayed at the meeting are attached.

The themes from this engagement event focused on county enforcement, and how there can be rules for community members participating in the agritourism industry to follow. The enforcement was for those already participating and those looking to do so in the future, as well as what should be considered agritourism.



Many attendees thought it was the county's responsibility to enforce and monitor with clear rules and codes for how farmers can utilize the agritourism industry in the county. Participants at the engagement event also wanted it easy for residents to report those not following the county's rules. Since there is a lack of clarity with these regulations the participants understand how it is difficult for the County to regulate, but they believe a better permitting process will lead to better regulation and a paper trail. Through better regulation participants hope there will be better safety measures put in place and make it, so the farmers do not take matters into their own hands, such as disrupting an event purposely.

Through the permitting discussion, people brought up their thoughts on agritourism, and the majority saw it as an accessory to the primary activity/revenue which is farming. There was not an issue with farm stands or u-picks since this relates to farming. What participants see as the primary goal of agritourism is teaching people about what farming is. Farm-to-table restaurants, food trucks, and weddings do not

have a clear place as part of Skagit County agritourism (since less related to farming or education). Some felt that there should be less regulation and property owners should have freedom while others thought that proper regulations of land uses was necessary to protect neighbors and farmland. Some people brought up special use permits for events like these but wanted clear rules for what is allowed. Concerns over current use taxation on agricultural land and not being taxed on commercial activities were raised; farmers make more money through agritourism than with farming.

Meeting at Maple Hall in La Conner | November 16, 2022

The meeting at Maple Hall included time before a meeting to review boards, a presentation, and a question and answer session. The presentation addressed the goal of the Agritourism exploration and analysis effort, current conditions about agritourism, the different scales and level of activities of different activities, and questions for the 25 to 30 participants attending. The audience was able to share their thoughts and concerns with the County staff and the BERK consulting team. See notes taken during the discussion and a copy of the presentation in the attachment.



Several participants were in support of allowing a wider range of agritourism. Attendees showed support for events such as large festivals and farm-to-table restaurants on site or near where the foods are grown. Some felt that Skagit Valley is changing, and there needs to be flexibility for how agritourism can fit into future growth; look to how other regions in the country maintained rural character in areas with increased population growth. Some felt the State Growth Management Act and the history of Skagit County farming should also be considered for the parameters of what is allowed.

The discussion also included agricultural viability; a priority is to make sure the farmer is able to continue to farm for future generations. People did not want small farmers to be left out; with smaller farmers, the owners already work additional jobs to keep the property up and running. Property owners can have additional sources of revenue off their land than traditional farming. Yet, there needs to be a line drawn

with what is allowed, because, for example, a farm-to-table restaurant could eventually lead to a chain restaurant opening on agricultural lands near a highway.

Summit in Mount Vernon | December 6, 2022

Skagit County hosted an agritourism panel to share viewpoints from long-standing and newer producers. Some of the panelists participate in agritourism, and some do not but they all see the effect of agritourism on their business, community, and the agricultural economy. The event had standing room only, with over 50 people attending in person and others online as well.



The panel was facilitated by Don McMoran, Director of Washington State University – Skagit County Extension. The panelists included:

1. Leo Roosen, who was representing RoozenGaarde as well as Washington Bulb Company, both contributing to tulip farming and events in the valley.
2. Jessie Anderson, owns Maplehurst Farm in Mount Vernon which is a six-acre farm that hosts special events.
3. Andrea Xavier is a lifelong farmer in the county and is a producer in Big Lake.
4. Annie Lohman who was previously the chair of the Skagit County Planning Commission and a member of the Skagit Agriculture Advisory Board. She owns Lohman Farms in Bow with her husband and primarily farm seed crops.

5. Terry Sapp who has been a member of the Skagit Agricultural Advisory Board since 2015. Terry also owns Hoehn Bend Farm and Fender Farm with his family where they primarily raise cattle.

The panelists were led through a discussion with prepared questions; see the attached recording link and transcript. At the end of the facilitated discussion, panelists took questions from the audience.

One of the opening questions that made panelists excited was what made Skagit County special. All of the panelists regardless of their stance on agritourism saw the beauty and the importance of the county is a place for agriculture in the State of Washington and beyond. When asked how to show visitors these special things, many of the panelists saw the importance of agriculture education. Agritourism is a gateway to showcase what the “1% of agriculture producers” are doing. Safety was another key point here. Making sure agritourism showcases what work happens in the county without creating additional threats to agriculture was discussed.

Many of the panelists saw that agritourism is not going away, but that there needed to be regulation on it to ensure it does not overtake agricultural land, such as seeing agritourism as secondary to the primary farming activity, but not limiting small producers from earning income off their land through agritourism.

When given the opportunity to ask questions, audience members asked about avoiding overregulation, supporting the local economy, and also allowing agritourism while minimizing adverse effects. Ensure that farmers do not get penalized for farming. Ensure that there would be a process in the future where Skagit County can have more control over these activities and protect farming.

Appendix

1. Presentation Posters



Public Meetings on Agritourism

Meeting 1

When: Thursday, November 10th, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Where: The Sedro-Woolley Senior Center

Meeting 2

When: Wednesday, November 16th, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Where: La Conner Maple Hall

Meeting 3

When: Tuesday, December 6th, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Where: Agritourism Town Hall in Skagit County
Commissioner's Hearing Room

Take the Survey!

www.skagitcounty.net/SkagitAGT

The Goal

Skagit County is reviewing what agritourism means to the County's agricultural community, rural residents, and other stakeholders. Skagit County will explore and analyze agritourism activities in Skagit County to develop a report on the economics of agritourism, a current assessment of County policies, and relevant case studies. The study addresses the current situation with farm stands and value added activities, agricultural recreation, and options for other types of agritourism, such as potentially allowing food service on farms, wedding venues, temporary event spaces, etc.

The Assessment

The situation assessment documents current agricultural trends and conditions in Skagit County. The study evaluated current practices for agritourism activities and contrasted them with case studies from other jurisdictions. The study also shares the results of discussion groups and an online survey to develop a common understanding of agritourism and the public interest in the direction of the study overall. The Situation Assessment Report was released in September 2021 and was shared with local stakeholders, such as producers, businesses, and local residents.

Key Questions

- › What kinds of agritourism should the County allow?
- › Where is the best place?
- › How can agritourism support farming as a primary use and avoid negative effects on neighboring properties?
- › What is the best way to maintain commercial agriculture and rural character while allowing for agritourism?
- › What is the best way for the County to enforce its rules and keep the permit process transparent and fair?

The Options

After the situation assessment report was released, staff evaluated public response and developed three policy options the County could pursue for agritourism activities. These three options were released in a report in March 2022, with details on which activities would be allowed under each option and the benefits and drawbacks of each policy proposal. Staff hosted multiple public workshops to hear feedback from the public on the three options and released a second survey for additional comments. The public engagement and survey responses were compiled into a report, which was published in June 2022.

The County developed a second online survey and virtual workshops to hear ideas and concerns. To share the study and questions more widely the County shared a postcard and a more streamlined survey in fall 2022 and is holding in person discussion sessions (see left). Please share your voices.

Skagit County Process



Next Steps

Based on feedback from research and policy proposals from County staff, a legislative proposal to potentially amend County policies, zoning, or development regulations will be developed for consideration by the Skagit County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners with opportunities for public workshops and hearings.

What is Agritourism?

Agritourism is generally considered "a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owner." (UC Davis)

› Western Washington Examples



Farmstand



U-pick



Farm Stay



Wedding (Temporary)



Wedding (Year Round)



Tasting Room



Combo U-Pick, Corn Maze, Restaurant, and Distillery

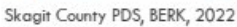
Typical Annual Visits Per Year

Farm Stands	500
U-Pick	2,000
Farm Tours	2,080
Farm Stays	520
Tasting Rooms	11,304
Wedding - Temporary	6,000
Wedding - Permanent	13,000
Farm to Table	2,600
Festivals	20,000

BERK, 2022

SKAGIT COUNTY AGRITOURISM ■ 2022



**SKAGIT COUNTY AGRITOURISM ■ 2022**

2. Survey Post Cards





Skagit County Administration
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273



Use the QR code or visit our website to view the policy options report and take the survey!

Skagit County has published a report with options for new policies regarding agritourism. Please take our survey to provide your input on how the County moves forward!

County staff will also be hosting public meetings this fall to hear from you on agritourism. Check out our website for more details:
skagitcounty.net/agritourism

3. Meeting One Agenda



Skagit County Agritourism

Agriculture Leadership Lunch and Agritourism Outreach Event | November 2, 2022

Agenda

Time	Topic	Lead
11:30-11:35	Introductions	Hal
11:35-11:40	Proposed Timeline/Process for Agritourism	Sarah
11:40-12:00	Presentation on Agritourism Concepts	Lisa
12-12:30	Comments/Questions	All



4. Meeting One Flow Chart Notes

Ag. Leader Lunch Outreach Meeting 11/2/22

Notes from Meeting

What is Agritourism?

- Is u-pick tourism?
 - Farmers generally don't have a problem with this
- Why is it viewed as tourism?
- Is it a cultural activity?
 - Weddings might be a cultural activity although not an activity that is tied to farming
- Why are certain activities tourism and not others – for instance hunting?
- Does the County define it or do we let someone else define it?
- Can agriculture benefit?

What is an accessory use?

- When or how can you determine when an activity goes from being subordinate to the main use of a property?
 - An example was given for Snow Goose produce – it sells fish, ice cream and baskets and small items that have nothing to do with farming, even though the intent originally (I think?) was as a produce stand.
 - Does the activity detract from farming (Don McMoran for example asked adjacent farmers not to work during his wedding because of dust) or traffic that gets in the way (could there be limits on agritourism for certain seasons that are more intensive for equipment and farming?)
- Is there a difference between direct retail vs Agritourism? Do our regulation and code need to reflect that difference? Could this line be drawn or is it too fuzzy?
- Sakuma farms gets complaints about traffic when there pickers go out – so be careful when you look at impacts.
- What causes harm over time? Brandon Roozenguarde gave an example that creating duck clubs over time is an impact. This causes productive land to be taken out of service over time.
- Does the tourism activity negatively impact agriculture?
- Timeframe (are there better times of the year?)
 - An example was given as a rotational schedule (potato farmers)
- What is agriculture and what is tourism?
- Actual impacts vs. perceived impacts?
 - Do we have data to help connect the dots (take traffic counts around agritourism activities? Do a parking inventory of different Agritourism venues?)
 - Are there indicators of impacts?
- Is a wedding considered a spiritual/cultural event?
 - Hunting could have a greater impact on ag. land than a wedding.
- When people from out of town come to Skagit County they get a connection to Agriculture. This helps them understand it and (hopefully) advocate for it when they go home. (Mark K. PC)
- Don Moran – when a Wedding venue can get \$3K for an event, how can Ag. compete with that?
- Mark K. – doesn't think a wedding venue is something that is connected to Agriculture

Lisa Grueter posed the question to the group: What is quintessential agritourism?

- Someone answered festival of farms (this event is about education- not necessarily about farming)

Allen R – Wish we could create an Agriculture Education Foundation – to help put people on farms and learn about farming. He gave an example of a farm stay that he hosted where his guests learned all about farming. He contrasted that example with his neighbors that hosted loud parties that had spill over effects of people parking and trespassing on other farms.

- Educational activities that will preserve the connection and education to agriculture and learn about farming.
- Degree of impact and cumulative effects are a concern
- Enforcement- how many VBROS are on Ag. land? Also Hip Camp.

Definitions

- Festivals?
- Bird watchers (this is an organization directing people their property and they have to deal with constant trespassing.)

5. Meeting Two Agenda



Skagit County Agritourism

Sedro Woolley Senior Center Agritourism Meeting | November 10, 2022

Agenda

Time	Topic	Lead
10:30-10:35	Introductions	Hal
10:35-10:40	Proposed Timeline/Process for Agritourism	Sarah
10:40-11:00	Presentation on Agritourism Concepts	Lisa
11-11:30	Comments/Questions	All



6. Meeting Two Flow Chart Notes

Sedro Woolley Senior Center Outreach Meeting 11/10/22

Concerns

- Comprehensive Plan amendment for expansion, no enforcement for codes/policy changed.
- Unhappy with survey – believes it has a certain outcome . Needs to clearly say what Ag. tourism is. Define what this is.
- Comment that Agritourism has had a negative impact in other Counties.
- Farms too many going into this business and the County cannot support it.
- County need to enforce this; clear rules so that everyone can follow.
- Consistent
- Public information on how to report people not following code/policies
- County police unable to enforce or intervene
- People are having unpermitted events, they started small and have grown.
- Can we measure the impact on neighbors?
- Can we measure the impact on neighbors?
- Safety – management of large events
- Annual permits? Other Counties have done this; allows for a paper trail, yes other counties have done this.
- Farmers should be able to do their business
- Events should not stop people
- Farmers purposely do things to disrupt events
- Farm Country

Questions

- County data on people hosting events? Are they accessory to the farm or are people making money off this only?
- Does leasing out the property matter?
- Can we get this info?
- Permits- property rights/floodplains elevation is subdivided away from Ag. lands
- Trespassing is seen as tourism? Lot sizes and reasonable use permit?

