

Guideline to Accessory Uses for Farms

Examples Demonstrating the Intent of These Regulations

1. A farmer raising beef cattle on a 100 acre farm decides to host an outdoor “barbecue hamburger night” on 3 occasions during the warm weather season. He/she anticipates about nine- ten customers on each occasion and has adequate parking in a field with access off his driveway. He/she submits a Narrative Statement describing what he/she intends to do and a Plot Plan showing the location of the parking spots.

Primary Use: The raising of beef cattle.

Subordinate or Accessory Use: hamburger night

Comment: in terms of impact on neighbors, this is no better or worse than 3 outdoor barbecue parties with 10 guests each, which is not uncommon in our area.

2. The farmer in the example above has enjoyed great success with the hamburger nights and is planning on an increase in his /her activities based on feedback from customers. He/she finds that on weekends there is a demand for tours of the cattle operation with opportunities for people to get “up close and personal” with a cow. Tourists from area cities are bringing their children to see the farm and learn about how the meat they eat gets to the table. He/she decides to host a “tour and hamburger tasting” each Saturday afternoon, using an unused shed in case of inclement weather. He/she still anticipates that nine-ten parking spaces will be needed and so installs a permanent all-weather parking surface in the field off the driveway due to the increase in anticipated use. The Narrative Statement and Plot Plan are amended and resubmitted to the ZEO. The farmer erects a six square foot sign along the town road directing traffic to his event.

Comment: Nine to ten vehicles are usually going up this road each Saturday anyway on their way to the: library, local restaurant, church event, sports-field.

3. A farmer who grows vegetables for area restaurants and farm markets, along with selling eggs, decide to host 3 monthly weddings each summer in an empty hay barn. He/she submits a Narrative Statement indicating the intention to bring in Port-a-Potties for each event and a Site Plan showing up to 50 parking spots in a field whose access road is off a blind curve on the nearest town road. The ZEO decides that safe ingress and egress cannot be ensured and denies the application. The farmer resubmits with a new and safe parking plan and is approved.

Primary Use: Commercial vegetable production.

Subordinate Use: 3 weddings per year

Comment: the infrequent use of the farm for weddings should have only a small impact on neighbors.

4. The farmer in the example above has enjoyed great success as a wedding host due to the popularity of the beautiful rural setting. Young couples attending the weddings are falling in love with Cornwall and deciding to make it their permanent home. Local B&Bs , the Inn and the Motel are seeing a big increase in business on wedding days. Pearley's has to hire extra per-diem staff to handle the increased demand for service. He/she decides to increase to 2 weddings a month from June through October, ie. A total of 8. He/she anticipates hiring several part-time employees to assist with the event hosting. A Special Permit is required and a public hearing is to be held.

Comment: A Special Permit and Public Hearing are required because the impact on neighbors is no longer negligible.

5. Because of his/her ongoing success as a wedding host, the farmer decides to give up commercial vegetable culture and focus on event hosting. His Special Permit is withdrawn since the primary use is no longer farming.

Comment: Wedding events must be **subordinate to the primary use**.

6. A farmer whose activities include growing ten acres of corn decides to host a corn maze after the final harvest on 3 weekends in September/October. There will be hay-rides and pumpkin carving as well. Parking will be on the edge of the cornfield, accessed off the town road, which is straight and unobstructed. He/she submits a Narrative Statement and a Plot Plan.

Primary Use: Growing corn

Subordinate Use: corn-maze and fall activities

7. A young couple buys an old farm from a childless farm couple who have not actively farmed in many years. The husband works for the state highway department and the wife is a stay-at-home mom. They prune and reinvigorate the 30 apple trees that are on the farm and resume the use of an old chicken coop that can house 30 hens. The husband plants the half-acre vegetable garden in tomatoes in his spare time. The couple decide to place a farm-stand at the end of their driveway near the road right-of-way. They plan to sell apples and tomatoes in season, eggs, and home-made sauces and pickles made from their produce. They submit a Narrative Statement and a Plot Plan indicating that they also intend to sell corn obtained from another farm in season and that they do not anticipate more than one car at a time.

Primary Use: not yet established though the property is an old farm and parts of it are being re-established

Secondary Use: apples, tomatoes, eggs and the homemade products made from them

Comment: Due to the economics of farming, many farm families "work out" in addition to running a farm. These regulations are not meant to discriminate between established farms and new ventures, nor to discriminate between full-time and part-time farmers.