

## Attachment 1 – Support

Count	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Hughes	Michael	Chair AAB	Support	Email	7/12/2023
2	Erickson	Christy	5548 Smith Rd Bow, WA 98232	Support/Grandfather existing venues	Email	7/27/2023
3	Lisser	Debra	18417 Burkland Rd Mount Vernon WA 98274	Support	Email	8/14/2023
4	Bynum	Ellen	Executive Director Friends of Skagit County 419 South Main, Suite 207 Mount Vernon, WA 98276	Supports/Wants clarity for the public	Email	8/1/2023
5	Fernades	Jana	Starbird Rd	Supports/Wants enforcement of current code	Email	8/16/2023
6	Jennifer	Smith	S&B Farms, Norhtwest Lime Company, Skagit Valley's Best Produce, and Fir Island FloralSmith	Supports	Email	7/27/2023
7	Billings	Judy	Anacortes WA	Supports	Email	7/26/2023
8	Speas	Kathy	1609 9th St Anacortes, WA 98221	Supports	Email	7/22/2023
9	McCord	Linnea	6478 Bayview St Anacortes WA 98221	Supports	Email	7/28/2023
10	Hughes	Mickala	18065 Skagit City Rd Mount	Supports	Email	7/28/2023

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			Vernon, WA 98273			
11	Allen	Nancy	PO Box 221 Bow WA 98232	Supports	Email	8/2/2023
12	Bouscher	Nancylee	Intersection of Avon Allen and Dunbar Mount Vernon	Supports	Email	8/3/2023
13	Pare	Robert	14114 Doser St Bow, WA 98232	Supports	Mail	8/4/2023
14	Zollars	Walter	La Conner WA	Supports	Email	7/28/2023
15	Jennifer	Smith	President Western Washington Agricultural Association	Supports/Provides further recommendations	Email	8/9/2023
16	Bynam	Ellen	Friends of Skagit County	Supports	Email	7/24/2023
17			Friends of Skagit County	Supports/Info about current laws and regulations	Mail	7/25/2023
18			Friends of Skagit County	Supports/Request to remove Change.org petiton	Mail	7/25/2023
19	Patterson	Janet	18383 Burkalnd Rd Mount Vernon WA 98274	Supports	Email	7/26/2023
20	Knutzen	Kraig	Knutzen Farms 9255 Chuckanut Dr Burlington WA 98233	Supports	Email	7/26/2023

Attachment 1 – Support

21	Good	Randy and Aileen	35482 State Route 20 Sedro Woolley WA 98284	Supports	Mail	7/24/2023
22	Lohman	Dolores	16821 Britt Rd Mount Vernon WA 98273	Supports	Email	8/17/2023
23	Sapp	Terry	804 Ferry St Sedro Woolley WA 98284	Supports	Email	8/17/2023
24	Michael	Hughes		Supports	Email	8/17/2023
25	Speck	Josh	845 Keta Ave. Burlington, WA 98233	Supports	Email	7/24/2023

1. Michael Hughes



## Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board

1800 Continental Place • Mount Vernon, Washington 98273  
office 360-416-1338 • [www.skagitcounty.net/planning](http://www.skagitcounty.net/planning)

July 12, 2023

Skagit County Planning Commission  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Skagit County Planning Commissioners:

The Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board is writing in support of the Agritourism proposed code changes. The current code does not adequately define Agritourism. The proposed changes will update the code's language to better convey what is and what is not agritourism in the Ag-NRL parts of our county.

Thank you for accepting our comments.

Sincerely,

Michael Hughes  
Chair, Agricultural Advisory Board

**2. Christy Erickson <[christy@hedgerowedison.com](mailto:christy@hedgerowedison.com)>**

thank you for all of the thought and time put into these code changes. i am sympathetic to those properties that have spent so much love and energy building places for people to gather on agricultural lands. these changes will be a hardship. all that said, i agree with the limit of 12 events a year. it allows for those special events that encourage engagement with ag lands but keeps in check the effects it may have on the surrounding properties and farming. working farms are critical to the valley and if the lands are slowly transitioned into event spaces i am concerned the valley starts to have faux farms that look good for venues not production of agriculture.

another major consideration is effect on the neighbors of these event space properties, who didn't purchase land with the idea there would be weddings and events next door. that is a large noise and environmental impact to a rural location.

planning and codes should be in place to prevent the worst scenarios from happening. amending the code to allow for venues on ag lands means all ag properties and owners could potentially be wedding venues. not just the few that are functioning today. that would be a huge problem and a cultural shift to this valley

**is there an avenue to grandfather in these few spaces that have been functioning and good neighbors??**

christy erickson

5548 smith road

bow, washington 98232

**3. Debra <[debra@lisser.com](mailto:debra@lisser.com)>**

August 9, 2023

RE: Agritourism in Skagit County

To The Agricultural Advisory Board, Planning Commission and Skagit County Commissioners,

Thank you for allowing an extended comment period on the topic of Skagit County agritourism and what it may mean for the future in our Valley.

I urge you to please consider what this ordinance means to all Skagit County residents. I ask you to address many of the larger issues which may take place without a comprehensive permitting process leading to the “anything goes until reported” currently happening in the agricultural zoned areas of our County.

Consider the trendy “wedding venues” and following example:



The proposed Briarwood Estate location at 18091 Burkland Road in the south Mount Vernon area- zoned AG-NRL. Please see the web site [www.briarwood-estate.com](http://www.briarwood-estate.com) which is up and running and taking reservations without the proper county permitting nor approval.

Within this “wedding venue” facade, you will find links to:

“Woodland Glamping”- camp sites with “glamping bubbles and modern amenities”

Outdoor Movie Theatre

Trailer and RV spots on site

“Comfortable lodgings (Cherry Blossom Cottage and Rosewood Manor) for guests from 2-6 persons” located on site

“Different areas to entertain” for private parties, religious or community gatherings or corporate events, games and entertainment and bbqs

“Birthday and other special occasions rentals”

all with “no minimum guest requirements and groups of all sizes” which can “span the weekend” or longer time periods with event/lodging rentals.

None of these are permitted nor zoned in the AG-NRL.

All these “activities” are facilitated with an off-site scheduling agent to “book your event” and are specifically excluded under the “wedding venue” agritourism umbrella which is currently being proposed.

Our Burkland Road neighborhood is not only agricultural based but is home to bald eagles, hawks, migratory waterfowl, deer, coyotes and a mixed number other wildlife. All will be impacted by this “all inclusive event center” proposal.

Rural farming deals with early morning to late evening field plowing, planting and harvesting, chemical sprays, tractor traffic, not to mention big trucks during dusty harvests. What “glamping visitor” will enjoy waking up to those activities or the bird deterrent blueberry cannon blasts on Stackpole Road which might begin at daylight? We neighbors accept this as part of our rural life in Skagit County.

Please work to maintain strong agricultural zoning and limit, or as you are proposing, eliminate the unregulated wedding/event venues which do not relate to an agricultural use. Unrestricted agritourism effects us all.

Venues in the Ag-NRL zone should be required to be permitted and should abide by rules and regulations of strict zoning which protect those who live here and call Skagit County home.