What Ag. Tourism Fits?

- Farm Stands and U-pick are a fit and benefit the economy.
- On-site experience for people to understand a working farm
- Keep it an accessory use – primary revenue from farming
- Do utilities matter? Certain road size, water, etc.
 - Monitor size, certain amount of farm activity onsite (Spokane given as the example)
 - Wedding onsite but keep it a farm
- Team an ask on Farmers feedback
- Code change for parties
- Lawsuit against the County, but does not represent every farmer but challenges to the code
- Growth management for review and allowed to continue
- Lack of enforcement
- Environmental issues also impact party venue
- Spray issue – this is covered by the right to farm ordinance

- Disrupt potato harvesting/Ag.
- Time and money spent on these processes
- Permits should show farming comes first
- Wedding events should not be part of agritourism
- More showing what people are applying for
- Allow special events, not specific uses
- County staff to figure this out
- Need clearer rules on what is allowed – better defined
- Food Trucks? Does this count?
- A restaurant is not part of the farm
- Wedding Venues – there are so many, can we cap this? Are they allowed? Are the existing ones grandfathered in? Can we limit the areas that they are permitted?
- Have we got any feedback from the operators?
- Need a balance: limiting farmers money from their land
- Parking? (can be fixed?)
- Taxes are paid on farm activity, not commercial/market rate
- Would not allow strip mall development, why allow all of this business?
- Define limits
- Where do we go with Ag in the County?
 - Farmers make more money not farming.

7. Meeting Three Agenda



Skagit County Agritourism

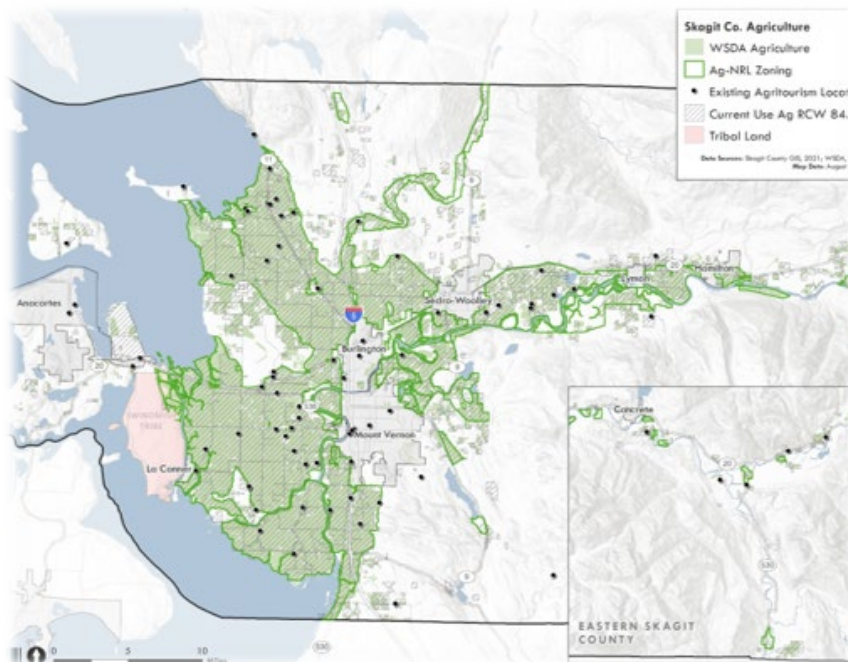
La Conner Maple Hall Agritourism Meeting | November 16, 2022

Agenda

Time	Topic	Lead
6:30-6:35	Introductions	Hal
6:35-6:40	Proposed Timeline/Process for Agritourism	Sarah
6:40-7:00	Presentation on Agritourism Concepts	Lisa
7-7:30	Comments/Questions	All



8. Meeting Three Presentation Slides



Current Agritourism

Common agritourism activities in Skagit County:

- Events, roadside stands, u-pick, accommodations, wine tasting
- Around 70+ operations
- Requests for: food service, weddings, temporary events

A common definition

Agritourism is generally considered “a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owner.” (UC Davis)



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Farmstand



U-pick



Farm Stay



Wedding
(Temporary)



Wedding
(Year Round)



Tasting Room



Combo U-Pick, Corn
Maze, Restaurant,
and Distillery



Scale & Intensity

Based on intensity consider appropriate location, scale, frequency, conditions, etc.

Understand Scale, Intensity, and Relationship to Agriculture and appropriate standards

Typical Annual Visits Per Year

Farm Stands	500
U-Pick	2,000
Farm Tours	2,080
Farm Stays	520
Tasting Rooms	11,304
Wedding - Temporary	6,000
Wedding - Permanent	13,000
Farm to Table	2,600
Festivals	20,000

Based on business models and available studies/data, or code parameters.

Consider relationship to AG, temporary or permanent nature, footprint, location, services, etc.



Situation Assessment & Engagement



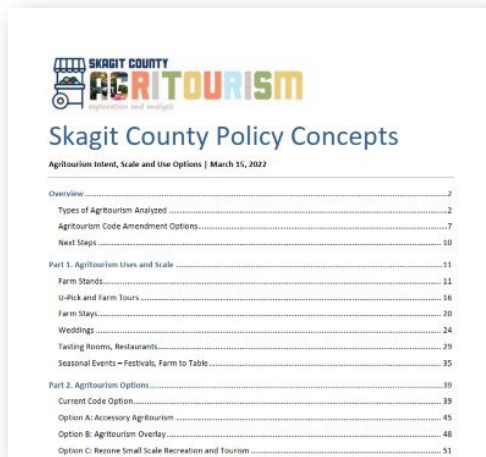
- ✓ Agritourism Definitions and National Trends
- ✓ Skagit County Agritourism and Economics
- ✓ Case Studies and Example Policies
- ✓ Engagement

Project Website & Materials
Interviews
Survey and discussion groups
Agriculture Advisory Board Meetings
Planning Commission Meetings
BOCC Meetings



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Policy Concepts & Engagement



Postcard to
17,000 Addresses



Survey Online



Meetings Around
County

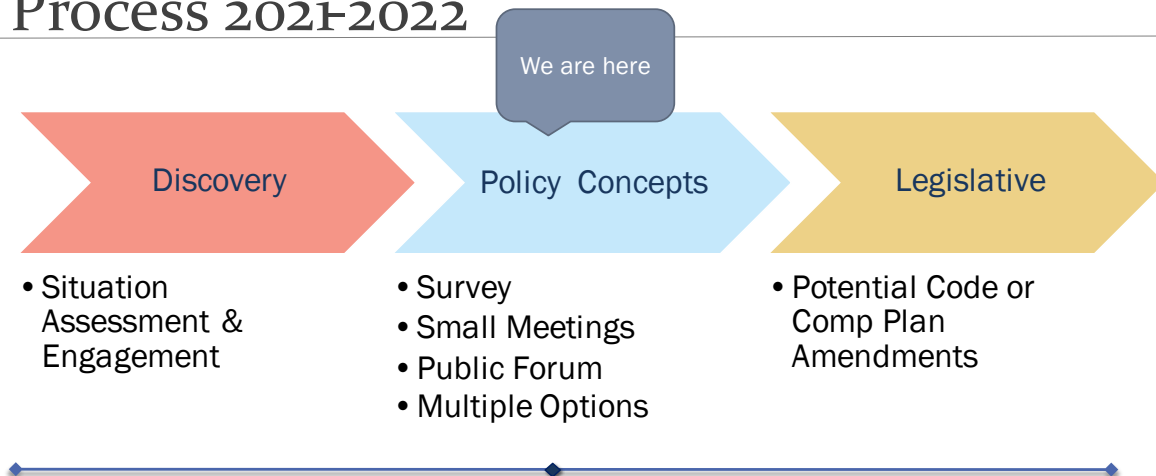


Agritourism Town
Hall

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Questions for Discussion

What kinds of agritourism should the County allow?

Where is the best place?

How can agritourism support farming as a primary use and avoid negative effects on neighboring properties?

What is the best way to maintain commercial agriculture and rural character while allowing for agritourism?

What is the best way for the County to enforce its rules and keep the permit process transparent and fair?



9. Meeting Three Flow Chart Notes

Notes from Maple Hall 11/16/22 Agritourism Public Outreach Meeting

- A discussion of the timeline for adoption. Goes to PC first and then County Council; Estimate is mid-2023 to late 2023 depending if it is just code changes or needs policy changes as well and also depends on how much iteration back and forth with Planning Commission and BoCC is needed.
- What kinds of Agritourism should be allowed?
 - Member of audience described how 20 years ago people pushed back on large festivals with big name music. He thought this would be a good way to pay for needed infrastructure upgrades and help Skagit gain economically.
 - He thought this was a creative way to make tourists love it here but still go home.
 - He thinks we need to think about return on investment for agritourism
 - A few large festivals a year (special events)
- Farm to table restaurant – source from local farms and it can be a showcase for what is grown here.
- A question was asked, “Would the County get into the business of organizing and promoting events?” The response was that no this is just a discussion of land use policy around agritourism
- There was a comment that farm stands allow owners to make money off of their land. An example was given that the resident has an 18 acre farm but does not make money off of it. They have other jobs besides the farm. This shows the importance of having a farm stand for value added.
- A comment was made that they do not want restrictions on land owners.
- Size limitation impacts smaller farmers for needed added value with other activities.
- A comment was made that wedding events do not increase traffic. No new structures.
- There was a comment that people should be able to do what they want with their land.
- There was a comment that we need to draw a line somewhere; do not want a Denny’s but a greenhouse is impervious surface and infrastructure and that is seen as okay but not a farm stand.
- A comment about moveable structures; prevents farm stands to allow to be farms and not make a parking lot.
- There is a comment that regulations need to be open enough to allow for the fact that agritourism is evolving and we don’t know what ways it will work and needs to be flexible for future growth.
- There was a question from the audience of how many of the listed agritourism sites on the map, how many of those are permitted. The response was that when the inventory was done they did not check whether the establishment was or was not permitted so it is unknown.

- Comment: guidelines have to be set because once the gates are open, they are hard to close.
- The Valley is under pressure (for growth) after GMA and it should be compared on a national scale to see how other communities (like California or other areas) have handled agritourism with increased population and growth.
- A comment was made that we need more input from all.
- Farmers first, keep it around for future generations.
- There was a comment asking how do we make sure that these regulation help small farmers, small family farms?
- What can we do with agritourism to maintain rural character?
- Survey – a comment was made that while he agreed that the activity should be subordinate or accessory to the use of agriculture there needs to be exceptions for very small lots that do not allow for farm producing income; these lots should be allowed to have agritourism as well.
- The farm first, in ag. zone value added in Ag. would be a good use.
- Planning and permitting is already a process;
- Comment about a support structure for farming and value added farming from a model at the Maryland airport. There are different levels of development; look at land use and economics
- How can we operate in a positive way and invite agritourism to work with generational farmers
- A question was asked of whether the County has a definition of rural character. The response was that it does, it is a long definition that includes open space and other descriptive aspects.

10. Panel Discussion Facilitator Guide



Agritourism Town Hall

December 6, 2022 | 6-8 PM | Board of County Commissioners Hearing Room

Meeting Objectives

- Share diverse perspectives on agriculture and agritourism in Skagit County

Agenda

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 6:00-6:10 pm | Welcome – Hal Hart, Director, Planning & Development Services, Skagit County |
| 6:10-6:20 pm | Overview of Agritourism Effort – Sarah Ruether, Long Range Planning Manager, and Lisa Grueter, BERK |
| 6:20-7:20 pm | Panel Discussion – Facilitator Don McMoran, Director WSU Extension <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jessie Anderson – Maplehurst Farm2. Terry Sapp - On Ag Board3. Leo Roosen - Tulip Festival4. Annie Loman - Formerly a Planning Commission member & farmer5. Andrea Xavier – Farmer |

Panelist Questions

- Introductions
 - What's your name and who are you representing tonight?
 - How long have you been working in agriculture in Skagit County?
 - What is your relationship to agritourism?
- What makes Skagit County a special place for agriculture? What do you believe the county is known for?
 - How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things to visitors and residents?
 - What might be a threat to what makes the county a special place for agriculture?
- What does agritourism mean to you? What types of agritourism would you like to see in Skagit County?

