



Celebrating Small Farms & Agricultural Businesses

In Jefferson County

Questions & Answers About Agriculture Policies & Regulations

Jefferson County has made important changes in Agriculture policies and regulations. Listed below are a few questions and answers to help you better understand how these changes affect your small farm and/or agricultural business.

How do I know if my land is eligible for agricultural land use designation?



If your land is in the county and you are raising or planning to raise something that you sell regularly, such as hay, beef or dairy cattle, vegetables for the Farmers Market, flowers/berries/trees for a U-Pick, etc., your land is eligible for consideration. There is no minimum lot size.

How can I find out my current County land use designation?

Go to the County website at www.co.jefferson.wa.us and click

"Maps" in the header. Using the "Parcel Map" viewer, zoom in close enough to your land and make the "County Zoning" layer "Visible" by clicking the box. Use the "Help" function in the "Map Viewer" header for additional guidance or contact the Department of Community Development (DCD) at 360-379-4450 or dcd@co.jefferson.wa.us.

Will a change to an agricultural land use designation change my property taxes?

Your property taxes will still be computed on your appraised value. There is no special, add-on tax for agricultural designation.

What kinds of things can I do with my land if I have an agricultural land use designation that's different from what I can do now?

Activities associated with commercial agriculture, such as selling direct from your land, processing your farm products, agritourism, etc., are allowable within specified limitations without a permit if you have an agricultural land use designation. Some other agricultural activities not formerly allowed can be accomplished subject to obtaining a permit.

What about raising crops or grazing livestock near "environmentally sensitive areas?"

In many cases, having an agricultural land use designation will permit greater flexibility in the ways you can use your farmland and still protect sensitive areas.



What will a change in land use designation cost me and how much paperwork will it be? How long will the land use designation take?

For one time only, between now and July 30, 2004, the County will do all the paperwork for you and there will be NO fee. The land use changes are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2004.

Who makes the final decision about a land use change for my property?



The County staff prepares a report on all the properties submitted for change. The County Planning Commission reviews it, holds a public hearing and makes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for a final decision.

If I have further questions, who should I contact?

Contact Josh Peters 379-4466 at the Department of Community Development or e-mail at jpeters@co.jefferson.wa.us.