Thank you,

Debra Lisser

18417 Burkland Road, Mount Vernon WA 98274

Not a farmer but local resident (since 1968) who supports farming and our rural way of life in Skagit County

**4. Ellen Bynum <[skye@cnw.com](mailto:skye@cnw.com)>**

July 31, 2023

Skagit County Planning Commission

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for extending the comment period to the Skagit Planning Commission on the proposed changes to the Ag-NRL codes regarding agri-tourism and allowed uses on farmland in Skagit County.

The public needs better information about the planning processes.

Few of the attendees at the recent public hearing understood the process for rule making and planning in Skagit County. We recommend that the County Commissioners and members of the Planning Commission work with staff to produce and post an outline of the process that explains the process for amending the existing Comprehensive Plan, Countywide policies and county codes. If such an outline exists, please post it on the county website and also show on future public notices and as a PSA on Skagit 21 TV.

Due to the misinformation, there is much confusion about what is possible. Yes, the code is complicated, and yes, the GMA and Comp Plan (which reflects the local planning policies and decisions of the people of Skagit), was written 30 years ago, but this is the current law under which we operate. Sticking to the process is always challenging, but it is what has to happen to make the outcome, whatever it is, legal.

How the process works and why.

Although the record may already show some of this information, we repeat some here in an attempt to clarify the importance of the planning process and the Planning Commission's processes of decision making. Please add corrections where needed so that the public is not misled or misunderstands the processes. Our intent is to clarify, if needed, existing language in the plans, policies and codes that affect Ag-NRLs use and protection under GMA.

We understand that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) initiated the review of the Skagit County code by Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PD&S).

The Ag Advisory Board (AAB), members of the Planning Commission and other committees and boards are appointed by the BOCC. The Skagit Planning Commission (PC) requested the AAB participate in the review of agritourism issues from the beginning of the BERK study. The AAB appointed its Land Use Committee to propose changes to the existing code to strengthen

protection of farmland. The AAB Land Use committee completed that task after 2 years and presented their proposed code changes to the PC, PDS staff & the BOCC at a joint work session held as a public meeting. The PC reviewed the AAB's proposed codes and recommended a public hearing be held. Staff published the notice the public hearing including a SEPA review of the proposed code changes as required under the GMA.

The record is established during the public hearing and any extended comment period. Any member of the public or staff can submit comments during that time. The question before the PC is ONLY whether to adopt or reject the proposed code changes based on the record. A quick review of historical Planning Commission recommendations did not reveal any prior decisions with amendments that were not closely related to the proposed changes.

After the public comments are closed, the record is closed. Comments that are "off the record" can be submitted after the comments close to the PD&S, and PC members can read them. However, PC members cannot consider changes proposed by public comments that do not pertain to adoption or non-adoption of the proposed code changes in their deliberations and decision. Decisions of the PC are only recommended or not by the PC to the BOCC.

PC members cannot participate in proposing solutions, as their role is not advocacy, only review and recommendation to the BOCC. Comments which are inaccurate or do not address whether to adopt the proposed changes or not can be reviewed. However inaccurate and/or unlawful comments should not be considered.

Members of the PC are acting as "deciders" and as such should maintain an appearance of fairness so the public trusts their review and vote were done in a neutral manner, without favoritism or pre-judgement. Members of the PC who act as advocates for any proposal before the PC are no longer impartial "deciders". A person cannot be both an advocate and a "decider" and should recuse themselves from voting when there is an appearance of fairness issue, even when not legally required to do so in our opinion.

Correcting lack of enforcement on Ag-NRLs.

Whether the PC recommends to adopt the proposed changes to the code or not, the BOCC are still left with the question of what they want to do about illegal operations. The BOCC has the option of adopting, the language proposed in the code change, regardless of the PC recommendation. The BOCC and/or county staff can initiate a July 31st submission next year to the Comprehensive Plan docket. Citizens can do the same. The BOCC decides which items on the docket are forwarded to the agenda for PC review.

In the interim, the BOCC could have planning and legal staff work on guidelines of what is allowed and what is not, under current code, RCWs, case precedent, etc. This needs to be in plain language with citations to where the authority for each originates - WACs, RCWs, County Comp Plan (CP), codes, countywide policies, Ag. Adv. Board policies and GMA Hearings Board decisions. The WA State Dept. of Commerce may have updated its handbook on GMA and/or have other appropriate documents that can be used as a basis for adding modifications that are specific to Skagit County.

The venue operators need certainty about whether they can continue operating. The BOCC, with legal counsel, will need to figure out the options they can take. Continuing to allow illegal operations invites an appeal to the GMHB from the public. Issuing an emergency ruling may be possible with language that conditions operations based on current codes for health & safety regulations as well as GMA, CP, codes, policies and legal precedents from appeals. The BOCC would need legal advice to determine if that is possible and how to do it. We have seen these used when one party or another is appealing, or as a settlement, but haven't done the research to see if it has been used as a remedy to avoid appeals.

Skagitonians have supported farmland preservation and agriculture for many years.

Prior to GMA Skagit County had district plans which required conserving farms and farmland. For 33 years, Skagitonians considered and made decisions on what they wanted farmland to do and be under GMA. Citizens created the Comprehensive Plan (CP) and although it took appeals and some revisions, the County has been in compliance with the GMA from the end of the appeals. There have been revisions, and except for legal decisions that affected the CP, the changes were done with the cooperation of farmers, ag advocates, ag services, dike/drainage districts and farm associations. Please see attached Skagit County Planning Commission Proposed Comprehensive Plan Element Policy Document: Natural Resource Conservation (Agriculture, Forestry, and Mineral), Rural, Urban Growth AREAs, Housing, Transportation and Utilities, June 17, 1994 (partial citations on Ag-NRLs) for the original policies that shaped the Comprehensive Plan, policies and codes concerning Ag-NRLs.

Challenges at the GMHB hearings boards regarding converting farms to schools (Burlington proposal which was withdrawn) and urban growth area conversions (Mount Vernon UGA expansion requests moderated by GMHB rulings) were decided so that farmland and farmers could continue production. One challenge was SPF's concern about the Alfano "farmstand" which was resolved by the landowner moving his proposed commercial operation to the Town of LaConner and selling the 60 acres he had purchased. The outcome supported agriculture and the code.

Skagitonians overwhelmingly support the preservation of farmland. Even the operators of wedding venues do not want to jeopardize farmland; it's the responsibility of the PC and BOCC to explain to the public how the code was written to conserve farmland and how it continues to do so.

No one says they want Skagit to become a "Disney Farm" experience and stop producing food and fiber. However, the unregulated addition of more and more non-farm events on farms can only result in interference with farms and farming activities.

Non- farm accessory uses threaten farming & farmland in Skagit County.

The concerns about non-agricultural accessory uses on Ag-NRLs is that these non-farm uses may interfere with farming. Skagit County's "right to farm" was adopted earlier than the GMA as part of farmers working with the county to consolidate parcels into the 40 acre minimum size today in Ag-NRL. Producers on prime soils understood the economics of using larger parcels for commercial crops. Crop rotation and the need to "trade" ground to prevent pest and

disease damage meant farmers needed to know if there was enough land to successfully farm. The diversity of the crops in Skagit Valley are one of the keys to its continued economic success. The other obvious key is the cooperation among farmers and their neighbors.