- What is the best way to ensure agritourism is related to the primary use of the land for agriculture?
 - What are the opportunities and challenges of:
 - 1. Tasting rooms/restaurants? 2. Wedding venues? 3. Special events?
- Do size requirements come into effect when creating these regulations? Or dollars made by agritourism should be secondary to the farmers?
 - Is there space to allow small farms to host agritourism activity to make them more viable?
- How do you feel about the current Skagit County approval process and code enforcement?

7:20-7:50 pm Audience Q and A

7:50-8:00 Summary and Next Steps

Agritourism definitions vary and involve five types of activities – education, entertainment, direct sales, outdoor activity, and hospitality – which differ in depth of connection to the primary agricultural activity at that site.

11. Panel Discussion Presentation Slides

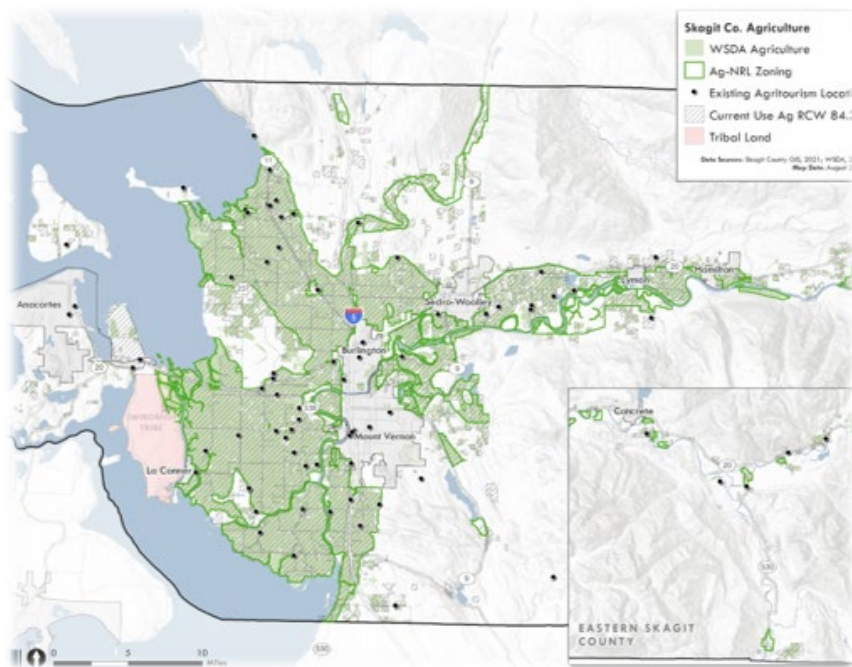


Topics

Background – Agritourism in Skagit County

Panel Discussion





Current Agritourism

Common agritourism activities in Skagit County:

- Events, roadside stands, u-pick, accommodations, wine tasting
- Around 70+ operations
- Requests for: food service, weddings, temporary events

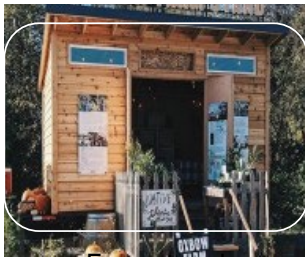
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A common definition

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Farmstand



U-pick



Farm Stay



Wedding
(Temporary)



Wedding
(Year Round)



Tasting Room



Combo U-Pick, Corn
Maze, Restaurant,
and Distillery



Scale & Intensity

Based on intensity
consider appropriate
location, scale,
frequency, conditions,
etc.

Understand Scale, Intensity,
and Relationship to Agriculture
and appropriate standards

Typical Annual Visits Per Year

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Farm to Table	2,600
Festivals	20,000

Based on business
models and
available
studies/data, or
code parameters.

Consider
relationship to AG,
temporary or
permanent nature,
footprint, location,
services, etc.



Situation Assessment & Engagement



- ✓ Agritourism Definitions and National Trends
- ✓ Skagit County Agritourism and Economics
- ✓ Case Studies and Example Policies
- ✓ Engagement

Project Website & Materials

Interviews

Survey and discussion groups

Agriculture Advisory Board Meetings

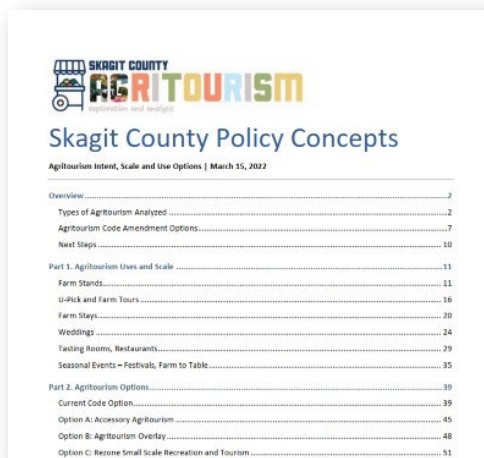
Planning Commission Meetings

BOCC Meetings



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Policy Concepts & Engagement



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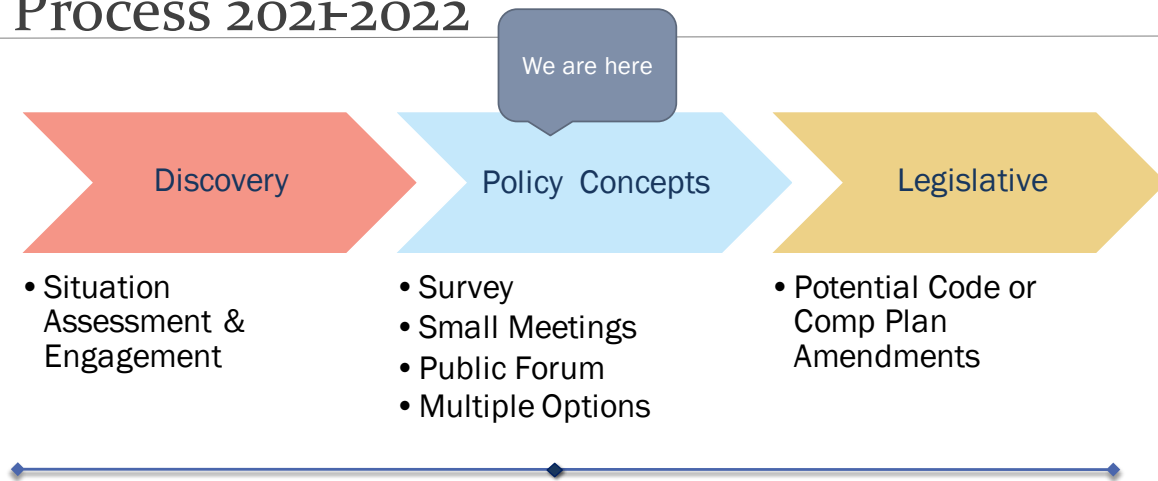


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Hall

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Panel Discussion

Facilitator Don McMoran, Director WSU Extension

Example Discussion Topics:

- ❖ Panelist Introductions
- ❖ Skagit County – Uniqueness for Agricultural Production
- ❖ Agritourism Activities
 - ❖ What is agritourism?
 - ❖ Which ones are a fit for the county?
 - ❖ What are some opportunities or concerns?
 - ❖ Which ones support agriculture, culture, or local economy?
- ❖ Improvement to Regulations and Enforcement

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



12. Panel Discussion Transcripts

Skagit County Planning and Development Services Agritourism Town Hall December 6, 2022

Planning Staff: Sarah Ruether, Long Range Planning Manager
Jenn Rogers, Long Range Planner

Consultants: Lisa Grueter, BERK Consulting
Adam Greer, BERK Consulting

Facilitator: Don McMoran, Director, WSU Skagit County Extension

Panelists: Jessie Anderson, Maplehurst Farm
Terry Sapp, Skagit Agricultural Advisory Board
Leo Roozen, RoozenGaarde
Annie Lohman, Lohman Farms
Andrea Xaver, Producer, Big Lake

Questioner
From Audience: Owen _____

Sarah Ruether: Good evening, everyone. Thank you for coming tonight. I'm Sarah Ruether. I'm a long range planning manager. And welcome to Skagit County's Town Hall event to discuss agritourism. First I want to thank our panelists and Don McMoran for volunteering to be a part of this effort. Don has been willing to answer any question that I've had, being new to Skagit County, so I'm very grateful for that, and I'm really grateful to him for being our moderator. I also want to thank all the panelists who volunteered their time to be here and their willingness to share their experiences so that we can all learn and understand each other better with this issue.

Skagit County has a long history of being proactive envisioning its future, especially with the preservation of agriculture. In 1965, Skagit County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan and in 1979 Skagit County increased the minimum lot size to 40 acres for agricultural properties. This planning and foresight is what allowed the rural character of Skagit County and the preservation of ag land that we enjoy today, and without this planning and this intent to preserve ag lands, Skagit County would look much different today.

So Skagit County with this event continues to plan for the protection of agriculture and its rural character. It has established the Farmland Legacy Program in 1996, which buys conservation easements and permanently protects agricultural land. The Farmland Legacy Program has resulted in 14,212 acres of protected ag land to date.

So this work is to continue giving agricultural planning and continue visioning. And the work of all these groups and the participation of citizens like you in creating boards and programs have contributed to the beauty of Skagit County. And the work we're doing tonight continues these efforts to intentionally grow Skagit in a purposeful way that accomplishes a community vision. And having these conversations and understanding different perspectives makes it a richer process and gives better solutions to problems. And it's the work of volunteers and citizens who participate

that helps contribute to creative and better solutions. So I want to thank you for coming and participating.

And I want to say with that, thank you for being here tonight. And we have postcards in the back, if you haven't taken the survey yet and you would like to, and we will also have cards to give questions that we'll pick up later. So if you have questions we'll have a Q and A session at the very end. And I would like to thank Jenn Rogers, our long range planner. She helps me with all those really important details to make this happen so I'm really grateful for her help. And I would also like to thank Lisa and Adam from BERK Consulting. Their technical advice and help has also been really great. And with that, I will introduce Lisa, who's going to give you a background in some of the work that's been done.

Lisa Grueter: Thank you, Sarah, and good evening. I have just about 10 slides that gives you a lot of the information that's in the handout on the back table. And so I'll just remind you of the overall agenda. There's a detailed agenda on the back table, but in general I'm just going to give you some quick background. Don's going to lead a panel discussion, and as Sarah mentioned, there's a Q and A. This is what the back side of the postcard looks like. There's a white space you can put a question and Sarah and Adam will pick up these cards along the way. If you're on Zoom, there's a Chat function and Jenn will be watching for the Chat and you'll be able to submit a question at that point.

So this is a map that shows the Ag-Natural Resource Land zone, Ag-NRL zone, in the green, and the little black dots are what we inventoried as agritourism type activities in Skagit County. We had about 70 of them identified in the Situation Assessment that's on the project website that is at the bottom of the comment sheet. You can go to that weblink.

A definition: The County doesn't have a specific definition of "agritourism" but generally it's considered a commercial enterprise at a farm that's conducted for enjoyment of visitors and for income for the owner. It may also involve education and boosting agriculture as well. The types of agritourism we've been reviewing in the Situation Assessment and the policy work over the last couple of years is represented by this range of activities here, from a direct sale farmstand, U-Pick, farm stay, which is a temporary type of accommodation. The County does allow for bed and breakfasts already. There's weddings that may occur on a temporary basis in some counties or some counties may allow for that year around. And then tasting rooms for grapes or hops. And then there's other examples in the region of a combination of these different activities. As we've been looking at these different activities, we've been looking at the footprint of them to look at what scale or intensity they are on the landscape, but also the level of visitors that may be generated to look at what's a fit for agriculture in Skagit County. And this is all in that policy paper, but looking at both the activity and the footprint has been part of this work, and so some activities have less annual visits than others.

So the policy paper is on the project website. The weblink is down at the bottom there, skagitcounty.net/skagitagt. As Sarah mentioned, we've been in the middle of some additional engagement this fall. There were postcards. The ones you have on the back table were sent to about 17,000 addresses. A survey has been online and we have over 600 responses at this time. As was mentioned, the survey's going to close soon – at the end of this week, I believe. That was put out in the press release. So if you haven't taken it, this week would be a great time. We've had – this is the fourth meeting that we've held around the county, and this town hall kind of caps off some meetings we've had in Sedro-Woolley, La Conner, and elsewhere.

