

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 18, ZONING, ARTICLE I, GENERAL PROVISIONS, ARTICLE II, BASIC REGULATIONS, ARTICLE III, DISTRICT REGULATIONS, AND ARTICLE IV, PROCEDURE, OF THE CODE OF THE COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE, VIRGINIA

BE IT ORDAINED By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Albemarle, Virginia, that Chapter 18, Zoning, Article I, General Regulations, Article II, Basic Regulations, Article III, District Regulations, and Article IV, Procedure, are hereby amended and reordained as follows:

**By Amending:**

Sec. 5.1.58 Events and activities at agricultural operations

**Sec. 5.1.58 Events and activities at agricultural operations.**

Each event or activity at an agricultural operation authorized below shall be subject to the following:

- a. *Purpose and intent.* The purpose and intent of this section 5.1.58 is to implement policies of the comprehensive plan and the requirements of Virginia Code § 15.2-2288.6. The stated elements of the county's vision for the Rural Area designated in the comprehensive plan include having a strong agricultural economy with large lots on which to produce agricultural products, opportunities to gain value from processing those products, and accessing local markets; maintaining a clearly visible rural character achieved by supporting lively rural industries and activities; having a significant tourist economy in which the rural landscape augments the visitors' experience; and having diverse, interconnected areas of viable habitat, healthy streams, sustainable supplies of unpolluted groundwater, and protected historic and cultural resources. The comprehensive plan's stated goal to protect the county's agricultural lands as a resource base for its agricultural industries and for the related benefits they contribute towards the county's rural character, scenic quality, natural environment, and fiscal health is achieved, in part, by allowing appropriately scaled low-impact events and activities on farms engaged in agricultural production as provided in this section. The comprehensive plan's stated goal to encourage creative and diverse forms of rural production and support rural land uses is achieved, in part, by allowing the events and activities such as farm sales, low-impact forms of agritourism, and other events and activities provided herein.

The comprehensive plan also recognizes that rural land uses depend on natural resources that are irreversibly lost when rural land is converted to residential and commercial uses, and that protecting rural land uses provides an opportunity to conserve natural, scenic, and historic resources – by maintaining farmland, forested areas, and other natural areas – and public fiscal resources – by limiting development and lessening the need to provide public services to wide areas of the County. In addition, the comprehensive plan recognizes that conflicts can arise not only between agricultural and residential uses, but also between different agricultural uses. Thus, to ensure that events and activities at agricultural operations do not conflict with the character of the Rural Area, to promote a vibrant rural economy while controlling the adverse impacts these events and activities may have on public fiscal resources and services, and to minimize possible adverse impacts resulting from events and activities, this section incorporates strategies provided in the comprehensive plan to address potential impacts.

This section shall be implemented and interpreted to achieve the objectives of its purpose and intent.

- b. *Findings.* The board hereby finds that the standards and restrictions in this section were established by considering their economic impact on agricultural operations and the agricultural nature of the events and activities authorized herein. The board further finds that one or more substantial impacts on the public health, safety, or welfare have been identified when a zoning clearance or a special use permit is required by this section. These substantial impacts, and the thresholds and standards related thereto, are based upon the comprehensive plan, study, experience from authorizing and regulating similar events and activities under this chapter, and existing state standards. In addition, the board finds that the thresholds and standards established herein are the minimum necessary in order to satisfy the relevant policies, goals, and objectives of the comprehensive plan without allowing the events, activities, and structures permitted by this section to cause substantial impacts and thereby endanger the public health, safety, or welfare.
- c. *Applicability; limitations.* This section applies only to the events and activities permitted by right and by special use permit under subsection (d). This section does not apply to the agricultural operation itself, to any farm winery subject to section 5.1.25, ~~or to any farm brewery subject to section 5.1.57,~~ or to any farm distillery subject to 5.1.59.
- d. *Events and activities permitted.* The following events, activities, and structures are permitted by right, permitted by right with approval of a zoning clearance, or by special use permit as set forth in the following table, provided that these events, activities, and structures are individually and in the aggregate subordinate to the agricultural operation, and subject to the applicable requirements of this section and this chapter:

1. *Eligibility for agricultural operation events.* Any agricultural operation event established in the County before [date ordinance adoption], may continue to hold events as currently authorized in subsection (d) and as defined in Section 18-3.1. Any agricultural operation event established in the county on or after [date ordinance adoption], may only be held if the agricultural operation to which it is subordinate has a minimum of five (5) acres of land devoted to agricultural production on-site, or on any abutting lot under the same ownership, at least one growing season each calendar year.
2. A special exception to the minimum acreage requirement set forth in subsection (d)(1) may be granted provided the proposed agricultural operation events are consistent with the purpose and intent of this ordinance, the Comprehensive Plan, and would cause no substantial detriment to abutting properties.

Event or activity <sup>1</sup>	Criterion	By right	By right with zoning clearance <sup>2</sup>	By special use permit <sup>3</sup>
Agritourism: generally, for any number of events or activities, not regulated as another category of agritourism in this subsection or as an agricultural operation event	On sites <sup>4</sup> greater than or equal to 21 acres and the event or activity will generate 50 or fewer visitor vehicle trips per day ("VTPD")	X		
	Either on sites less than 21 acres or the event or activity will generate more than 50 visitor VTPD		X	

Event or activity <sup>1</sup>	Criterion	By right	By right with zoning clearance <sup>2</sup>	By special use permit <sup>3</sup>
	The event or activity would have more than 200 attendees at any single agricultural operation at any time, regardless of the number of visitor VTPD or the acreage of the site			X
Agritourism: educational programs, or workshops or demonstrations related to agriculture or silviculture	On sites <sup>4</sup> greater than or equal to 21 acres and the event or activity will generate 50 or fewer visitor vehicle trips per day ("VTPD"), and each event or activity would have 200 or fewer attendees at any single time, regardless of whether the number of these events or activities, in the aggregate would exceed 4 in a calendar year	X		
	The event or activity would have 200 or fewer attendees at any single time, regardless of the number of visitor VTPD or the acreage of the site, where the number of these events or activities, in the aggregate would not exceed 4 in a calendar year	X		
	Either on sites less than 21 acres or the event or activity will generate more than 50 visitor VTPD and each event or activity would have 200 or fewer attendees at any single time, where the number of these events or activities, in the aggregate would exceed 4 in a calendar year		X	
	The event or activity would have more than 200 attendees at any single agricultural operation at any time, regardless of the number of visitor VTPD or the acreage of the site			X
Agritourism: farm tours	The number of farm tours in which the agricultural operation is participating would not exceed 4 in a calendar year, and each farm tour would have 200 or fewer attendees at any single agricultural operation at any time, regardless of the number of visitor VTPD or the acreage of the site	X		
Agritourism: farm tours	The number of farm tours in which the agricultural operation is participating would exceed 4 in a calendar year, regardless of the number of attendees at any single agricultural operation at any time, the number of visitor VTPD, or the acreage of the site		X <sup>5</sup>	
Sales: The sale of agricultural or silvicultural products, or	On sites greater than or equal to 21 acres and the activity will generate 50 or fewer visitor VTPD	X		

Event or activity <sup>1</sup>	Criterion	By right	By right with zoning clearance <sup>2</sup>	By special use permit <sup>3</sup>
the sale of agricultural-related or silvicultural-related items incidental to the agricultural operation, including farm sales but excluding harvest-your-own activities	On sites less than 21 acres or the activity will generate more than 50 visitor VTPD		X	
	Structures used for the sales activity, in the aggregate, if the gross floor area devoted to sales is less than or equal to 4,000 square feet	X		
	Structures used for the sales activity, in the aggregate, if the gross floor area devoted to sales is greater than 4,000 square feet			X
Sales: harvest-your-own activities	On any site, regardless of the acreage of the site, the number of visitor VTPD, or the number of attendees at any time	X		
Sales: The preparation, processing, or sale of food products in compliance with Virginia Code § 3.2-5130(A)(3), (4) and (5) or related state laws and regulations (“sale of food products”)	On sites greater than or equal to 21 acres and the activity will generate 50 or fewer visitor VTPD	X		
	On sites less than 21 acres or the activity will generate more than 50 visitor VTPD		X	
Other Events or Activities: Agricultural operation events	The event will generate 50 or fewer visitor VTPD and will occur on sites greater than or equal to 21 acres	X		
	The event will generate more than 50 visitor VTPD or occur on sites less than 21 acres but have 200 or fewer attendees at any time		X	
	The event will have more than 200 attendees at any time, regardless of the number of visitor VTPD or the acreage of the site			X
	The number of events in a calendar year would exceed 24, regardless of the number of visitor VTPD, number of attendees, or the acreage of the site			X
Other Events or Activities: Other events or activities which are determined by the zoning administrator to be usual and customary uses at agricultural operations throughout the Commonwealth	The applicable criteria will depend on whether the proposed event or activity is classified as agritourism, sales, or an event; and the applicable criterion of the events or activities listed above shall apply	Determined by how event or activity is classified	Determined by how event or activity is classified	Determined by how event or activity is classified