Cummulative effects of allowing non-ag accessory uses on farms.

It's not one venue or two, but what happens when even half of the 700 farms in Skagit wants to be a non-farm event venue? Even though there are limits in the RCWs, GMA, Comprehensive Plan, policies and codes on how much farmland can be used for accessory uses (no more than 1 acre adjacent to existing buildings), current farmers may have historically converted more acres when constructing barns, sheds, outbuildings, garages and other structures. Additional acres converted to other uses removes the land from production. Reducing the total acres available for growing crops, for whatever reason, can eventually reach a tipping point where the support services infrastructure (equipment, seeds, insurance, fertilizer, etc.) goes out of business. The balance of the economy of Skagit County's farming community is critical to keeping farms in production and markets viable. Once the land is converted to other uses, it is unlikely to ever be used for food production again. This is the reason the RCWs and GMA are so clear on identifying, designating and protecting agriculture and other natural resource lands.

Smaller farms also play a key role in keeping agriculture viable. In addition to providing local food (farmstands, CSAs, farmers market suppliers, regional suppliers for Food Hub distributions, etc.) small farms can provide the buffers between larger farm parcels, urban growth areas and cities or town boundaries. Smaller farms work with their larger neighbors on rotation, cross-fertilization issues, pest and disease control, use of chemicals and biologics and many other aspects of food production.

Agritourism, by any definition, has to start with agriculture.

The proposed code changes clarify Skagit County's definition of agritourism based on the legal requirements in local and state policies and laws. Many Washington counties that had thriving farm communities at one time, have lost these to other uses like development before GMA passed. From King, Snohomish, Pierce and Thurston to Clark counties, farms were converted to commercial centers, shopping malls, housing and business developments, public venues, environmental buffers and mitigation projects and wider roads, to name a few. Prime agricultural soil was paved, covered, moved and removed. In some places where farming was no longer viable, non-farm activities helped keep some farmers farming. No one wants Skagit to convert the remaining prime soils and farmland in the region so that we become the Kent Valley. To guarantee this does not happen, Skagit farming and farms of all sizes must be maintained primarily in agricultural activities and support agricultural accessory uses on farms.

Evaluating and planning for Skagit's agricultural past, present and future.

Historical review (partial) of planning under GMA, see attachment below.

Skagit County Planning Commission Proposed Comprehensive Plan Element Policy Document, June, 17, 1994 provided definitions, goals, objectives and policies about identifying and conserving Agricultural - Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRLs). The plan established an agricultural

advisory board, limited the intrusion of non-agricultural uses in agricultural designated areas, proposed a farmland protection program, limited home based businesses on Ag-NRL, and emphasized that agricultural production, processing, distribution and related ag services were to be the primary uses of the land. Secondary uses were to be related to agricultural production - processing, distribution, and farming related activities. The plan was created over two years by a Citizen Advisory Committee. Twelve to fifteen prospective participants for each element of the plan were invited to participate by the BOCC. The Planning Department worked with a communication specialist to develop a common ground rules so all of the committees used the same decision making process. The CAC met individually over a fourteen month period. Meetings were advertised and public participation encouraged.

The Planning Commission received public comments during the review and revision of the CAC generated policies. The Planning Commission held public hearings on each element and all comments were reviewed in detail. These efforts resulted in the Planning Commission proposed comprehensive plan element policies, released June 17, 1994.

Current and future planning processes for resource lands under GMA.

Skagit County will continue to use processes that are guided by the GMA and other state laws. The County may appoint special committees to advise on agricultural issues and solutions to those issues, but the recommendations of such committees must be lawful, i.e. legally possible. If the BOCC do not wish to have this done in house by County legal staff, they could hire an experienced GMA attorney to provide legal advice to them, PD&S and legal staff and produce any accompanying language or documents. Whatever the choices taken, the actions proposed must comply with the current plans, policies, codes and state requirements.

Outline of public process (please revise if needed).

- Issue presented to BOCC, PD&S or brought as a Comprehensive Plan, policy, code or map amendment by a citizen. Some issues are added due to a change in state law and/or legal decisions.
- PD&S staff research and present the issues in staff report(s) to the PC.
- Public notice of a public hearing before the PC or BOCC.
- PC holds the public hearing and takes testimony that creates the record.
- PC deliberates on the record.
- PC makes a recommendation to the BOCC to accept the proposed code changes as presented, accept with qualifications or comments or to reject all or part of the proposed code language.
- The BOCC reviews the record and recommendations presented by the PC.
- PD&S provide any clarification or additional planning or legal reference support not covered by the PC's recommendation. Staff do not advocate for one decision or another.

- A public hearing is usually held with public notice, to take testimony to create an additional record(s). BOCC also have the option of reviewing the recommendations of the PC and making a decision, but have usually held public hearings especially on controversial issues.
- BOCC deliberates.
- BOCC makes a decision on the issue(s) and passes a resolution or ordinance to enact their decision.
  
- The public has an opportunity to appeal the decision to the Growth Management Hearings Board within a certain amount of time.
- The GMHB has its own process for review of the record and generally does not allow new or additional information in their review.
- The GMHB makes its decision and the ruling can be appealed by any citizen who has standing to appeal, that is they made the comments from the beginning of the review of the proposed code change(s).
- An appeal goes to the District Court of WA which has its own operating rules, including dates and deadlines and requirements for consideration of the issues in the case.

Friends of Skagit County urges the Planning Commissioners to consider the intent of the County Comprehensive Plan, county planning policies and current codes as well as the proposed changes to the Ag-NRL section of the code in making their recommendations to the BOCC.

Keeping farmland for food and fiber production is essential for the County's current and future economy.

Please contact us should you need more or different information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Ellen Bynum, Executive Director

Friends of Skagit County

419 South Main, Suite 207

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

cc: Randy Good, President, FOOSC; Michael Hughes, Chair, Ag Advisory Board.

Attachment.

Skagit County Planning Commission Page 1 of 3 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Element Policy Document,  
June, 17, 1994 (Selected sections).

Excerpt from Introduction:

Skagit County has been working with Citizen Advisory Committees developing elements (chapters) of the Comprehensive Plan since November of 1992. During the last eighteen months committee members have worked diligently to produce policy documents that reflect both community visioning efforts and fulfill legal requirements of the Growth Management Act.

Community suggestions, staff review and Planning Commission recommendations have served to guide these policy proposals. The Department is now pleased to offer for public review element policies on the Natural Resource Conservation element (covering agriculture, forestry and mining), urban growth areas, rural, housing, transportation and utilities....

.....To enable additional public review and comment on Planning Commission proposed comprehensive plan elements prior to final recommendation, a public hearing is scheduled.....

All comments received during this process will be reviewed before the document is forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our county's growth management planning efforts.

David Hough Planning Director.

Page 2 - AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE ELEMENT POLICIES

GOAL A: Develop efficient, effective local agricultural policies, ordinances, and programs.

OBJECTIVE 1: Establish an agricultural advisory board.

