

**STAFF REPORT TO: AMADOR COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
FOR MEETING OF: December 18, 2019**

**ITEM #2** Discussion and possible recommendation to the Planning Commission regarding a proposed amendment to Chapter 19.24.036 AG District—Use regulations, by adding Section 19.24.036(I)(13), regarding agritourism operations, to Amador County Zoning Code pertaining to all parcels in the “AG,” Exclusive Agriculture District within the unincorporated County. The amendment proposes specific agritourism uses allowed in the “AG” zoning district with a Use Permit, as approved by the Planning Commission. A definition for “agritourism” would be added to Chapter 19.08. In addition, removal or modification of the restriction of residential uses to family or employees of the property owner(s) within the “AG” zoning district, shall be reviewed and discussed with respect to agritourism and compatible uses.

**Applicant:** County of Amador (Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZOA-19;12-1)

**Supervisor District:** All

**Location:** The ordinance would apply to all properties in the unincorporated area of Amador County with the zoning designation of “AG,” Exclusive Agriculture.

The proposed zoning amendment codifies several specific agritourism uses which would be allowed in the “AG” zoning designation subject to a Use Permit issued by the Planning Commission. Agritourism uses not specifically listed could be determined to be allowed uses with a Use Permit, with a recommendation from the Amador County Agriculture Advisory Committee. Any use permit application must provide specifications regarding the uses proposed, site conditions, frequency of events, occupancy, and any other information required by the Planning Department.

A definition would also be added to Zoning Code Chapter 19.08—Definitions, providing a generic definition for “agritourism.”

The Committee should also discuss the existing County Code requirement of that all dwellings in the “AG” district be restricted to use by immediate family members or employees of the property owner. This restriction will be evaluated with respects to agritourism operations. The Committee should review the proposals to determine if they are compatible with the California Land Conservation Act and Government Code 51238.1.

The Committee’s recommendations will be forward to the Planning Commission for further consideration.

**19.08—Definitions: “Agritourism”**

“Agritourism.” The act of visiting a working farm/ranch or agricultural operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the activities of the farm/ranch or agricultural

operation that adds to the economic viability of the agricultural operation. Agritourism activities shall be secondary and incidental to a primary agricultural use.

**19.24.036(3)(a)—Agritourism Uses**

3. a. Agritourism operations including but not limited to any of the following uses if found to be consistent with “agritourism” as defined in this title, and secondary to an existing agricultural use of the property and found to be a compatible accessory use under the principles of compatibility as determined by the Agriculture Advisory Committee:

- i. Hayrides, wagon rides, pony rides;
- ii. Farm stays, guest ranches, dude ranches;
- iii. Farm or barn tours;
- iv. Harvest your own and “u-pick operations”;
- v. Farmers’ markets, produce stands, agricultural product tasting facilities
- vi. Arena events, roping, horse shows, rodeos, herding competitions;
- vii. Agricultural education opportunities;
- viii. Demonstration farms and gardens;
- ix. Other agritourism uses as determined by the Planning Commission.

b. In any use permit application submitted for an agritourism operation or use, applicant must submit the following information as well as any other information required by the Planning Department:

- i. Duration and frequency of the agritourism activity, or seasonality;
- ii. Impacts to traffic, commercial encroachments, and roadways (public or private);
- iii. Parking accommodations;
- iv. Signage and advertising;
- v. Farmland classification (USDA);
- vi. Maximum number of guests at one time.

c. Public notice of such application shall be given in the manner described in Chapter 19.56 of this code, Use Permits.