1. If two or more events or activities categorized as “Agritourism” or “Other Events or Activities” are being, or will be, conducted on-site simultaneously for any duration, the number of visitor VTPD and the number of attendees shall each be aggregated, and the requirements of the more restricted event or activity shall apply. For the purposes of this provision, an event or activity requiring a special use permit is more restricted than an event or activity permitted by right, either with or without a zoning clearance, and an event or activity permitted by right with a zoning clearance is more restricted than an event or activity permitted by right.

2. The zoning clearance shall be obtained under section 31.5 and shall include considering the matters in subsection (e).
  3. The special use permit shall be obtained under section 33 and, in addition to the requirements of that section, shall include the information required by subsection (f).
  4. The term "site," as used in this section, means one or more abutting lots under the same ownership on which the agricultural operation and the event or activity is located.
  5. A single zoning clearance may be obtained for all agricultural operations participating in a farm tour.
- e. *Matters to be considered in review of request for approval of zoning clearance.* In reviewing a request for approval of a zoning clearance, the zoning administrator's review shall include verifying that the proposed event or activity complies with the applicable minimum yard standards in subsection (h), Virginia Department of Transportation entrance standards, Virginia Department of Health health and sanitation standards, and shall ensure that on-site travelways can accommodate emergency vehicles, adequate on-site parking is provided in a location that complies with this chapter, environmental impacts are addressed by compliance with the applicable regulations or performance standards of this chapter and chapter 17, and that all improvements comply with the applicable requirements in section 4. In addition, for any zoning clearance for a farm tour that may have more than 200 attendees at any single agricultural operation at any time, the zoning administrator shall consider the traffic management plan submitted by the person requesting the zoning clearance. The traffic management plan shall demonstrate how traffic entering and exiting each agricultural operation participating in the farm tour will be managed to ensure safe and convenient access to and from the site and safe travel on public streets.
1. *Notice.* The agricultural operation shall provide written notice that an application for a zoning clearance for agricultural events and activities allowed by this subsection has been submitted to the owner of each abutting lot under different ownership than the lot on which the proposed event would be located. The notice shall identify the proposed type, size, and frequency of events, and provide the name and telephone number of a contact person who will be on-site at the agricultural operation during each event. The notice shall be mailed at least ten (10) days prior to the action on the zoning clearance.
- f. *Information and sketch plan to be submitted with application for a special use permit.* In addition to any information required to be submitted with an application for a special use permit under section 33.4, each application for one or more event or activity ("use") for which a special use permit is required under subsection (d) shall include the following:
1. *Information.* Information pertaining to the following: (i) the proposed uses; (ii) the maximum number of persons who will attend each use at any given time; (iii) the frequency and duration of the uses; (iv) the provision of on-site parking; (v) the location, height, and lumens of outdoor lighting for each use; and (vi) the location of any stage, structure or other place where music will be performed.
  2. *Sketch plan.* A sketch plan, which shall be a schematic drawing of the site with notes in a form and of a scale approved by the director of planning, depicting: (i) all structures that would be used for the uses; (ii) how access, on-site parking, outdoor lighting, signage, and minimum yards will be provided in compliance with this chapter; and (iii) how potential adverse impacts to abutting lots will be mitigated so they are not substantial.
- g. *Sound from outdoor amplified music.* Sound generated by outdoor amplified music shall be subject to the following:

1. *Zoning clearance.* Each agricultural operation shall obtain approval of a zoning clearance under section 31.5 prior to generating any outdoor amplified music at the agricultural operation. The purpose of the zoning clearance shall be to verify that the sound amplification equipment at the agricultural operation will comply with the applicable standards in section 4.18 or that the owner has and will use a sound level meter as that term is defined in section 4.18.02 prior to and while outdoor amplified music is being generated, to monitor compliance with the applicable standards in section 4.18, or both.
  2. *Maximum sound level.* Sound generated by outdoor amplified music shall not exceed the applicable maximum sound levels in section 4.18.04.
  3. *Outdoor amplified music not an exempt sound.* Outdoor amplified music shall not be deemed to be an exempt sound under section 4.18.05(A).
  4. *Times of day when outdoor amplified music prohibited.* Sound generated by outdoor amplified music is prohibited between 10:00 p.m. each Sunday through Thursday night and 7:00 a.m. the following morning, and between 11:00 p.m. each Friday and Saturday night and 7:00 a.m. the following morning
  5. *Notice.* The agricultural operation shall provide written notice that an application for a zoning clearance for agricultural events and activities allowed by this subsection has been submitted to the owner of each abutting lot under different ownership than the lot on which the proposed event would be located. The notice shall identify the proposed type, size, and frequency of events, and provide the name and telephone number of a contact person who will be on-site at the agricultural operation during each event. The notice shall be mailed at least ten (10) days prior to the action on the zoning clearance.
- h. *Yards and separation from dwelling units* Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the following minimum front, side, and rear yard requirements shall apply to any event or activity:
1. *Structures used for ~~sales~~ agritourism, events, and sales.* The minimum yards for structures used for the sale of agricultural or silvicultural products, agritourism, and events shall be as follows:
    - a. *New permanent structures and temporary structures.* The minimum front, side, and rear yards ~~required for~~ requirements in Sec. 10.4 shall apply to all primary and accessory structures used for agricultural operation events or agritourism and any new permanent structure or temporary structures shall be as provided in the bulk and area regulations established for the applicable zoning district, provided that the minimum front yard on an existing public road in the rural areas (RA) district shall be thirty-five (35) feet for structures used for sales. The minimum required yard may be reduced by special exception upon consideration of the following: (i) there is no detriment to the abutting lot; (ii) there is no harm to the public health, safety, or welfare; and (iii) written consent has been provided by the owner of the abutting lot consenting to the reduction.
    - b. *Existing permanent structures.* If an existing permanent structure does not satisfy any minimum yard requirement under subsection (h)(1)(a), the minimum yard required shall be the distance between the existing permanent structure and the

street, road, access easement, or lot line on November 12, 2014, and that distance shall not be thereafter reduced. An enlargement or expansion of the structure shall be no closer to a street, road, access easement or lot line than the existing structure.

2. *Outdoor event and activity areas.* The minimum front, side, and rear yards for outdoor event and activity areas shall be seventy-five (75) feet. In addition, outdoor event and activity areas shall be a minimum of one hundred twenty-five (125) feet from any dwelling unit on an abutting lot not under the same ownership as the agricultural operation. These minimum standards shall not apply to any portion of the agricultural operation that is engaged in production agriculture or silviculture, even though it also is used for an agritourism activity.
  3. *Parking areas, tents, and portable toilets.* The minimum front, side, and rear yards for parking areas, tents, and portable toilets shall be ~~seventy-five (75) feet~~ one hundred twenty-five (125) feet from any abutting lot not under the same ownership as the agricultural operation. In addition, parking areas and portable toilets shall be a minimum of one hundred twenty-five (125) feet from any dwelling unit on an abutting lot not under the same ownership as the agricultural operation.
  4. *Special exception.* Any minimum yard may be reduced by special exception upon consideration of the following: (i) there is no detriment to any abutting lot; (ii) there is no harm to the public health, safety, or welfare; and (iii) written consent to the proposed reduction has been provided by the owner of any lot abutting the proposed reduced setback.
- i. *Uses prohibited.* The following uses are prohibited:
1. Restaurants.
  2. Helicopter rides.