So the process has been one of educating the County and comparing to other counties and looking at different agritourism activities here and across the state and in other states, and conducting some engagement. That was in 2021. In 2022 we've been doing additional engagement and put out different ideas, but trying to get more input so that we can come up with the best options that are a fit for Skagit County. And after this effort, we'll take stock of what we're hearing and seeing and there will be some draft code or Comp Plan amendments likely to be looked at next year.

So we're going to turn now to a panel discussion and Don is going to lead it with our panelists. On your agenda are the detailed questions we provided to the panelists ahead of time. This is just a summary. The panel is going to introduce themselves. They're going to talk about what makes Skagit a unique county for agriculture, and talk about agritourism and what it means to the county: What's a fit and what are some challenges, and then what might be some improvements to County regulations or enforcement?

So with that, I'll pass it over to Don.

Don McMoran: Thanks so much, Lisa.

Ms. Grueter: Thank you.

Mr. McMoran: And thank you for all of those of you who were able to join us tonight. I really appreciate it. So I'm Don McMoran. I'm the director of WSU Skagit County Extension. I'm also a fourth generation farm kid from right here in Skagit County. I grew up on a 2,000-acre diversified potato farm in west Mount Vernon. So when I had the opportunity to think about tonight and to think about, you know, this process, it really brought me back to our founding fathers and them creating the First Amendment in which everyone has the freedom to free speech. And so I want you to be thinking about that tonight. You know, you might not necessarily agree with our speakers, but tonight I want you to do your best to be respectful and try to leave some of your biases at home and listen to what the speakers have to say because they're bringing different perspectives to our community. And also, just a reminder that no decisions are going to be made on the subject tonight. That really falls within the Planning Commission as well as our County Commissioners. We do happen to have a County Commissioner in the room tonight, so Peter Browning, if you'd wave your hand so everybody can make sure that they seek out meetings with you in the future to fully vet this situation as we move forward.

So tonight I want to introduce some of our panelists. I just have a short blurb on them and I'll ask for them to add to what we have on board here as we move forward.

So our first panelist is Leo Roozen of RoozenGaarde. Leo is one of the owners of Washington Bulb Company and Roozengarde, which farms approximately 2,000 acres of land for mostly tulips. Leo, would you care to add to that?

Leo Roozen: I can later.

Mr. McMoran: Sure. It sounds good. Second panelist is Jessie Anderson from Maplehurst Farms. Jessie Anderson has owned Maplehurst Farms in Mount Vernon with her husband Jeffrey Anderson since 2008. The six-acre farm hosts special events and weddings for the community.

Jessie Anderson: Yes, thank you.

Mr. McMoran: Thank you.

Ms. Anderson: I will elaborate a little bit on that.

Mr. McMoran: Sure, go ahead.

Ms. Anderson: I think we have kind of a similar background, hearing you say that you're fourth generation. I'm also a generation – fifth generation, actually – farmer here. I grew up at Hayton Farms on Fir Island.

(inaudible voice)

Ms. Anderson: Oh, sure. So my name is Jessie Hayton Anderson and I was born and raised here in the valley. I grew up at Hayton Farms on Fir Island and began working in the fields at a young age harvesting cauliflower, packing cucumbers, weeding berry fields. My sisters and I began selling produce at my parents' farmstand, and in high school we started to deliver and sell direct at farmers markets throughout the greater Puget Sound area. And that helped fund our college education at the University of Washington. After my undergraduate degrees, I attended Seattle Pacific University and earned an MBA and then I moved to Los Angeles and worked from 2005 to 2008. In 2008 I realized that the Skagit Valley was where I wanted to settle and so I moved home and married my husband, Jeffrey Anderson, and he also grew up – he's third generation farmer here – grew up on a farm in Conway. And so we were lucky enough to buy a six-acre portion of his grandparents' home place, their farm, on Dike Road. And so we bought that in 2008.

I worked for my parents at Hayton Farms from 2008 to 2012, and after we had our second daughter I was motivated to work from home and I'd always been entrepreneurial so I decided to try hosting some events at our property on Dike Road. I continued to work for my parents. My husband had a separate career path. It was a parttime venture that we've grown over the past 10 years into a wonderful family business. And so we do host weddings. We also host memorials, reunions, church groups, youth group meetings, school auctions and dances, quinceaneras, also many nonprofit groups such as Skagitians to Preserve Farmland, Children of the Valley, and the Skagit Valley Community College. Many of our clients are locals – friends, neighbors, and members of the community – as well as other clients from the greater Puget Sound area. My husband and I do believe in giving back to the community and we coach youth sports and use our venue to donate free events and also host discounted events annually for organizations such as the Festival of Trees, the Skagit Valley Hospital Foundation, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services of Skagit Valley, and other local schools and nonprofits. We manage five acres of lawn, mature trees, and gardens; maintain a historic mansion, and a barn. We have taken no land out of agriculture and farming for our venue; however, we will be farming 10 acres this year on top of the venue – aside from the venue, and we will be selling grass hay bales and also bring fruits and vegetables for our two daughters, who are six generation farmers, to sell at my parents' produce stand.

So I think that's all that I need to say for now. But I'm happy to be here, and thank you for the opportunity to discuss two things that I'm very passionate about: agritourism and farming in the Skagit Valley.

Mr. McMoran: Great! Thanks for being here.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: All right, our next panelist is Andrea Xaver. She's a producer out at Big Lake. She's also a huge supporter of agriculture. Andrea, do you want to elaborate on that?

Andrea Xaver: Well, I'm the fifth of seven generations on the same farm that we've owned for 121 years. And we're in the process now of training the seventh generation. Hopefully they'll grow up and want to do what we're doing.

I'm adamant about saving farmland in Skagit County and I don't want to do anything that upsetting to someone, but, being one of the oldest people on the panel probably, I'd like to just let people know that – some of the history. Since 1940 we've lost about half of our farmland here in Skagit County due to other conversions. In the mid-1990s, some County commissioners did away with the zoning called "Agricultural Reserve." You'd think with the population increases we'd need more agriculture land held in reserve because in 1996 when this took place the world's population was 6.79 billion. Now we're up to eight billion. Skagit County's population in 1996 was 93,772. Now it's 132,047. And I read an article the other day that said one percent of the people feed 100% of the world. Maintaining agriculture land in Skagit County is crucial, plus it's some of the richest farmland in the world. And that's hard for other counties in other states to say. So we need it all.

I'm respectful and I like our venues that we have. It's been very nice and fun to drive around and see, but the devil's in the details, as far as the future. How many people want to do something, as far as agritourism? What will they be selling? Would it be strictly off the farm? Would they be importing other things to sell? How much space would they need? Would they be taking out more farmland? Would that then further erode the farmland that we currently have and take more of that away? And what are the farmers that do next door or around in that area? What will they have to do? Do they have to get better insurance? Do they have to get security? And the reason I mention that is because about three years ago in Whatcom County – had nothing to do with agritourism whatsoever – but a little girl ran away from her parents unbeknownst to them. She went out to the barn, climbed up on something that was kind of heavy – some machinery – and it was kind of teetering back and forth and it fell over on her and killed her. What I would hate to see would be something like that in this county or anywhere else. Do we sell there again? Do we have to hire more security? Would a busload of kids drive into the wrong farm, thinking it was part of the agritourism thing, run around, get loose, and then here comes a big tractor towing a bunch of heavy equipment comes around the corner of the barn or runs over maybe a half a dozen kids? It's a possibility and I don't think that would be good for anyone.

Like I said, the devil's in the details. How much land is going to be taken up or converted to uses to sell goodies and knick-knacks? The things that we have right now are pretty much connected to larger farms and the products are grown there or whatever. So, there again, I'm pretty adamant about saving what we have because we don't have that much left really, when you consider it.

And there was another article in the paper that talked about in the next 40 years farmers will have to produce as much food as has been produced in the last 10,000 years. That's pretty mind-boggling when you consider the rate that the population is increasing and so forth. We need agricultural land for agriculture.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. Our next panelist is Annie Lohman. Annie Lohman was previously the chair of the Skagit County Planning Commission and a member of the Skagit Agricultural Advisory Board. She owns Lohman Farms in Bow with her husband Dave, and they primarily farm seed crops. Annie, do you care to elaborate?

Annie Lohman: Hi. I am not a second generation, third generation. I am a first generation farmer. My husband and I purchased a 40-acre farm, kind of a little low on the heel, back in 1989. And we at that time raised dairy heifers and we also grew seed crops. And then eventually we sold out our dairy herd and focus now on vegetable seed crops.

But we did it the old-fashioned way. There was an elderly lady who was – her place had kind of gotten away, and it was an opportunity for a young person of 25 years old. We put a ton of work. We had open station tractors. We had some pretty rudimentary and pretty crude implements to get started. I think of Jerry Rindall putting together a beginner package for us and I wonder what he really thought when we pulled out of his lot! But it was a ton of hard work and there were years when we didn't make anything. There were years where we made barely enough. And back then you were advised that you need to save for yourself because there isn't going to be any social security. We didn't even have 100 bucks sometimes to put towards retirement. So we put everything in that. Flash forward 30 years and we are still here, and it's because of the opportunities that Skagit County visionaries – other farmers and other community members – put on looking towards the future. And I thank God for that vision, because I wouldn't have had it. It is not an easy path to take. It's tough. You plan in multiple years; you don't plan in single year or half-years. You don't take vacation. You give up an awful lot, but it's worth it. It is such a rich reward. And this is the last place left on the whole west side of the Cascades. And you think about that. It looks like there's an awful lot available here for those kind of opportunities, and that's only because I-5, Chuckanut Drive, Highway 20, Cook Road, all the major arterials in this county happen to go, unfortunately, right through the valley, right through the ag sector. That ag sector – all of the zoning, including going upriver east of I-5, is only less than 10% of the county's land base. But the perception coming down Conway hill or coming from the north from Bellingham, the perception is the vast majority of the county is that wide-open agricultural vista and wide-open space, and it is not. It's less than 10%. The majority of this county is timber.

So I just want to remind people that it's because of our reluctance to sell out, subdivide like our neighbors to the south in Snohomish and our neighbors to the north in Whatcom, and even further – King County and other counties where they made it five-acre, 10-acre. Anything less than 40 even. I'm not even sure 40 was actually enough but it was a start. The opportunity to have generational farms of long term significance, and even opportunities for newbies, like me, they're not going to be there. Do we want to keep these opportunities in the next 10 years, 20 years, 30 years – even looking 50 years down the pike: Do we want to be able to have that opportunity? And I hope we do.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Annie. Our last but not least –

Terry Sapp: The latest!

Mr. McMoran: – member of the committee is Terry Sapp. So Terry has been a member of the Skagit Ag Advisory Board since 2015. Terry owns Hoehn Bend Farm and Fender Farm with his family, where they primarily raise cattle. Terry.

Mr. Sapp: True. Hello. I am happy to be here. I've been in this room lots of times out there, looked up here, and there were always the important people up here! And so –

Mr. McMoran: So welcome to being an important person, Terry!

Mr. Sapp: Well, I don't know if that's true, but what I learned is that if you come late you get ushered right up to the front. So that's the new trick. In all deference, Commissioner, I'm here and it seems warm in here.

(laughter)

Mr. Sapp: So fellow panelists, not all of whom I have met, I'm eager to hear more from each of you, and rather than give an opening comment here, I'll just introduce myself with a few more notes. I indeed farm east of Sedro-Woolley. For those of you who haven't been up there that recently, that's just before you get to Lyman. And we farm beef cattle primarily. We grow grass and feed it to cattle. I speak with the plural pronoun because I do so with my very farm member partner and my wife, Jean Eagleston. You can do this, Jeannie – there you are. Jeannie is a great partner in our endeavor, and it wouldn't be as enjoyable without her.

I will just say that I have had – without detail; maybe will have opportunity later to say more about involvement in agritourism – but I have two specific connections. One is that Jeannie and I created a farm-stay on our farm – *mostly* Jeannie created a farm-stay on our farm – where we had visitors come from afar to farm with us. The main activity for those visitors was that they were up in the morning when we arrived – we didn't live there – and worked along with us most of the day. I'll get into that later.

