

## Agritourism Definitions

1. "Agritourism activity" means any activity carried out on a farm or ranch whose primary business activity is agriculture or ranching and that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities including, but not limited to: Farming; ranching; historic, cultural, and on-site educational programs; recreational farming programs that may include on-site hospitality services; guided and self-guided tours; petting zoos; farm festivals; corn mazes; harvest-your-own operations; hayrides; barn parties; horseback riding; fishing; and camping.<sup>1</sup>
2. "Agritourism" can be defined as a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors while generating income for the farm, ranch, or business owner.

Regardless of the exact definition or terminology, any definition of agritourism should include the following four factors:

- combines the essential elements of the tourism and agriculture industries;
  - attracts members of the public to visit agricultural operations;
  - is designed to increase farm income; and
  - provides recreation, entertainment, and/or educational experiences to visitors.<sup>2</sup>
3. "Agritourism" is commonly used to describe any activity incidental to the operation of a farm that brings members of the public to the farm for educational, recreational, or retail purposes.<sup>3</sup>
  4. "Agritourism" can be defined as a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors while generating income for the farm, ranch, or business owner.<sup>4</sup>
  5. "Agritourism" is the business of establishing farms as destinations for education, recreation, and the purchase of farm products; giving visitors the opportunity to connect with the working landscape and 'farm experience', and creating an additional source of revenue for the host farm.<sup>5</sup>
  6. "Agritourism" is a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the

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<sup>1</sup> [RCW 4.24.830\(1\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The National Agricultural Law Center](#)

<sup>3</sup> [American Planning Association; Knowledgebase Collection](#)

<sup>4</sup> [WSU Extension](#)

<sup>5</sup> [University of Vermont Extension](#)

owners. Activities may involve educational, entertainment, outdoor activities, hospitality, life events, food service, farm stays, or similar purpose. These activities link to and support the primary agriculture activity of the land and its economic viability. Agritourism services are separate and distinct from Farm-based businesses and Agricultural Support Services.<sup>6</sup>

7. A common, farm-based, commercial activity serving the public that promotes agriculture, is directly related to onsite agricultural production, is incidental and subordinate to the working farm operation, and is operated by the owner or operator of the farm or family members. Regularly occurring celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism.<sup>7</sup>
8. Agritourism is an enterprise on a farm or ranch for the enjoyment or education of the public that promotes the products of the farm and generates additional farm revenue.<sup>8</sup>
9. Agritourism is characterized as farm-related, consumer-oriented activities, including recreation and hospitality, on a working farm or ranch. Agritourism includes outdoor recreational activities such as fishing, hiking or hunting; hospitality services such as overnight farm stays, weddings, wine tastings or dining opportunities; educational experiences such as farm tours or on-farm museums; and, on-farm direct sales such as pick-your-own or farm stands.<sup>9</sup>

## Additional Considerations

The Agritourism definition needs to be specific enough to ensure that it is an Agricultural Related Activity, hence the name Agritourism and anything different is probably some other kind of tourism.

Agritourism should be subordinate to, or an accessory to the farm's main function by keeping the farm production the main thing, or another way to say it is that it must be a working farm that generates most of the income from farming and the tourism activity must be limited in scope to prevent tourism from being the main thing.

Agritourism could allow for some events and/or tourist activities, but we need to define a set of “Side Boards” so once they are allowed or permitted that they do not creep outside of the set limits.

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<sup>6</sup> [SPF Agritourism Multi-Stakeholder Work Group](#)

<sup>7</sup> [AAB Code and Policy Recommendations for Agritourism](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Galinato, Gregmar I., et al. Agritourism in Washington State: An Industry Profile. WSU Extension, 2011.](#)

<sup>9</sup> [A Community Vision for Sustainable Agriculture in Snohomish County, 2009.](#)

To ensure these points a permit process may need to be developed and reviewed on a regular basis. The review might have to include things like an "agricultural impact evaluation" to prevent events and activity from negatively impacting surrounding agricultural operations or detracting from the rural character of the valley. It might also need to be reviewed anytime there is a sale of property, so we don't encourage the sale and development of event only venues and see the farms go away.

#### **SCC 14.04 Definitions:**

**Agriculture or agricultural activity:** the [use](#) of land for commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products, or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, cottonwood trees, Christmas trees (not subject to excise tax imposed by RCW [84.33.140](#)), or livestock, including those activities directly pertaining to the production of crops or livestock including, but not limited to, cultivation, harvest, grazing, on-site animal waste storage and disposal, fertilization, the operation and maintenance of [farm](#) and stock [ponds](#), [drainage](#) ditches, irrigation systems, and canals, and normal maintenance, operation and [repair](#) of existing serviceable [structures](#), facilities, or improved areas.

**Agricultural accessory use:** an agricultural accessory use shall predominantly serve the principal use of the farm, but may also serve other farms. It shall be considered accessory to an agricultural use if it is located on either the same lot or other lots that collectively or in singular comprise a principal use of a corporate farm or farm held or leased by a farm manager or his immediate family. An accessory use to an agricultural use, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Outdoor storage of processed and unprocessed natural materials, waste materials, or other similar materials;
- (2) Impoundments under 1-acre feet in volume;
- (3) Farm animal or horticultural viewing by the public;
- (4) U-pick sales to the public;
- (5) Storage of agricultural products, ingredients, packaging and/or equipment used on-site;
- (6) Miscellaneous agricultural support buildings, including barns, sheds, corrals, farm offices, and coops, which are used for on-site soil-dependent agriculture; and
- (7) Activities associated with tourism which promote local agriculture; provided, that adequate parking and specified ingress and egresses are designated and permitted.

**Seasonal roadside stand:** small retail establishment accessory to an actively managed, ongoing agricultural operation dedicated exclusively to the sale of agricultural products and agricultural promotional items. A majority of the agricultural products must be grown on-site or be a product of the primary agricultural operation located in Skagit [County](#). All agricultural promotional products shall be accessory to the [primary use](#) of the stand for agricultural products and shall be directly related to the agricultural operation and located solely within the stand. Signage is allowed per [SCC 14.16.820](#).

**Temporary events:** commercial [use](#) of a property for any musical, cultural, or social event held either indoors or out of doors.

*Agricultural Natural Resource Lands allows temporary events as an administrative use permit per 14.16.400(3)(k) as long as “[Temporary events](#) related to agricultural production; and provided, that no agricultural land is converted and no permanent [structures](#) are constructed.”*

#### **Additional Skagit County Code References:**

##### **14.16.900 Special use permit requirements**

SCC 14.16.900 (2)(h) [Temporary Events](#). Special [use](#) permits for [temporary events](#) are also subject to the following criteria:

- (i) Events may occur on no more than 24 calendar [days](#) per year.
- (ii) Parking for all events shall be fully contained on the [subject property](#) and shall not include the [use](#) of any [road](#) right-of-way.
- (iii) Does not create a detrimental level of electrical interference, line voltage fluctuation, noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, traffic or other environmental [impacts](#) on the surrounding area.

[SCC14.16.400 Natural Resource Lands \(Ag-NRL\)](#) allows:

- (2)(n) [Seasonal roadside stands](#) not exceeding 300 square feet as a [Permitted Use](#).
- (3)(i) [Seasonal roadside stands](#) not exceeding 2,000 square feet, except as allowed in Subsection (2)(n) of this Section, as an Administrative Special Use.
- (4)(l) [Seasonal roadside stands](#) not exceeding 5,000 square feet, except as allowed in Subsections (2)(n) and (3)(i) of this Section, as a Hearing Examiners Special Use.