Policy:

1.1. An Agricultural Advisory Board shall be appointed and shall consist of a majority of agricultural producers. This board should reflect the diversity of agriculture and advocate sound agricultural policies and programs for Skagit County.

Page 2:

GOAL C: Stabilize the loss of prime farmland and limit the intrusion of non-agricultural uses into agricultural designated areas.

OBJECTIVE 3: Maintain, agricultural production on designated agricultural resource lands at the edge of urban areas and throughout the county, to reduce economic pressure for conversion of agricultural land and minimize the influence of speculative land transactions on the price of farmland and to provide incentives for long term agricultural use.

Policies:

3.1 Prime agricultural lands shall be protected and preserved as a nonrenewable agricultural production resource to benefit present and future generations.

3.2 Efficient agricultural operations and production which are based on sustainable agricultural and best management practices shall be encouraged.



Skagit County Planning Commission Page 2 of 3 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Element Policy Document,  
June, 17, 1994 (Selected sections).

Page 3

3.3 Skagit County, shall prohibit spot rezoning which is not agriculturally related, on agricultural designated lands.

GOAL D: Maintain a healthy, diverse and competitive agricultural industry whose products are recognized as being produced in Skagit County.

OBJECTIVE 4: Facilitate agricultural production by allowing agricultural processing facilities, limited direct farm sales, and limited agricultural support service, that support local agricultural activities, which are not harmful to the long term agricultural use in all agricultural land use categories.

Policies:

4.4.3 The use is directly related to agricultural enhancement or production...

4.5 A farm-based business ordinance shall be developed to permit on-farm enterprises including but not limited to; direct marketing of unprocessed and value added agricultural products produced on site, and agricultural support businesses. The purpose of this ordinance is to supplement the farm income, improve the efficiency of farming, and provide employment for farm family members.

4.5.1 Farm based businesses must remain an accessory use, secondary to the primary agricultural use of an actively farmed property, and shall not interfere with adjacent farming operations, cause nuisances for nearby residences, or generate large amounts of traffic.

4.5.2 Performance standards and mitigation measures shall be developed in order to govern the intensity, siting, and design of any proposed on-farm enterprises and agricultural support businesses. Performance standards shall govern permitted uses with respect to their impact on prime soils, drainage, critical areas, traffic generation, visual impact, and any other relevant criteria.

NOTE: The current Home Based Business (HBB) levels of permits and allowed activities is a result of this original goal.

Page 5:

Goal E: Mitigate conflicts between agricultural and nonagricultural uses in designated agricultural resource lands.

OBJECTIVE 6: Establish agricultural production as the highest priority use in the designated agricultural resource lands. Providing for farmers to manage their operations in a safe and efficient, economic manner with minimal conflict between agricultural uses and nonagricultural uses.

Policies:

6.1 Apply the provisions of the "Right to Farm" Ordinance to all lands designated Agriculture.

6.2 Anticipated conflicts between a proposed new or modified land use and existing agricultural activities shall be mitigated by the newer use or application.

Skagit County Planning Commission Page 3 of 3 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Element Policy Document,  
June, 17, 1994 (Selected sections).

6.3 The primary use of any parcel on lands designated as Agriculture shall be agricultural production and related processing, and support services. Residential uses in these areas shall recognize that the primary use of the land may create agricultural "nuisance" situations, such as flies, noise, dust, odors and spraying of chemicals.

6.4 Well-defined buffer areas shall be required as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent to agricultural land uses. These buffer areas shall be of sufficient size to protect agriculture from the impacts of incompatible development and to mitigate against the effects of agricultural operations on adjacent land uses, and shall be credited as open space

6.5 Agricultural operations shall be protected by requiring a buffer between the agricultural land use and any new land use adjacent to lands designated as agricultural. The buffer shall occur on the parcel for which a permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmable land.

6.6 Residential land divisions shall be sited with sufficient distance from agricultural activities to minimize future nuisance complaints.

6.7 A mechanism for the increase of lot coverage maximums on agricultural land shall be developed for approved agricultural purposes.

Page 5:

Goal F: Mitigate conflicts between tourism and agricultural uses in designated agricultural resource lands (CWRP 3.4, 8.5, WAC 365-190-040).

PAGE 6:

OBJECTIVE 7: Avoid conflict between tourism generating and public festivals in agricultural areas by promoting a better understanding of the significance of agriculture within the County.

Policy:

7.1 Public festivals which are centered on agricultural or wildlife viewing activities that may substantially impact agriculture shall promote ways to reduce those impacts resulting from the public festival. Those impacts include but are not limited to traffic, litter, trespass, sanitation.

Page 8:

GOAL L: Minimize non-farm activities impacts to agriculture within agricultural areas.

Attachment 1 – Support

Ellen Bynum, Executive Director

Friends of Skagit County

PO Box 2632 (mailing)

419 S. Main St., #207

Mount Vernon, WA 98273-2632

360-419-0988; friends@fidalgo.net

www.friendsofskogitcounty.org

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**5. Jana Fernandes <[jfjfernandes4@gmail.com](mailto:jfjfernandes4@gmail.com)>**

My Name is Jana (Kite) Fernandes and I live on Starbird Rd. East of I-5. I have lived at this property and owned by my parents and myself and my brother Steve Kite since 1965.

I would like to partner with Friends of Skagit Co. to support the changes to clarify and strengthen the County codes to protect and preserve farm and agricultural land in Skagit Co. Also to support the Revised Code of Washington, the Skagit Co. Comprehensive plan and codes. And the growth management Act.

All of these mandates and laws were put in to place to protect land owners, farmers, agriculture , and Rural Reserve areas from unchecked development, encroachment and urban sprawl. I am vehemently opposed to any new development proposed for the Starbird Rd. exchange area. I do not want any changes made to our rural way of life here. I am also opposed to any changes made to County codes that would allow for zoning and code changes so that development and commercial activities can spread to Rural Reserve lands. Doing so would just open the flood gates for further development here and all across the county.

A few questions I have is, why are the existing 21 Wedding and wine tasting venues allowed to operate if they are all illegal and have no permits to do so? Why has the County told them they have no permits to give them? Wouldn't creating permits and requiring them to obtain permits and charging noncompliance fees generate income and revenue enough to hire an officer/s to oversee these operations?

Why are they allowed to hold events that are not allowed and out of compliance with (SUPS) such as outdoor entertainment, concerts, parties, art events, etc? SUPS were not created to allow non agricultural events. Why are Commercial businesses allowed to continue after the Growth Management Act was passed??

Conversion of Agricultural Natural Resource lands to other uses are not allowed under the Revised Code of Washington, and the Skagit Co. Comprehensive Plan, and the Growth Management act. If we have these laws and protections why are they not being enforced? Is the County not doing its job?? Every resident in this County is expected and required to follow the laws and we have to pay our property taxes just like everyone else, why is the County not expected to and required to do the same??

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion, concerns and questions and taking the time to read and consider my thoughts.