The other way, number two, that I am involved in agritourism is that I am on the Agricultural Advisory Board and have been for a number of years. And the Agricultural Advisory Board has indeed been involved in this topic for a couple of years. And I've worked with Lisa. Lisa, sorry I missed your presentation. I think I've heard much of it previously. But my apologies, nonetheless. And with Sarah; through the Agricultural Advisory Board, we have been involved in this topic. And the Ag Board – if you will allow for short – has established policy positions and some recommendations that have been expressed and shared with the functional operatives – that isn't a very good word – those of you who have been working on this more intensively than we at the Ag Board. But we've been real involved, and I think we'll have opportunity to get into that later. I'll try to clarify when I speak and if I have opportunity when I am speaking from my experience and representation of the Ag Board and when I speak regarding my personal experience. Thank you, Don.

Mr. McMoran: Perfect. So I think we'll kind of – we'll go right to left and then left to right. So, Terry, back to you. First question is how long have you been working in agriculture in Skagit County?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah, I don't have a number of years for that. I grew up on a farm also where we now farm. I am third generation. I grew up farming in the morning and the evening after school. Both of my parents worked off-farm, so we *all* worked mornings and evenings, and, of course, weekends. And then I went away elsewhere to do other things. I had a couple of careers and came back when I had a – I grew up enough to have a choice. Jeannie and I have been farming for –

Jean Eagleston: Since 2008.

Mr. Sapp: Thank you. How many years is that? So for a while.

Mr. McMoran: Annie, you already made mention of how you started out in 1985, correct?

Ms. Lohman: Yep. Well, my first job out of WSU – I had to put a plug for the Cougs –

Mr. McMoran: Go Cougs!

Ms. Lohman: – was as a cow breeder, mostly in dairy, in north Snohomish County. And then my late husband was a son of a farmer in Stanwood and then I moved to Skagit. And so all my adult life has been in agriculture. When I was a little kid, I picked berries for Tom Shane, so that was my very first actual paycheck that wasn't written by Mom and Dad.

Mr. McMoran: Awesome. And Andrea, how long have you been involved in agriculture in Skagit County?

Ms. Xaver: Well, like I mentioned earlier I think, my family's owned the same farms for 121 years, and when I was a kid I learned my multiplication tables feeding the cows out in the barn because my mom or my dad would go, What's 7 times 9? What's 2 times 4? And so on and so forth. So I had chores to do, had to go to school, had to do all the stuff – help my folks seven days a week. We milked cows twice a day and then when we had time we hopped in the car and we'd take tours and go around Skagit County and visit our friends and family that were all over the place and involved in farming. I drive around now and there's some places that bring me to tears. Things have changed so much because of all of the things that have taken the place of agriculture land. And that's why I'm concerned. I'm not involved in agritourism. I do – like I said, I do appreciate some of the things that we do have here today, but as I also mentioned earlier, the devil's in the details. We don't know what the future will bring and how much more erosion that will have an impact on farmland. So I hope we can do another 121 years or beyond that.

Mr. McMoran: Yeah. Jessie, how long have you been involved in ag in Skagit?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I mean, my dad drove me around when I was a baby in his pickup truck with him, but I worked as soon as I could – around 10, you know – on the farm. My first paycheck that wasn't from my parents was from Alf Christianson Seed Company __ spinach. But then I worked for my parents after that until I – well, through high school and college I continued to work at the farm, and then I was in Los Angeles working for three years but returned after that. So most of my life I've been here. I'm 41 years old now.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Leo, how long have you been involved in agriculture in Skagit County?

Mr. Roozen: Well, Don, my whole life, as people say, but I think I got my first check – we started getting paid – you know, I'm preaching to the choir to a lot of people here and I'll try to be, you know, somewhat brief because we've got a lot to cover. I'd be happy to answer more questions later, but my older brother's sitting here and he might correct me, but I think we got our first check I think when I was eight years old. He might have got his earlier. I'm not sure. But that's 62 years ago because I'm 70 now. And we've – my whole life had been in agriculture. If we weren't in school or turning out for sports or studying – and some of that stuff we didn't want to do anyway – we were working because there was always way more work to do than there was time in the day. So I think I can talk to a lot of this stuff just with practical experience, but again, I'd be happy to answer more questions later, but most of my whole life. Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: Perfect.

Unidentified Voice: Don, could you put the microphones closer to perhaps the women on the panel? I can hear the gentlemen on the end but _____.

Mr. McMoran: I don't need one, do I? I spent too much time on a tractor so I can't hear and I talk loud. I hope.

Same Unidentified Voice: The men are doing great. _____.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Perfect. All right, so back over to you, Leo. What's your relationship with ag tourism?

Mr. Roozen: Well, most of my relationship and our relationship at Washington Bulb Company is with the Tulip Festival, and we've got hands-on experience there, of course – and just clarifying earlier when it was – you'd mentioned 2,000 acres. Most of that is not tulips. We're diversified. But we're known most for our tulips, I guess.

Mr. McMoran: That's right.

Mr. Roozen: That said, most of our hands-on experience – and that's why I agreed to be here is to share what I know firsthand – is with the Tulip Festival and with the Festival of Family Farms in the fall. And we're quite involved in those two and, you know, maybe I can add some information a little bit later. But that's my experience with ag tourism.

Mr. McMoran: Jessie?

Ms. Anderson: Okay, so as I mentioned, you know, some before, I own Maplehurst Farm with my husband and we host weddings and other events at the six-acre property. None of that land was ag land, although we are surrounded by his family farm and my family farm is just five miles from our property. But we host events together and then we also will be farming 10 acres for grass hay and then also to supply our daughters' produce to sell during their summer vacation at my parents' farmstand. And so I help them manage that. I'm the adult that helps them run that stand and that was one of my first jobs and something that they take pride in and something that will help them learn to love agriculture like I do.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Jessie. Andrea?

Ms. Xaver: Can anybody hear me?

(sounds of assent)

Ms. Xaver: Okay. I really don't have any association with agritourism. As I mentioned, when I was a kid my folks and I would drive around through the farmland and visit people and go look at things from one end of the valley to the other, because we knew so many people and had relatives and friends all over the place. So that was tourism, I guess you could say in a way. But then to kind of mix and mingle agriculture with tourism is kind of a different slant. Tourism, okay. Agriculture, fine. We need it. But to put those two together is kind of a sticky situation, I think. And, there again, like I said, I don't know what the future might bring or how much more land would be taken – essentially – out of agriculture.

Ms. Lohman: I'm a fulltime farmer and it's not a hobby farm, but we have been involved with helping with FFA and 4H. I was a dairy superintendent at the Skagit County Fair for several years. And so while it's really kind of not tourism per se, it's almost like ag advocacy and kind of self-preservation to kind of sow the seed for the next generation and give them a taste of it. But I suppose you could argue that that also is a potential opportunity with tourism, with farm-stays,

farmstands, and other opportunities to expose the public to our farms and our work ethic and all of that. And also we have had a WSU Ph.D. student living with us for the last several years and kind of exposing a city kid from LA to a more rural, day in/day out type lifestyle. So while it's really not ag tourism, that is about as close as I physically have gotten to it.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Terry, you want to share your experience with ag tourism?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah, I can be very brief because I already said some of it. Jeannie helped start a farm-stay at our farm. We had an extra house and two farm properties and so this became very active – and here's my pitch for agritourism – a *great* experience, *fabulous* experience. I said enough already maybe, but we had people from – I think, Jeannie, 17 countries who arrived to help feed our cows and goats and all, and almost all of them with kids. They were almost entirely people who came to stay who had small children and signed up to get their kids exposed to farms. That suited us. I had a career as an educator also so it was fun being around kids – teaching, talking about farming. So I'm wearing my personal hat now. I said I had two; the Ag Board is the other. But we also had a very sad and unfortunate traumatic experience with ag tourism next door. And I can go into that later, perhaps, as we get to some of the other issues –

Mr. McMoran: Sure.

Mr. Sapp: – but it was very mixed, a very mixed experience. Personally positive with our customers and then very troublesome next door.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Well, we'll definitely come back to that. The next question is: What makes Skagit County a special place for agriculture? What do you believe the county is known for, Terry?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah. Yes, the obvious things. I'm going to defer.

Mr. McMoran: Okay.

Mr. Sapp: Leo and others are ready for that question better than me. I love farming here. I love that experience. I chose it late in life but having started with ____ also, all good.

Mr. McMoran: All right. Annie, do you want to fill in?

Ms. Lohman: Well, at the risk of repeating myself, I believe it's our – the Skagit County's commitment to prioritizing the ag land and rural lifestyle, and that's pretty tough. And here we are in 2022. That's a pretty tough commitment to have made and stuck with when you look around and where it's gotten away. So what makes it special and what are we known for? Well, outside of the general public, but in the ag world we are known for our seed crops. There's well over 100 years of experience growing vegetable seeds, cabbage, spinach, a variety of other seed crops.

Mr. McMoran: Don't forget your beet seed.

Ms. Lohman: Yeah, don't forget the beet seed. I mean, and we are a world player in those seed crops and we are national certificates in those seed crops, so they're not any small potatoes. While the acreage may be small if you compare us to Nebraska and all that cattle in Kansas and all that wheat in someplace else and all that corn, we are – acreage-wise it might seem small. And then what else are we known for? Well, our red potatoes. We're kind of pioneers on red potatoes and everybody else had to catch up. And ours were special. We're also known for our tulips. But it's mostly our soil and our latitude and the kind of gentle maritime climate that we

enjoy. It doesn't take a lot of irrigation. I mean, while there *is* irrigation, it's not, like, in the basin or other places where you *have* to have irrigation going continuously. Ours is kind of –

Mr. McMoran: Supplemental.

Ms. Lohman: Thank you.

Mr. McMoran: You're welcome.

Ms. Lohman: So I think about all those things that – and that's God-given, Mother Nature, dumb luck – I don't know. Plus a long term visioning. So that's – did I answer all those questions?

Mr. McMoran: Yeah, and others can fill in too. Andrea?

Ms. Xaver: Well, first of all there has been mentioned several times: It's the soil. Some of the richest in the world, and not too many places can say that. And then I'd like to chime in with what Annie has said about all the crops that are being grown and the weather and so forth. And it's written down but I'll mention it, that I'm on the Farmland Legacy Program with the County and I've been on that program since 2007, and we've saved over 14,000 acres of farmland from conversion to other uses. And that's pretty critical because, like I say, we keep losing it. But then I believe the county is also known for – when you drive around and take a look at farmland, you're also looking off into the distance and you see not only the farms but you see forestland, you see places to fish, you see wildlife that's settled – comes in in the wintertime and they tromp around and our little birds and fly around on the farmland and so forth. So you see the wildlife, you see their habitat, and you see incredible views that are uncluttered by something that looks like the Kent Valley.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. I know Jessie wants to add her father's berry crop as well as brassica production into this list of the mix. So Jessie, go ahead.

Ms. Anderson: Yes, let's! Yeah, I would say definitely on top of being known for tulips and the beauty and the history, berries – strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, cucumbers, cauliflower, of course potatoes. There's just a tremendous amount of incredible food that is grown here. And the history. But I think it's interesting that, you know, currently just within a few miles of my small farm there is, you know, an alpaca farm that has – that sells in a little shop on their property they sell hand-made woolen goods. There's an apple cider barn that sells fresh-pressed cider. There's a nursery that sells plants. And then my family has two farmstands on Fir Island and there are others. My venue – there are other venues. You know, with the farmland there are also agritourism businesses that have grown locally and they're contributing to the local economy. And they're also a method to teach visitors about the rich history that we have here. We have guests that attend events at our venue that have never seen farmland, that don't know how their food is grown. They don't know how important it is to buy local. And getting those visitors to come and see how special the valley is and how important it is to preserve it is important too. And so I think agritourism can work together with the farms to achieve, you know, mutual goals.

Mr. McMoran: Right. Thank you, Jessie.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: And Leo, I know we missed some flower production because you do more than tulips.

Mr. Roozen: To the question: Okay, what makes the valley special? My dad always said it's God's country. And so what does that mean? I mean, but if you look, we've got this mild maritime climate. As people ask me, I just go down the list. We've got the rich – the silty loam and the clay loam soils. We've got the temperature-buffering breezes or winds that just – they don't just protect us from the high and low temperatures but so many other things that don't like those breezes and winds: aphids and that type of thing; bugs that – you know, some of those things – it keeps things – it helps us. If you go down, we have a moderate amount of rainfall at the right times. At times we have to do a little bit of irrigating but not necessarily that much. So then you go into the crops. Where else do you have a diversity of crops? We've mentioned a lot of them, but what it shows us is we're growing 80 to 100 different kinds of crops here. We've got vegetable seed production, grain crops, vegetable crops, ___ crops, and dairy, beef livestock, horticultural crops, nursery crops, forage crops, rotation crops, and you can go on and on. It shows that what is the valley special for, what's it known for – it is truly unique in a lot of ways. With what can be done here – and when we talk about sustainability, what *has* been done in the early days with the pioneers and what *can* be done in the future, *if* we have – what we're known for – a lot of farm ground. We're known. The county and county-supported organizations have been very proactive in their approach to preserving and protecting farmland. We're *known* for that. Nothing that anybody's talked about here is going to continue if we don't preserve and protect the farmland. But maybe as important as anything is, we're known to have the cooperation of all these different agricultural producers that are growing all these different kinds of crops or raising livestock or nursery products or whatever. These people are all working together in cooperation towards a common goal to try to help every other individual succeed – trading ground, working, renting. Doing all the things that you all do – and I'm talking to the choir in a lot of respects. But, yeah, that's not that common either. And so we're known for that cooperative, proactive, really cutting edge thinking that is really outside the realm of maybe some people in agriculture. But I think this valley is setting an example in that, you know?

