

OREGON LAW: AGRITOURISM, COMMERCIAL EVENTS OR ACTIVITIES

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ORS 215.283(4) sets standards for agritourism and other commercial events or activities occurring once a year up to eighteen times per year depending on the circumstances. Existing and temporary structures may be used to accommodate these events or activities, but no new structures may be built for these types of events. Your county may have chosen to adopt these regulations in whole, in part or not at all. What is consistent no matter where you are is that agritourism and other commercial events must be related to and supportive of agriculture. All the activities approved by these provisions must be “incidental and subordinate to existing farm use.” To define that phrase a little further, think of it this way: Is this event secondary to your on-site farming in terms of income generated, area occupied and off-site impacts? Does this event generate supplemental income that will support your farming efforts? The statute is not clear about the types of events and activities that might be allowed, so counties may interpret these uses differently.

In general, this permit could include activities related to:

- Education
- Hospitality
- Entertainment
- Outdoor recreation

More specifically, we see agritourism event permits issued for:

- Cooking classes using farm products
- School tours (which could also be conducted with a farm stand permit)
- Farm/garden/nursery tours and stays
- Farm celebration and “Harvest Days”
- Pony rides, petting zoos, corn mazes
- Farm-to-table events

Limitations and requirements:

State law requires that the activities and events must be related to and supportive of agriculture, and be incidental and subordinate to existing farm use. State law provides for a variety of permits; they increase in cost and intensity as the events do. They are:

- One expedited event permit (must occur on a tract of at least 10 acres)
- One-event permit with a conditional land-use permit
- Up to six events with a conditional land-use permit
- Up to 18 events with a conditional land-use permit (must occur on a parcel meeting the minimum size requirement which is typically 80 acres)
- Conditions associated with these permits are set by the local jurisdiction, but are likely to include:
 - Parking
 - Noise
 - Sanitation
 - Signage
 - Food

Although there are no specified limits on annual agritourism event revenue in relation to overall farm income, these events are intended to be subordinate to an existing, commercial farm operation. Also note that other agencies like the County Health Department or OLCC, may also have requirements related to these types of events.

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