Jana Fernandes

**6. Jenn Smith <[jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Smith. My husband Brad and I own and operate S & B Farms, Northwest Lime Company and Skagit Valley's Best Produce. I own and operate Fir Island FloralSmith. He has lived in the valley his entire life and I moved here after college in 2001. Please find my comments on the proposed agritourism code changes below:

Agriculture is what makes Skagit magic. Without farms we lose what makes Skagit unique. We also lose one of the counties largest employers, revenue creators and one of the last remaining food production centers in Western Washington. This is important because the majority of the states population is on this side of the Cascades. We need local food to feed the masses. My work with Skagit Counties Food Insecurity Work Group has been eye opening to the disconnect between Agency folks who work to solve food insecurity and local farms that produce food. We need to work together to close this gap and we cant do that without local farmers at the table. If the County works to support farms of varied size and type and to connect farms with the food distribution centers in the county we can make great strides in ending hunger in Skagit County. This cant happen if farms cant survive here.

Recently Ive heard “there is no code path” or “there isn’t a legal way to do what I want” The county code is this way by design. Event venues and large groups of people dont belong in the Ag-NRL zone. Zoning regulations are created with safety in mind. They are not arbitrary and serve an important purpose. There are good reasons why its illegal to operate an event venue in the ag zone. These businesses put unnecessary liability on the shoulders of neighboring farms and impede our ability to operate properly. In farming, timing is everything. While an event planner can have several backup plans for their event, should the weather not cooperate, we cannot. Our crops and livelihood are at the mercy of the weather, not their schedule. The County and neighborhood shouldn’t be held hostage because venue owners didnt do their homework before they invested in property or improvements or because they think they are above the law. Their neighbors did their research and chose to live and work in the AG-NRL zone because it is peaceful, it is beautiful, there isn’t much traffic and there are birds and wildlife to enjoy. This peace is stolen every time there is an event. For farmers its not just the

peace, but peace of mind that's stolen. If one event attendee wanders into my field and gets sick or creates a visible disturbance we have the potential to be in the midst of a food safety recall that could cost millions. I'm sure no one would do that on purpose, but the potential is there every single time. The man hours, additional audits, and damage to customer relationships from a single recall can translate to total devastation. If one person wanders into my field and twists their ankle in the row and decides to sue me it could mean the end of my farm. The venue next to me might carry liability insurance that they think is above and beyond. I'm positive that it's barely a drop in the bucket of what would be needed to deal with a lawsuit or food safety event. Cultivation, irrigation, and pest control all happen on schedule. These schedules need to be flexible to account for weather events. They can't always be flexible to account for human events. This is why we farm in the AG-NRL. That's what it was designed for.

Most farmers by nature are decent people and good neighbors. They do their best to get along and don't complain. Some venue operators either don't know or don't care about the sacrifice that occurs regularly on their behalf. Continued pressure to do more and bring more people out into the Ag zone has pushed farmers to the edge. **We cannot give any more.** We have to stand up for ourselves, our families, and our employees by demanding that Skagit County does better. Enforce the code you have until reasonable, effective new code can be drafted. Thank you for leaving the comment period open so that those of us who wish to find compromise can work together to draft new code that will protect agriculture by not shutting down every farmstand and you pick in the county and allow some venues to operate if they meet specific criteria for permits. The proposed code would shut down the field tour part of the Tulip Festival. I believe this to be an unintended consequence, but my legal advisor assures me that if challenged in a court of law the proposal would stop all public interface with farm operations. Skagit County should be encouraging and supporting all farm operations, large, small and everything in between. I'm circling back around to food security. Farms need to be able to thrive here if we are going to ask them to help solve the hunger problem. Regulations from State and Federal agencies continue to increase. We need at least one regulatory body to have our back. Please let that be Skagit County.

I heard many comments during the Public comment meeting about "woman owned small business". As a woman who owns a small flower farm and floral event company, that I built and maintain on my own, I am offended by these comments. If you as female entrepreneur are not bright enough to figure out for yourself or seek business advice from a professional that good business needs diversity then you probably deserve to fail. Yes, it's a hard lesson, but one we all must learn. Yes, I would lose business if the illegal venues all went out but my business is flexible and diversified. Hosting a pity party and pointing fingers at the County for personal poor choices is embarrassing to resilient, intelligent women everywhere.

Farmers settled this valley and made it what it is today. We all need to do our best to protect this vital resource that is our most valuable and irreplaceable asset.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Attachment 1 – Support

Jennifer J. Smith

S & B Farms, Inc

18154 W. Stackpole Rd  
Mount Vernon, Wa 98273  
[jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com)

360\*941\*7503

**7. Judy Billings <[judybillings90@gmail.com](mailto:judybillings90@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

Throughout the world farm production is under assault. My main concern is food production. Our Skagit soil is fertile and needs to be used to growing food. Ag-Land is farmland not event land.

I understand the need of small growers to supplement the farm's income. This can be accomplished by means other than event centers.

I discovered one Ag Event Center that had almost 350 events over the last 6 year period.

Two of those years were Covid years or the total would have been substantially more.

The average events in non covid years was 74 events per year. Including Covid years the average was 59.

I could not find any special permits for this venue.

Wedding events are a business of their own, they have nothing to do with farm production.

Why can't weddings be held in churches and community centers?

I feel the agriculture advisory board is being extremely generous by allowing even 12 wedding events on ag property. There should be none. According to state law they are illegal.

There are many ways to supplement income, especially for Hobby farmers. Petting zoos, riding lessons, farm stands, tasting shops, u-pick etc. Functions that are connected to the soil = agriculture.

A farmer is receiving a tax discount on their acreage to produce food, because it's important to society. The balance of the discounted tax amount doesn't just disappear, it's paid for by everyone else in that district. The government gets the full amount.

For a wedding venue to have a property tax discount makes no sense, they do not contribute to food production. Some farms are being turned into "Event Centers Period".

Developers all over the world are destroying farmland and paving it over.

Preserving the 88,000 acres of farmland Skagit County has left is critical. and should be the priority!!!

Thank you,

Judy Billings

Anacortes

**8. Kathy Speas <[kathyspeas@comcast.net](mailto:kathyspeas@comcast.net)>**

I am an Anacortes resident who appreciates our Skagit farmers and all they do to foster and develop sustainable local agriculture.

I have a special perspective on this issue, having lived for 18 years in Sonoma, CA (heart of the Wine Country). KUDOS to the Planners and the farm community for tackling this issue before Skagit Valley becomes like Sonoma County. We watched our community in and around the town of Sonoma go from a beautiful valley with lots of vineyards to madhouse Wine Disneyland. I watched my local grocery become a picnic stop for bachelorette party limousines. Biking to local wineries was no longer fun because of the crowds. Wine tasting went from a casual chance to try the latest vintage (and save the \$10 fee on the bottle you bought) to a competitive upscale event requiring reservations and costing \$50. Local groups that questioned the groundwater use (grapes and extensive landscaping), impact on the soil from monoculture (we watched as the last walnut and apple groves got replaced by grapes), or the noise and traffic in neighborhoods were ignored and dismissed. Wineries flouted the Planning Department so flagrantly that Planning finally just dropped the permitting rules and allowed unlimited events until all hours. Need I even mention the drunk driving?

I love Schuh's and Samish Cheese and Bow blueberries and Snow Goose and the other farms that allow us to enjoy their produce and see the source of our farm to table pride. I love to learn how these farms are working to keep farming sustainable and appealing to a new generation of farmers. We need our farmers to have a healthy economy. I find it hard to believe that a farm cannot survive at all without weddings and events.