Mr. McMoran: That's great. So the next question is: How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things to visitors and residents?

Mr. Roozen: Well, you know, it comes down to, you know, the who, what, why, where, when, how. I mean, okay, who do we want to showcase this to? I mean, who are the visitors? And *what* do we want to showcase? And where are we going to do this? Are we going to do it in some auditorium or are we going to do it on the farms or on venues? When are we going to do it? Is it going to be seasonal or are we going to do it year around? And why are we going to do it? Well, one of the main reasons maybe we want to do it is because – I might touch on it a minute – is we're going to survive in ag, you know, you go back 75 years, 50% of America was rural. Today we're talking about 1% of the people that are producing all these crops.

Well, if we're going to do it, why are we going to do it? Because we need to educate. We need to show people what we're doing. We need to inform people. How are we going to do that? Well, I guess – how would we – I can only talk to what – we've learned a little bit in our companies. We need to provide information on the products that we produce or grow and sell in the world. We need to produce information on those. You know, how are they available? Where can they be purchased? How are they grown? I don't necessarily – I'm not going to go into this, but we have – we produce – we've got a website that we've got frequently asked questions that I think we're going to have to address if we want to get into agritourism and stuff. The questions that most people have – there's about 20 questions that most people have about almost anything, and if we're going to do that, how are we going to – we're going to have to make a commitment. The county and people involved in how this develops down the road, they're going to have to make a

commitment, and that's going to take a lot of time and thought and human resources and money and effort. That can be beneficial to everyone but that's – I'm just here maybe to share a little bit of what we've learned and the things that we've been involved in, the Family Farm Festival and the Tulip Festival. And we've learned a lot about people. And people want to know what we're doing and, really, our salvation is in education. The more people know about what we're doing and why we're doing it – and I'll get into it at one of the later questions, the complexities involved and that type of thing – the more they respect that and understand that there are parameters that we all have to live within. There's common ground we have to find and there's give and take. And so this is – I think this is – as I've watched this thing develop over the last few years and where it's going, I think that's going to be a key.

Mr. McMoran: Jessie, I'll repeat the question for you.

Ms. Anderson: Sure.

Mr. McMoran: How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things to visitors and residents?

Ms. Anderson: That's a good question. I think it's important for the County to support farms of all sizes and be open to agritourism businesses to support the local economy and also, you know, what was recently discussed, the partnerships that we have with our neighbors and other business owners. Support that network. And I think it's important to realize that with the many challenges that farms continue to face in this day and age, we have to be open to new ideas and new sources of income and education – overtime laws, regulations, competition from larger conglomerates, global warming. These are just a handful of the many things that family farms are facing. And so agritourism is a way to provide an opportunity for additional resources, income, and education not only within the valley but to those who visit it.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Thank you. So Andrea, how would you like Skagit County to showcase agriculture to visitors and residents?

Ms. Xaver: Well, I agree with Mr. Roozen: from the perspective of education. I think there's been a big shortfall within the state educational system of telling kids or educating kids about all of our resources, whether that's farms, fishing, forestry, or what have you. And I see the same problem here in Washington in Skagit County. There needs to be more education available on a regular basis to remind kids, because you usually have to tell people three times before they remember anything. Certainly me, anyway. But more education for kids so they know what's going on in this county. And agritourism: There again I get a little – kind of get a chill because I don't know. Like I said, we don't know enough about what the future might bring or what this really means for agritourism and how it might impact us. So we need more details. How many more of these sites are we going to have? How much parking is going to be needed on farmland? What will the traffic do? Will there be more traffic – an increase? Is it going to make it hard for the farmers to run up and down the roads with their tractors and equipment, or are they going to be stuck in a traffic jam? We need more details. Meanwhile, you could put people on a bus and drive them around Skagit County. Maybe they'd learn a thing or two here and there. That'd actually be kind of fun as long as they don't get off the bus and go onto the wrong farm and get run over by a tractor.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. Annie?

Ms. Lohman: I guess I took the question literally. How would you like Skagit County to showcase these things? And I've been elsewhere – other states – and I've been to some large cities where

they've got an ag showcase and they're proud of their agriculture or their community, and we really don't have anything. We don't have anything in downtown Mount Vernon, for example, or Burlington that is dedicated to this ag community. We kind of let it go piecemeal and let the farmers or those that have venues kind of take that ball, but it's kind of destroying it. There might be a map showing where a variety of U-Pics or opportunities are, but really we don't have anything coordinated that's year around. And, you know, for me, I'm never going anywhere in the summer, so is there something that somebody could do in the winter? We don't really have anything. And I'm kind of reluctant to pass that baton and put the onus on government, and so I would almost rather see the ag groups – and we have a whole bunch of them – take on that task and figure out how to staff it or do something, rather than rely on a government entity to do it.

I think about when my daughter was an intern for Donnie at Extension. She was the only OSU student at WSU; I thought that was pretty funny back then. Anyway, but she had the job of doing the voice for that agritourism sign as you come into Skagit – that blue information sign. Maybe we need some more placards. I know there's a little bit of placarding around La Conner where it shows what's growing in the crops. Well, if you down to Oregon you see placards as you're going down I-5 along the fence lines or along the right-of-way there saying what's in the fields. Maybe we should consider expanding that to not just be along around La Conner but maybe out towards Bow-Edison and out towards Sedro-Woolley and, you know, kind of broaden that so it's a little more than just people driving by – you know, *while* they're driving by. Maybe they'll look and see.

So I guess I go back to I just don't want to put the whole onus on Skagit County.

Mr. McMoran: Fair enough. Terry?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah, thanks. I don't want to repeat the things that people have already said and the people out in the audience here probably already know and maybe jointly believe about Skagit County. And Don, I'd really like to think maybe we could – or maybe I'm going to jump offside and get a penalty here, but I'd like to think that with our precious time here, and people who have come to visit or listen and offer ideas perhaps, that we could dig into the weeds a little deeper here. And I want to do that because on the Ag Board we've spent a lot of hours and a lot of time trying to dig into some very serious policy issues, and I know that we're going to go into a legislative writing stage. The Growth Management Act is going to have a very big impact on what we do here in this county. Other counties have tried. Cases have gone before the Growth Management Hearings Boards that are instructive. And so I'm hoping we can get some dialogue going. I think –

Mr. McMoran: I think we get there.

Mr. Sapp: Okay, as long as we don't run out. I don't want to –

Mr. McMoran: We're scheduled to go to 8 p.m., so...

Mr. Sapp: Yeah.

Mr. McMoran: Yeah.

Mr. Sapp: So yeah, all good in ag land in Skagit County and I support it, and I like education. I think that's one of the real important parts that isn't left out of the ag tourism discussion too much and not well enough focused about how we can produce an educative element to add to how people participate here.

Mr. McMoran: Yeah. So the next question might start you down that thread. What might be a threat to the county? So it says: What might be a threat to what makes the county a special place for agriculture?

Mr. Sapp: Yeah. So yeah, you threw the flag on me. I think that agriculture is heavily threatened by many forces coming from many directions. In other forums where I have participated, the discussion is housing. And I know that's an essential issue for the Commissioners as well and county policy-making. It's a *big* threat to agriculture. You need places to build houses. Ag has land. It's an obvious choice. And now I don't want to deter our thinking here, but I'm looking out and I see Commissioner Wesen. Amazing that I'm here speaking to you! It befuddles me!

(laughter)

Mr. Sapp: But I know the policy issues are great and the direct challenges to agriculturalists are great. They're huge in my little community. It's called **SkyU**, halfway between those two places out there – Sedro-Woolley and Lyman – where ag land is being consumed for a variety of other kinds of things. Not housing and not agritourism, but one of the things that's creeping in that I see is the use of ag lands, barn yards becoming construction business zones. The excavators and the dump trucks and the aggregates and the things – obvious good place for those kinds of businesses. They're not agriculture. They are business. They are sources of employment. But the vectors or the directions from which the intention to use agricultural lands for non-agricultural things is tremendous, and we all know by reading the newspaper that building an airport out there is one of them. So they're innumerable. And I think it was said someplace, you know, we just have to put our stake in the ground and address all of them.

Mr. McMoran: Annie?

Ms. Lohman: I think – as I said earlier, I think perception that the majority of the valley is available is a threat and that it's potentially loved to death. Everybody wants to come and live here. I see on our local Bow-Edison group and various ones there's constantly – and I don't mean this in a bad way. People want to live here because we've done a really good job of keeping it as a rural place. We're on the tipping point of switching over from being a rural county to suburban, and that's a completely different mindset, completely – that's a paradigm shift from rural to suburban, and I think we need to think long and hard about do we want to be that. And I feel that is a threat because it's a shift, a major shift.

I also think there's a lot of pressure in the ag community. There's thin margins in any given year. Some years, I mean, you have a banner year and other years it's pretty grim. And you've got labor issues, you've got capital gains, you've got taxes, you've got all these pressures, and farmers tend to be individuals and we don't talk about that stuff much by ourself. So there's a ton of personal pressure on each of our farms. And so that, in a way, kind of contributes to that threat. And I don't want to be a Debbie Downer here, but I also think about the urban vise that we're in between the north and the south, and that's a real thing. And it was really apparent during COVID because people tended to stay home. They didn't stay home! You should have seen Chuckanut Drive! I mean, Burlington and Mount Vernon were ghost towns. They were all up on Chuckanut, where I happen to farm. And that kind of – that COVID kind of revealed that people could live further away from their workplace and kind of telecommute or Zoom or do whatever. Where we farmers, we're already working at home and I have this five-second commute. So that incompatible suburban-rural-urban dynamic that I can't really articulate it very well but I hope you kind of get the feel. The other thing is I feel a need to have some cautions about injecting

incompatible uses. There's an awful lot of what you could call agritourism that is absolutely compatible, but there's also incompatible uses that could be packaged and sold as agritourism or tangentially related to the farm that create incompatibility, and it will always be the farm that ends up having to buffer, set aside property and step back, and I view that as a major threat. Because if you can't take care of your crop you can't make a living and you will fail.

Mr. McMoran: Andrea, care to add to threats?

Ms. Xaver: Yeah, I agree with you, Annie. And the other thing that could happen, of course, is the rezoning because that's already happened. And then in the east of I-5, there've been the threats on farmland because of wild animals. The elk. The elk have come in here and have been imported and so forth and other things, and they're being threatened by hoof rot. And nobody really seems to care except the farmers. Where's all the people who call themselves – and I don't mean to take offense to anybody, but call themselves environmentalists or fish and wildlife people that care about the animals. But they don't do anything about the hoof rot and it continues to spread and it goes and will affect anything that has hooves. So some of these farmers upriver are going to be driven off their property because of all the damage so far from the elk and other animals that want to come in and take over. And then the people who love to come here and take a look, and they move here and so on. They move here to get away from it all but they bring it with them. So hence we have further rezoning issues, possibly. And then upriver, like I mentioned, people will be forced off their farms because they can't farm them anymore – too much damage. So they're going to give up and go away. So I always wonder, What's behind the scenes? Is it someone who wants to move here and then develop everything we have? Then you can kiss farming goodbye in Skagit County.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Andrea. Jessie? Threats.

Ms. Anderson: So when I thought about threats, I definitely thought of development, pavement, buildings, things that are, you know, permanent or semi-permanent and they do detract from farming. And since the valley has, you know, such a limited amount of sacred farmland, development is really what I think of when I think of a major threat. And just in my own personal experience, I haven't seen farmstands and U-Pick operations – I'm looking at the list here – the tasting rooms, wedding venues, farm stays. I have not seen those putting down pavement or taking away farmland. I see them working in small areas, you know, *nearby* farms or maybe it is a small farm running an operation on their farm. But they're not paving, taking away farmland. It does seem like there is a great fear about, you know, what we could lose and the challenges for agriculture here, but I don't see a direct connection between many of the local agritourism operations and those – you know, the pavement and development.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Leo, threats?