The solution is not to lay down in front of the tractor, the solution is for people to learn that farming is messy and noisy and smells sometimes and Mother Nature tells you when to plow and plant.

Please. Don't let Skagit Valley become the Wine Country. Keep it real for the kids.

Thanks for listening

Kathy Speas

1609 9th St

Anacortes 98221

## 9. Linnea McCord

**Subject: “Proposed Agritourism Code Changes”** (originally delivered before the 4:30 pm deadline today, which has been extended. After meeting the deadline, I had time to correct some typos and change the subject heading to be more accurate.

Dear Planning Commission Members:

### **CONCLUSION:**

*The language proposed to the Planning Commission as written is a necessary clarification of existing Washington state law regarding agritourism on agricultural land in Washington state.. It was obvious from many of the comments at the hearing this past Tuesday that there is rampant “confusion” (real or imagined) about the legal uses allowed on agricultural land in Washington state, which every owner of agricultural land in Washington state is charged to know and follow.*

*It was also clear that many of the farmers spent a great deal of time and effort over years to create this language, allowing 12 days instead of no days, for those neighboring farmers who are conducting events in a reasonable way that doesn’t interfere with their neighbors’ farming and agricultural operations.*

*Talking about feelings and surveys and women-owned businesses and how much money these non-agricultural operations bring to the community are irrelevant to preserving our food security on agricultural land. Whether intended or not, the tone adopted by some of the expanded wedding venue proponents sounded like veiled threats of non-compliance to bully and intimidate the Planning Committee.*

*It's time to tone down the emotional arguments and use critical thinking common sense. Food security is an issue for us all. Helping our small farmers survive and succeed is essential if we wish to maintain our self-organizing control over our food supply, without which we cannot maintain our unique brand of American freedom. The days of the \$40,000-\$50,000 weddings are ending in America. Worrying about having a car (they are being repossessed), having a home (foreclosures are going up), having money to retire (stock bubble and real estate bubbles always crash – the only question is when and how). Those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it.*

*Here’s a sobering thought to consider. It was only 8 years of bubbles, bubbles, bubbles and bubbles in the 1920s – real estate bubble, stock bubble, consumer debt bubble and mergers and acquisitions bubble that led to The Great Depression of the 1930s. We’ve just had 22 years of bubbles, bubbles, bubbles, bubbles. The same 4 bubbles of the 1920s PLUS we’ve added something different and much more dangerous – a government debt bubble of gargantuan proportions. When we experienced the Great Depression in the 1930s, we were the largest creditor nation in the world. We are now the largest debtor nation in the world and in world history. What do you think is in front of us now? Easy street? Not likely.*

*It's going to take all of us – working together using critical thinking and common sense and KNOWLEDGE and WISDOM to save our freedom, our prosperity, social harmony and security -*



***once again. Time is short – and getting shorter. WE THE PEOPLE are on the American Titanic together and there are NO LIFEBOATS if our American freedom fails. Corruption is being exposed on a daily basis causing extreme distrust. Distrust inevitably will result in Dictatorship – if we don't self-correct and fast. History's warning is clear on that point. There are only two choices: Trust (Freedom) or Force (Dictatorship). There is no "partially pregnant". One wins. One loses.***

***Thank you for taking your time to be Skagit County Planning Commission and thanks to the staff and Skagit Valley farmers who have worked tirelessly on this project for a long time. It is obviously a lot of work.***

***We all have to up our game quickly – together. It's no longer "business as usual". Everything we have taken for granted – including our mistaken belief in our American invincibility – is about to be sorely tested.***

***Sincerely, Linnea McCord***

### **INTRODUCTION:**

My name is Linnea McCord and I reside at 6478 Bayview Street, Anacortes, WA. 98221. I am a retired attorney who practiced law for many years before becoming a full-time business law professor (now retired) at two California business schools. I spent 15 years in Texas and 31 years California. During those 31 years in California, my full-time teaching positions gave me a ring side seat to observe the deliberate destruction of the once prosperous and successful state of California caused by failed and flawed government policies. Over those three decades I watched the California Dream turn into the California nightmare – crime, drugs, homelessness, businesses and high net worth individuals (and many others) fleeing to other states, dramatically lowered educational standards and rapidly skyrocketing costs for faxes, food, insurance, utilities, gas, etc.

These same flawed and failed policies are now being mimicked in Washington state.

Washington state now has the highest gas prices in the country - even higher than California. Like many Washington state residents today, Californians were cocky about the state's success, mistakenly believing that no matter how poorly the state was run, California was invincible. Californians have painfully discovered that they were dead wrong. Washington state is now fast becoming California North. Look closely at what has happened to the state of California because it is Washington state's future if we don't self-correct in Washington state – and fast.

### **FOOD SECURITY IS AN AMERICAN ISSUE, NOT JUST A LOCAL ISSUE**

What I heard from some of the participants at the hearing on Tuesday night on agritourism gave me a new appreciation for how challenging the role of the Planning Commission can be in Skagit Valley. Regardless of the emotional pleas from those favoring large and numerous wedding venues and tourism in Skagit Valley, the use of agricultural land in the state of Washington is under a specific legal framework. By definition, this must be the starting point of any analysis on what you as the Planning Commission can and cannot do under Washington state law concerning agricultural land and agritourism.

The reason is simple. Preservation of our food supply in any state and in the country is essential and affects us all. It is not only important for the local population and state. It is also potentially a national security issue. Tax breaks for agricultural land are given to produce food, not tourism.

Included below are some relevant Washington state statutes and case law for your consideration, more fully described than could be done in the 3 minute presentation at the hearing this past Tuesday. However, some background information is important to provide the "big picture" context we are all operating in (whether some of us know it yet or not).

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. **Too many laws, too many regulations, too many bad government policies:** We are all suffering from too many laws, too much regulation, and bad government policies that are harming our small farmers, not just here in Washington state, but across the country as well:

<https://inthesetimes.com/article/the-food-safety-and-modernization-act-has-consequences-for-small-farmers>

2. **New Era of "Robber Barons":** It is also true that hardworking Americans are having more and more difficulty maintaining their standard of living. Since the 1970s, the middle class has been shrinking while the super-rich have done spectacularly well:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/04/20/how-the-american-middle-class-has-changed-in-the-past-five-decades/>

We are in a new age of "Robber Barons" like the one in the late 1800s that led to our American antitrust laws with powerful enforcement tools to bust up "too big" businesses that were causing harm to the rest of the population and stifling competition. Too much power in the hands of too few for too long never works well for the rest of the American people - and that includes our *essential* American food supply.

3. **A Snapshot Picture of America's Financial Mess:** Before your eyes glaze over when you see \$32 trillion dollars, here's something to keep in mind:

a million seconds = almost 12 years  
billion = about 31 years  
trillion = about 31,000 years

<https://www.usdebtclock.org/>

The U.S. economy (GDP) = \$20 trillion a year. Here's a picture of the stunning and unsustainable growth of debt in the U.S. (and this was when our national debt was "only" \$17 trillion in 2014 (and now in less than 10 years has already almost doubled to \$32 trillion):

<https://www.offthegridnews.com/financial/us-national-debt-passes-17-trillion-thats-53769-per-person/>

We cannot "just keep printing money" to bail out such extreme levels of debt for much longer, especially since some countries no longer trust the U.S. dollar because of our outrageous and out of control debt:

<https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/China-And-Russia-Look-To-Challenge-The-Petrodollar.html>

4. **A Coming Pension Crisis?** Those relying on their guaranteed monthly pensions being paid might be in for an unexpected shock?