Mr. Roozen: Well, I think that probably we've touched on most things but no doubt overdevelopment and conflicting businesses in the farmland community, businesses that conflict with farms in farmland are threats. Loss of agricultural diversity is a threat. Loss of farming operations and/or related ag-related businesses is a threat. But maybe the greatest threat could be a lack of the understanding by the greater part of our population the complexity of our agricultural infrastructure here in Skagit Valley. I mean, really what is that whole big infrastructure and how complex is it? What's all involved in – what is needed to ensure our continuity into the future? That's probably the biggest threat – the lack of the general population understanding that big picture. And I think maybe that will – I felt when I made these notes that that kind of plays into our next questions.

Mr. McMoran: It does. In fact, the next question is: What does agritourism mean to you and what are the types of agritourism you'd *want* to see in Skagit County?

Mr. Roozen: Well, I'm not going to try to reinvent the wheel on this one. I've kind of followed some of these discussions over time and I know there's numerous definitions of agritourism. One was up on the screen earlier, and I think just a little more technically, I'm just reading one that I think fits our thoughts. "Agritourism can be defined as a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism in order to attract visitors onto a ranch, a farm, or an agricultural business for the purpose of entertaining and educating the visitors, and generating income for the farm or business owner." I really do believe that the days of that – of *no* tourism of any type are gone, and so the key down the road is going to be for us to define, What is agritourism? What of all the definitions of agritourism are we talking about? And that was the definition that I thought worked best for our type of thinking. That'll play into, of course – is this a two-part question: What types of agritourism would you like to see?

Mr. McMoran: Yeah.

Mr. Roozen: Well, again I'm not going to try to come up with something unique again. We obviously – our farm and our businesses are members of Skagitonians to Protect Farmland. And I think they have a feeling – they have a position that any kind of agritourism must be tied to an ongoing farming operation and be evaluated by the following criteria: It must relate to and support the primary use of agriculture at the site. It does not interfere with the surrounding agricultural operations and practices. It will provide experiences that promote and enhance Skagit agriculture overall. It does not result in the conversion of agricultural land. Done properly – we talked about education earlier. How do you get to all these people? How do you get them to listen to you? Well, there are people coming *to us*. And to build the infrastructure of auditoriums or facilities or that type of thing to educate these people, we've got an infrastructure here. It's called Skagit Valley Agriculture. And we've got damn good professors and teachers. It's all the guys running these businesses. And so if there's a certain amount of agritourism done properly and obviously with limitations and fit the guidelines that are agreed upon down the road that that's what this whole process is about, we've got a very, very unique opportunity in this valley to – without advertising or trying to get – the public, they're coming to us and they're hungry for knowledge. And they're very impressed by what all of you people are doing, what we're doing in our professions every day, and the more they learn the more they are impressed. And I think, done properly, we are on the road to protecting our farmland and we're on the road to protecting agriculture and we're on the road to protecting our future for generations to come. But it will need to be done with – I guess the definition is, What is agritourism and what are we going to do? And I just personally I think most of the people in our companies agree with these basic bullet points that Skagitonians has said numerous times in the past years of this is what they're all about. And I know there's much, much more and there're people in this room that know way more about this than I do, because I'm just kind of trying to stay up with it all in what we're doing in our everyday businesses, but that's kind of our feelings, I think.

Mr. McMoran: Great. Jessie?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I guess to me agritourism means businesses located on farms, related to farms, or that are located nearby agricultural lands. And I really do believe that these businesses can exist in harmony with local farms and promote economic strength, growth, and education. And that's what I've seen with my own personal experience. The guests that attend our venue are hungry to learn about the valley. They want to walk the grounds. They want to see the land.

They're curious about what's being grown right around the farm, what we have in our field. They want to know about it. Some of them have never seen it firsthand and they leave, you know, getting to spread this to others. So that's what agritourism means to me, and I think if it's, you know, done right it can be a very positive thing.

Mr. McMoran: And any specific types of agritourism that you want to see in Skagit County?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I would say definitely the agritourism operations that, you know, can coexist well with the farms and promote the protection of farmland. The agritourism businesses that I mentioned before that are right in my own neighborhood all seem to be doing very well, you know, with the neighboring farms, or many of them are small farms themselves. And I personally have not seen conflict or negative impacts. It's been a positive coexistence.

Mr. McMoran: Okay. Thanks, Jessie. Andrea?

Ms. Xaver: Yeah, I would agree with that. I think, you know, it has to have a positive influence and no negative impacts. And there again, we need more details. How many more of these are being planned and would that actually boil down to harming Skagit County? How many do we need?

Mr. McMoran: Annie?

Ms. Lohman: I think this is probably the toughest question on the page because I don't want to presume to tell somebody what they should be doing any more than I want somebody to tell me what I should be doing and what I should be growing or what color cow, whether it be a Holstein or Jersey, et cetera. So it's tough. I guess my – and I'm damn independent and I don't want to take that away from anybody else. And I'm not a person that enjoys working with the public so I *want* to be on the tractor or the combine. I don't want to be doing a farmstand or running a corn maize and that sort of thing, because that's not me. But it *is* other people. And I understand that and I accept that.

But I guess I would want it to be absolutely tied to the farm. It can't interfere with the neighbors. It can't prevent the greater area from doing their normal business. And I say that very carefully because sometimes we make a heck of a mess. I raise spinach. It is one of the dirtiest things to combine. You don't always get to pick your day. You have to kind of seize the opportunity sometimes, and the wind doesn't always blow your way. And you don't *want* to be a bad neighbor, and I've actually knocked on people's doors and asked them if they wanted to bring in their laundry because I know I'm going to dust it. And I can't help it. So it just has to be carefully thought out and located and – and I'm just kind of thinking back on what Leo said earlier about we're unique in our cooperation, and it extends to that, too. And I'm still struggling with it, but I guess limited with an absolute direct farm linkage.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Annie. And I did want to make mention that a lot of the words that Leo shared with you were created by Terry Sapp. Some of those regulations that he and the committee – the Land Use Committee with the Ag Advisory Board – put together. So Terry, I want to thank you for spending the time on that effort.

Mr. Sapp: You're welcome. And yes, I think some of Leo's words were borrowed from the Skagitians' position paper also. But in answer to the question, I'd start by saying I got very interested in this topic for reasons personal that – this is the personal hat now – that have been described here in part with my wife Jeannie by some of our efforts on our farm. I realized that the

topic was becoming central to discussions in this county by reading the newspaper and going to meetings, and wrote a nine-page letter to the County who was – the party who was leading the topic at that time in its initial stage, coining a phrase at the beginning of my paper which established myself as a proponent of agritourism, big A, little t. Big A, little t agritourism, I intended to mean and went on to try to explain, it's got to be agriculturally related. Agriculture first. Introduce tourism as it might fit those conditions in a general way.

Since that time, I've become increasingly involved not just through the Ag Board but my own personal interest in studying – and I mentioned it earlier – some of the very nitty gritty sometimes dirty details that have to do with how state law directs counties to use their zoning authority and powers to determine what can be done in certain places within a county. And I think, as the discussion evolves, we're going to see – and I think Lisa helped queue this up here – that it has to do with zoning. What zones do we do certain things in? That's the foundation of our land use mechanisms for development in our counties, and it is by nature of the state's *requirement* upon counties. And the state invokes some rules about how zoning can be used within those defined kinds. And in this case, mostly our talk would lead us to trying to evaluate what we do in the agricultural zone. So the big A, Agricultural zone, and what kind of tourism might fit in there. We cannot avoid that. It's going to be a zoning question. It has to be a zoning question. State law requires that it's a zoning question. And so when we start rewriting, when the rules and guidelines and definitions in law and County code begin to be written down on paper and the details are established, we're going to see that it is a question of how we create allowances in certain zones. There are lots of businesses and lots of things we can do that can be sited anywhere – all good things. The big question is going to be: Shall we do them, or which of them shall we do in the ag zone and what shall be reserved for other uses in the ag zone? Mainly the kinds that fit agriculture. So big A, little t. And indeed – I'm not going to go to it right now exactly what the Agricultural Advisory Board policy position was on that zoning question – what to do in the ag zone – but I'm sure we'll get to it. I certainly want to offer it.

Mr. McMoran: Sounds good. Lisa, do you have a question?

Ms. Grueter: Yeah, I just wanted to say we wanted to reserve a little time for audience questions, so I'd like to make a plug: If people do have a question to maybe write it on the back of the postcard. We'll pick it up at the end. While we're doing that, Don, I thought if you want to pick a couple of questions and kind of do a last round, then we can take some from the audience, if that works for you.

Mr. McMoran: That sounds fabulous. All right, so next question – I was kind of hoping we could wrap it all up because Terry really led into this well – is, What is the best way to ensure agritourism is related to the primary use of the land for agriculture? And with that, What are the opportunities and challenges of things like tasting rooms, restaurants, wedding events, and special events? So Terry, you already kind of led us in. Let's start with one of the ladies to lead into that.

Ms. Lohman: Well, the challenge is expectations. When you go to a restaurant, when you have a wedding, there's a bit of a heightened emotional situation, especially on a wedding. There's expectations that you're going to have a pristine, perfect day and a perfect view, but your neighbor might be doing their regular stuff and it's going to rain the next day and they don't have a choice. They're not doing it to wreck the day. They really aren't. They just don't get to pick. And that collision is what I fear or am cautious about, because I don't want to be a bad neighbor, I don't want to ruin someone's day. I got married. I've eaten at a restaurant that was pretty fancy. And so I don't want those ruined for them, but I also – I've got to pay my bills. I put everything in that crop. I need to be able to do my work.

Mr. McMoran: Good. Others?

Ms. Anderson: Well, I guess I would just elaborate on that. And I completely see where you're coming from. I do think it's important when families, businesses, organizations book a wedding at a farm venue they understand that it is a farm venue. And when I give tours of our venue, we talk about the planting, the harvest, what's going to be grown, and we're very transparent about the fact that my husband's family is farming that land actively and that may be taking place when we're hosting an event. My husband and I will also be farming acreage right around the venue ourselves and so, you know, it's a juggle but it's something that can be done with communication and understanding. And it has not presented an issue for our venue. Thus far we were able to work together with our neighbors and our clients to, you know, achieve our goals.

Mr. McMoran: Jenn, do you have some questions?

Jenn Rogers: We do.

Mr. McMoran: Go ahead.

Ms. Rogers: Okay, so the first question is: Farmers file a Schedule F, so if someone is a farmer by that definition and isn't taking any land out of agriculture, should they be told what else they can or cannot do on their farm to ensure their financial future and be able to maintain or sustain their farm?

Mr. Sapp: Sure, they should be told what to do. I know that's not popular. I know it's not the property rights position. But it's a position that needs to be stated. That's why we have zoning. Zoning determines its sites. It is written into law. It is the code in every county. Our county has code that says what can be done in a certain zone. And no, because somebody is a farmer and owns land, it doesn't mean automatically that they can do anything else they want.

Mr. McMoran: Any others want to comment on that question?

Mr. Roozen: I would agree with that, and there would be a process. Does that mean that an individual can't do anything else? I think it was well stated and then there is a process and I think these discussions are part of fine-tuning or developing or drilling down on that process because there seems to be a lot of gray area out there now. And so as this is done, there would be a process that an individual would go through to see if they would qualify to do the things they wanted to do on that land. If I understand how this is all supposed to go properly, so can we – that thing – it's a free country. I can do whatever I want. That is not so. Our country is the way it is because we have processes and rules and regulations and we follow those and we respect them and we honor them and if we need to change them we modify them. And so I think that the answer was probably good.

Mr. Sapp: And if I could just add a point. We're not at the starting point on this matter of policy. That happened 100 years ago. Get current. We have laws in place right now that deal with what we can do with our lands, not just in the ag zone – in the industrial zones. There're a series of rules about what can be done in the industrial zones. Or the residential zones, for that matter. You can't build any kind of house you want. Why can't I build whatever kind of house I want – 10 stories tall? Well, because there are rules about that and we didn't just make them up last year. It's 100 years old.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks, Terry. Next question, Jenn.

Ms. Rogers: Okay. Aren't commodity farming pressures and regulatory interference the real threats to agribusinesses' viability in Skagit County? And why aren't we talking more about how to create new customers and allies in our urban neighboring communities?

Mr. Roozen: Could you say that one more time?

Ms. Rogers: Aren't commodity farming pressures and regulatory interference the real threats to agribusiness viability in Skagit County? And why aren't we talking more about how to create new customers and allies in our urban neighboring communities?