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnmauldin/2019/05/20/the-coming-pension-crisis-is-so-big-that-its-a-problem-for-everyone/?sh=3b1859d437fc>

5. **Another Banking Crisis Underway?**

<https://www.fdic.gov/bank/historical/bank/index.html>

**A third bank failure just happened in July 2023:**

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/mayrarodriguezvalladares/2023/05/03/pacwest-bancorps-imminent-demise-shows-bank-turmoil-is-widening-to-smaller-banks/?sh=546fa7786521>

**Getting harder to get a loan?**

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2023/04/18/credit-crunch-bank-lending-consumer-preparation/11667818002/>

6. **Food Insecurity is Already Here:** e.g. skyrocketing food prices, property taxes, increased cost of utilities, etc?

<https://www.insideedition.com/skyrocketing-food-costs-inflation-leave-families-and-elderly-on-the-brink-of-ruin-never-seen-it>

7. **Governments and Rich Individuals are Aiming to Control Our Food Supply with the goal of putting us all under a one world global government, that is, a global DICTATORSHIP:**

**Europe: Government Wants to Buy Dutch Farms Directly FORCIBLY**

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-05-02/eu-approves-dutch-plan-to-buy-out-farmers-to-cut-emissions#xj4y7vzkg>

**Dutch Farmers Fighting Back and Winning in Elections:**

<https://www.dw.com/en/dutch-farmers-party-wins-big-in-provincial-elections/a-65009995>

**US:**

**Bill Gates Buying Up Farmland?**

<https://www.farmlandriches.com/bill-gates-farmland/>

**Billionaires Want to Reduce Population in the name of Climate Change?**

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-WHB-1322>

**Communist China buying up America's Food Supply?**

[https://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2020/05/how\\_china\\_is\\_buying\\_up\\_americas\\_food\\_supply.html](https://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2020/05/how_china_is_buying_up_americas_food_supply.html)

**COMMUNIST CHINA Coming for our American Farms?**

<https://www.newsweek.com/china-coming-american-farms-opinion-1619777>

**China's Communists Don't have food so now they want to control Ours?**

<https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/china-communists-food-now-they-want-control-ours>

**Americans fighting back too...?**

<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/07/19/china-buying-us-farms-foreign-purchase-499893>

**8. Our Food Supply is a National Security issue too:** Skagit County is an important farming contributor to the U.S. food supply:

<https://www.westag.org/our-crops>

Decisions made here now in Skagit County that could potentially harm America's increasingly uncertain food supply are likely to garner national attention much more quickly than in the past, especially since our food supply chain in the U.S. is fast becoming a national security concern: e.g. Food Security and National Security Bill of 2021

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3089>

This is especially true after storms flooded some California farmers in 2023 around San Jose:

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2023/03/14/farmers-fear-massive-losses-from-pajaro-flood/>

**WASHINGTON STATE STATUTES AND CASE LAW**

**1. Chapter [89.10](#) RCW**

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

**Sections**

[HTMLPDF](#)

[89.10.005](#)

Findings.

[HTMLPDF](#)

[89.10.010](#)

Office of farmland preservation.

[PDFRCW 89.10.005](#)

**Findings.**

"The legislature finds that maintaining the capacity to provide adequate food and fiber resources is essential to the long-term sustainability of the state's citizens and economy. The nation's population has reached three hundred million and will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. Further, the world population is now over six billion and is projected to reach nine billion by the year 2050.

In Washington state, the population is growing by over one million people every decade with much of this growth occurring in western Washington. This growth is increasing the competition for land not only for housing, but also associated retail, commercial, industrial, and leisure industries.

The legislature finds that many once-productive agricultural areas in western Washington have been overtaken and irreversibly converted to nonagricultural uses. Other agricultural areas in the state have diminished to the point that they are dangerously close to losing the land mass necessary to be economically viable. Further, only a limited number of areas in western Washington still retain a sufficient agricultural land base and the necessary agricultural infrastructure to continue to be economically viable both in the short term and the long term.

The legislature recognizes that because this significant decline has largely occurred in less than a half century, it is imperative that mechanisms be established at the state level to focus attention, take the action needed to retain agricultural land, and ensure the opportunity for future generations to farm these lands.

The legislature finds that history shows that previous advanced civilizations in the world were founded on highly productive agricultural lands and food production systems but when the land or its productivity was lost, the civilizations declined. In contrast, other civilizations have existed for millennia because they maintained their agricultural land base, its productivity, and economic conditions sufficient to maintain stewardship of their land.

The legislature finds that there is a finite quantity of high quality agricultural land and that often this agricultural land is mistakenly viewed as an expendable resource. The legislature finds that the retention of agricultural land is desirable, not only to produce food, livestock, and other agricultural products, but also to maintain our state economy and preferable environmental conditions. For these reasons, and because it is essential that agricultural production be sufficient to meet the needs of our growing population, commitment to the retention of agricultural land should be reflected at the state policy level by the creation of an office of farmland preservation to support the retention of farmland and the viability of farming for future generations."

[ [2007 c 352 § 1.](#)]

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=89.10&full=true>

## **2. RCW 4.24.830 (2020): Definition of Agritourism**

[RCWs](#) > [Title 4](#) > [Chapter 4.24](#) > [Section 4.24.830](#)  
[4.24.820](#) << 4.24.830 >> [4.24.832](#)  
[PDFRCW 4.24.830](#)

### "Agritourism—Definitions.

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agritourism activity" means any activity carried out on a farm or ranch whose primary business activity is agriculture or ranching and that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities including, but not limited to: Farming; ranching; historic, cultural, and on-site educational programs; recreational farming programs that may include on-site hospitality services; guided and self-guided tours; petting zoos; farm festivals; corn mazes; harvest-your-own operations; hayrides; barn parties; horseback riding; fishing; and camping."

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=4.24.830>

### 3. RCW 36.70A177 **Innovative zoning techniques – accessory uses under the Growth Management Act** (summarized):

(1) A county or a city may use a variety of innovative zoning techniques in areas designated as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance *provided they are designed to conserve agricultural lands and encourage the agricultural economy.*

- Non agricultural uses should be limited to lands with poor soils or otherwise not suitable for agricultural purposes.

(2) Accessory uses included but not limited to: such as

- Storage, distribution, and marketing of regional agricultural products from one or more producers
- Agriculturally related experiences, or
- Production, marketing and distribution of valued-added agricultural products,
- including support services that facilities these activities....