Mr. Roozen: I think those are threats. The question that was asked, those are real threats. But if I understand correctly, that's not the purpose of what we're addressing here. There could be numerous – the way I understand it, there could be numerous town hall meetings and discussion groups and that type of thing about threats to agriculture in the Skagit Valley, but the purpose of what I understood what we're doing here and where we're trying to go with this particular topic is focused on agritourism. And so there could be a whole other one focused on any number of other threats. But my understanding is that we – if we start bouncing all over, we're never going to get anywhere. So I would suggest we stay with the topic of agritourism.

Mr. McMoran: Looks like we have agreement. I'm seeing some head nods. Next question.

Ms. Rogers: In philosophy it's called the wedge theory. The phenomenon has also been called "creep." Common usage: Give a person an inch and they will take a mile. How can policy be written so that people do not take a mile and keep expanding the agritourism activities? For example, more events, more days of events, more visitors, et cetera.

Mr. Sapp: Exactly! How could that be stated rhetorically more clearly? We're all driven, I think most of us. Anybody who has any entrepreneurial spirit is driven by the idea that we're going to do something *new or more or more productive* next year when we get some time to do it. And so the individual drive, I think, motivates us to run up against the rules all the time. And, darn it, those rules keep getting in the way and that's why we're here. We're trying to – this county has already established all of the rules about agritourism that you would wish to know. They're in the law. They're already in the books. This county has a law that says that temporary events have to be sited in such a way that they are on existing developed property of no more than one acre. Now I look out at my field and I can tell you how much is five acres and – that's 10 acres, I say to – that field out there, Jeannie, we're driving by is – that's about 10 acres. One acre is 208 feet square – on a side – 43,658 square feet, I believe.

Mr. McMoran: 43,560.

(laughter)

Mr. Sapp: Our professor from Washington State University! But it's 208 feet to the east and another 208 feet north.

Mr. McMoran: And for those that aren't aware, it's about the size of a football field without the end zones.

Unidentified Voice: Right.

Mr. Sapp: The existing law says it's not only *County* law, it's *state* law. Growth Management Act, 36.70A.177 says you get an acre when you Counties zone for non-farm accessory uses. You know, we could all be here trying to legislate policy and think what's good for our county or business or agritourism or farming. We aren't starting today. There's already law about this. Are we following the law? That's why we're here. We're not following the law.

Unidentified Voice: We're here to bend the law.

Mr. Sapp: So I admire the tremendous work that BERK Consulting has done and the County staff has done revolving as it is and we start again. We already have a law. I don't think it's acceptable to a lot of entrepreneurs who are out there doing things that aren't within an acre or don't satisfy another 15 of the rules. But that's what we're trying to figure out until we rewrite the rules.

Ms. Anderson: Well, it sounds like we do need to keep an open mind because things have changed, I mean, since the rules were created. I mean, my great-grandfather settled my parents' farm after the Civil War. It's a different time now, and it sounds like we're here to discuss how things are changing, and there will be changes made to the laws. We need to respect them but also keep an open mind because our needs are changing. It's a changing economic landscape and that's reality.

Mr. Sapp: Can we have a little dialogue? I totally agree with that, except that it's not like let's just make it up new. There's state law in place right now.

Ms. Anderson: Sure.

Mr. Sapp: Go talk to your legislator who wrote the Growth Management Act and ask them why they put one acre in there and if they'd like to change it please.

Ms. Anderson: Well, it sounds like Skagit County is working to, you know –

Mr. Sapp: They can only go as far as the state allows because a higher, greater law.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah. Absolutely.

Ms. Xaver: Well, and you need a certain amount of farmland too. If you have big farms, you've got to have enough for crop rotation and all the things that big farmers need. And if you start chipping away at some of these bigger farms, then they can't exist either. So you can't keep saying, Okay, we'll do an acre here and an acre there and an acre over there, and so on and so forth, and pretty soon you're impeding the work and the viability of the farmers that do contribute so much to this county.

Mr. Roozen: Well, to comment on what's been said – what Jessie said: I think there's – the way I see it, there's some gray area out there and there are people that have bent the rules and bent the laws, and what I understand this process is all about here is that we just maybe need to upgrade and maybe some updates need to be made or discussed because there's no better guaranty for failure than – that's what's – there's an evolution – whether we're talking about sustainability – what sustainability was called a hundred years ago and what it's called today is different. It's still very sustainable, and for agriculture in Skagit Valley to continue to be sustainable and for us to do what we want to do, that's the purpose of why we're here to have dialogue and have discussion and to say, Okay, where do we want to go and what are we trying to do and is there room for updates or improvements? And, you know, some people are – you can't satisfy all

the people all the time. But you have to – we have to continue. I mean, that's what life's about. When there's enough noise and there's enough – I don't want to say dissension, but there's enough disagreement on – and different factions start going like this, it's time to get together and say, Hey, we need to talk about this. And what do we want to do and how are we going to get where we want to get and still continue to have what we want to have?

And so you're right. I mean, until we do that, the law's the law, you know? That old story that until we – that's why we're here. That's how our country's built. If we don't like it we have to get involved in the process and try to make changes. And until that's done, the law's the law. The rules are the rules. But we are here for that and I don't think it's – this has been going on for a while and I think it's going to continue. I personally – for those that want a fast fix, I think there's going to be disappointment because it's real hard. And the more you get involved and start digging in, you know, the more stuff that comes up. And done improperly, we've all seen new rules and new regulations that are passed and then there's unintended consequences that we just didn't see. We didn't want that. We didn't expect that. So thus the discussion. And sometimes maybe debate and maybe even, you know, a little bit of emotion involved. But I've followed a lot of this stuff. I haven't been to a lot of these. I've never sat up here. But I do think it's good stuff and I encourage everybody here to – I know there's some very, very active people in this room that are saying to me right now: Why don't you just shut up because you're not here half the time.

(laughter)

Mr. Roozen: You're not here half the time and I am, and so why do you have anything to say? But, you know, that's the way the world works. I mean, there's a lot of people out there and it's not just the 10 or 15% that show up that can make all the rules. We have to be aware of all the people out there and all the factors and then we have to encourage input or you get unintended consequences and then you get big problems.

Mr. McMoran: Agreed. Go ahead, Annie.

Ms. Lohman: You touch on kind of a very uncomfortable question: How to deal with creep. Because in one area somebody's creep doesn't bother anybody. They don't – they're really good people and they're accepted in the neighborhood and it works for whatever reason even though we know it's creep, if you want to call it that. And I don't mean "creep" as in "creepy." But in another place not far from there it's a train wreck. And then you get the guy that is following the rules and he gets the book thrown at him and he can't hardly operate. He can't hardly get going. He can't do the project because it's too onerous. And yet another guy, because of creep or stealth – whatever you want to call it – is able to do exactly what this other guy wants to do legally permitted. Legally and permitted.

So I don't know how to address it. And I don't – and it's a challenge of being fair. The visual that comes to mind is when my daughter, who is very headstrong, was a little girl and I would say, Don't come any closer, and she would inch closer and I would say – and she would want to know, Is it still wrong? Is it still no? And I feel that way when you're talking about creep. And the challenge with it is it can become permanent and then you finally – regulation or authority comes to bear on it to make – and then the challenge is what do you do with it? It's established. And if you just codify it and make it allowed, is that good public policy? And that's the question and it's way above my pay grade. And that balance, I don't know how you deal with it.

But as I was listening to all the discussion and the question and trying to keep the question on the table, I want to make sure, though, that that arguably non-ag creep structure or whatever doesn't

inadvertently marginalize or subordinate the farm activity that's all surrounding it. And that's the danger of creep, when the venue gets bigger and bigger and bigger or the numbers get bigger and bigger. And let's be honest. We farmers are outnumbered. We are vastly outvoted. We are absolutely in the minority. And that's a reality. And so we're able to be here actually by the good will of the vast majority. And we can't hide from that bald-faced fact.

Mr. Sapp: I've got a good example of creep and it comes from another county so we don't have to point at each other or blame one another. It's King County. And Lisa knows this very well. In King County they had a great **interfuge** (sic) of creep, if you will, with wineries, breweries, and distilleries. So this became a big issue in King County and Sammamish Valley. It's basically near Woodinville, where wineries were set up and tasting rooms and things, and it was a hit for tourism. And then they grew outside of Woodinville and into the Sammamish Valley – the rural area which has special zoning by the County, of course – and became a conflict with agriculturalists. An effort was made in that county like we are making here to try to discern what should the rules be. A study was done in 2016, I believe it was begun, that led to further study. Fifty-four winery, brewery, or distillery institutions or enterprises were operating outside of city limits in the rural zone in King County. Fifty-four of them. Fifty of them, the study determined, were *illegal*. The County just wasn't paying attention. In they crept. They were small businesses in garages, in barns, in backyards. Fifty out of 54 did not meet the code. Now what's King County – pardon me again – King County going to do about this? Oh my God. So legislation was written, it was challenged, it went to the Growth Management Board, it came back, it went to the Superior Court, came back. The Growth Management Hearings Board invalidated the law – invalidated King County's rules for wineries, breweries, and distilleries – WBDs – and remote tasting rooms. Another part of the creep was that these garage enterprises set up and brought wine from eastern Washington. And then they became restaurants. Way out of bounds! So poor King County is in the midst now of having *no* ordinance about this because the Growth Management Board invalidated it. Invalidated it both for Growth Management and for State Environmental Protection reasons because they didn't meet what they were supposed to do in the ag lands to meet environmental requirements because they were enterprises that were running sewer and water and all this stuff. No one was watching. Now they've got a mess.

Mr. McMoran: Thanks for that example, Terry. We're down to our last two minutes so we can take one more question and then we'll close things out, because we did agree that we would close things out at 8 o'clock.

Ms. Rogers: Thank you, Don. What is the proper channel for noise complaints regarding alcohol-related gatherings other than informing the Skagit County Sheriff's Office? I'm happy to answer that on behalf of the County.

Mr. McMoran: Go ahead!

Ms. Rogers: We do have a code enforcement team, so that is something that you could call Planning and Development Services that's got some code enforcement. But if there's any other dialogue about noise that you might have? That's our last question.

Mr. McMoran: Anyone?

(silence)

Mr. McMoran: Maybe another question?

(laughter)

Ms. Rogers: That's the last of our questions.

Mr. McMoran: Okay, perfect.

Ms. Rogers: So maybe one more question from the prepared ones, if you'd like?

Mr. McMoran: We could take maybe one from the audience?

Unidentified Voice: (unintelligible)

Ms. Rogers: If you'd like to provide a comment or a question, can you come up to the mic just so anyone that's watching online can hear?

Same Unidentified Voice: Will I be loud enough right here?

Ms. Rogers: No, you will not.

Owen: It's very brief. Hi, my name is Owen _____. Thanks for taking my question. I'm glad to see all these good people in this room and hopefully we can come to some good solutions. I'm sure we will. These people are quite bright in here. I think it's pretty unique. I'm going off-topic here but I think it's pretty unique to get these people in this room here right now. And I think Leo said earlier, these farmers are very bright people so I'm sure we'll get good solutions if we all participate. The question would be: On the enforcement part, is there consideration on the County to eliminate the non-anonymous complaint system? I see a lot of code violations. We've talked about them. There's oodles of them. I can point them out everywhere. I have to write my name down in order to get the complaint to move forward or else it's not really looked at. And I don't want to be a bad neighbor, like Annie. I'd like everybody else to get along and stuff, but we do have rules. We've got a lot of rules on the books. So are we going to follow them? And if we're going to, we've got to police ourselves a little bit. That's kind of where I'm going with that. I think it's good to police ourselves. It keeps us honest. But, yeah, that's what I've got.

Mr. McMoran: Thank you, Owen. Jenn, do you care to follow up on that?

Ms. Rogers: It's something that I think we can certainly pass along to our County Commissioners, but I'm not sure I would feel comfortable giving an opinion on at this time.

Mr. McMoran: Awesome. And I think that's a good plug. We do have two County Commissioners with us tonight, Commissioner Browning and Commissioner Wesen. So as you have, you know, issues that you want to discuss with the County Commissioners, they'll be happy to schedule a meeting with you at a later time and date. I'm sure our panelists will be able to stick around for a few minutes. We are past the 8 o'clock hour so I'd like to adjourn at this time. I'd like to thank all of our panelists. Thank all of you that were able to join us tonight. I think we had some fabulous discussions and will give something for those in Planning to think about as they move forward in this endeavor. So thank you all for coming and have a great night.

(applause)