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=36.70A.177>

**4. Case Law: Further clarification on what is a permitted innovative zoning technique for agricultural land.** In 2011, a Washington case in which a county sued the Growth Management Board held that a zoning technique that allows nonfarm uses on designated agricultural lands constitutes an impermissible “innovative zoning technique” under the Growth Management Act. Any zoning technique used must be designed to conserve agricultural lands and encourage the agricultural economy. Although innovative zoning techniques are allowed under the Growth Management Act, *that statute requires that agricultural lands be protected.* *Kittitas County v. E. Wash Grow Mgmt. Hearings Board, 172 WN2d 144 (2011)*

**10. Mikala Staples Hughes [mikalas@sakumabros.com](mailto:mikalas@sakumabros.com)**

Name : Mikala Staples Hughes

Address : 18065 Skagit Clty Road

City : Mount Vernon

State : Washington

Zip : 98273

email : [mikalas@sakumabros.com](mailto:mikalas@sakumabros.com)

PermitProposal : Amendments to Skagit County Code 14.04 Definitions and 14.16 Zoning

Comments : My name is Mikala Staples Hughes, and I stand before you today with a heartfelt plea—a plea to preserve not only our farmland but also the very essence of agricultural operations that sustain our way of life.

As an executive in the agricultural industry and the wife of a fourth-generation Fir Island farmer, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges and opportunities that come with nurturing our agricultural heritage. Over the last decade, I have worked tirelessly in vertically integrated farm and food processing companies across Oregon and Washington, gaining insights into farm operations, production, quality, regulation, compliance, and strategic planning.

Today, our hardworking farmers face real risks, and it's not just about preserving the land; it's about safeguarding the very ability to perform essential agricultural activities. Lawsuits, negative public perception, and burdensome reporting requirements threaten their livelihoods. We must stand in solidarity to protect them and ensure they have the support and encouragement to continue their vital work.

In managing the Agricultural Natural Resource Lands (Ag NRL), we must strike a delicate yet decisive balance to protect both the land and the farm businesses that depend on it. Farm stands and U-Pick ventures play a crucial role as links between farmers and the community. We must be wise in our approach, ensuring that the majority of products sold at these establishments are grown and produced by the farm-operators. This preserves the authenticity of these businesses while supporting our farmers' livelihoods and ensuring that these activities are an accessory to agricultural operations.

Let us face the reality of illegally operating venues within the Ag-NRL and acknowledge the county's past enforcement shortcomings. It is time to rectify these issues and establish stringent regulations that provide a legitimate pathway for deserving and diligent venue operators. Our aim is to foster an environment of compliance, accountability, and mutual respect, where everyone can prosper while abiding by the law.

To achieve this, I propose key amendments to the existing code governing Administrative Special Use Permits for Temporary Events. These recommendations strike a decisive yet

delicate balance, supporting both our farmland preservation goals and the thriving businesses within our region.

First and foremost, I recommend implementing an annual review process for all permits. This review will ensure ongoing compliance and that events continue to align with our commitment to farmland preservation. By conducting regular assessments, we can hold ourselves accountable in safeguarding the essence of our agricultural heritage.

Furthermore, it is vital to require permit holders' active presence during events. This will not only uphold rigorous standards but also ensure that these events genuinely complement the intended use of the land. By actively monitoring activities, permit holders can be instrumental in preserving the harmony between agricultural operations and temporary events.

In our collective endeavor to protect neighboring farm operations, permit holders shall be held financially liable for any damage, harassment, distress, or loss of production caused by their events. This measure fosters a culture of accountability and mutual respect, where everyone thrives within the boundaries of the law.

Moreover, I propose empowering the Agricultural representation through the Ag Advisory Board. By involving experts who understand the unique needs of our agricultural community, we can make informed decisions that truly reflect our commitment to sustainable development.

To further bolster our farmland preservation efforts, I suggest that venues subject to special use permit requirements contribute to a farmland preservation tax payable to the Skagit County Farmland Legacy program. This investment will strengthen our resolve to secure the future of our cherished farmland for generations to come.

Lastly, let us underscore the significance of upholding the Skagit County Right to Farm ordinance. By requiring clients to affirm their understanding and adherence to this vital ordinance through documented affirmations, we reinforce responsible practices and respect for the rights of our farmers.

Together, these recommendations harmonize needs that protect our farmers, their operations, and our cherished farmland. In conclusion, we have an unprecedented opportunity to leave a legacy for future generations—a legacy that celebrates the tenacity of our farmers and the beauty of our farmland. As we move forward, I implore you to make decisions that reflect the collective vision of our community—a vision where progress and preservation walk hand in hand.

Thank you for your time, and I trust that you will make the bold and compassionate choices needed to secure the prosperity of Skagit County and its agricultural legacy.

From Host Address: 76.191.117.250

Date and time received: 7/25/2023 9:19:31 AM



**11. Nanci Hollerith Allen <[loneoak6496@gmail.com](mailto:loneoak6496@gmail.com)>**

Nancy Allen

PO Box 221

Bow, WA 98232

To whom it may concern,

Here are my thoughts about the proposed changes.

- Let farmers, farm. I have yet to see any existing barns made for farming that any bridezilla or event planner would possibly accept, nor is there adequate parking. This then suggests additional farmland be taken up by more buildings and parking lots. That is not the intended use for farmland. There is a finite amount of farmland which must be preserved as farmland at all costs. We have a lovely, fertile, farmland valley, don't ruin it because of the current trend of barn weddings and events. Trends change! Not to mention drunk drivers and loud music, caterer facility etc.
- If farmers want to sell their produce, we have farmers' markets for that exact purpose, does each farmer really need a "storefront"? Do we need to keep reinventing the wheel? Little Ethel who wants to sell an occasional bouquet in her driveway is fine, but a real storefront, not necessary.
- Many little farmers market their wares on social media and we can reach out to them as to where they will, such as a parking lot that currently exists.
- There are two huge empty malls in Burlington. It seems that little spaces there for wine tasting or the like would be natural. But most wineries already have a space for wine tasting as well as events.
- I believe that unintended consequences have the potential to be very detrimental to existing farmers as previously mentioned. Sadly the proponents are not considering those possibilities, but only how they themselves can gain.
- We have existing places for pumpkin patches, farm stands and the like. Our traffic continues to increase and drivers are getting crazier. Do we need to have people slamming on the brakes everywhere for a little roadside stand?
- There are event places in Skagit County that exist that should more than suffice for the demand. They aren't being used to their maximum capacity.
- I fail to see the merit of having more people interfere with tractors and farm implements impeded by traffic. I've been on the road much too often to see impatient drivers risking life and limb to get around some of the slower moving vehicles. Tulip time is crazy enough!
- Farm area roads have little to no shoulders and quite often deep ditches, should more people end up in them? It's bad enough having lots of bicycles on the roads with little to no space to yield.

Thank you for your consideration, I really believe we already have the infrastructure set up for this need, we just need to consider what already exists. The idea of what happened to the Nalley Valley could possibly happen here in the name of greed disgusts me.

**12. NancyLee Bouscher <[nancylee.b@gmail.com](mailto:nancylee.b@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

I couldn't find something obvious to send a comment so I'm sending it to you. I'm so sorry for the inconveniences if this is not the correct way.

I live near the intersection of Avon Allen and Dunbar in Mount Vernon and I work at the food coop downtown. I understand the complicated issue at hand and I think it's a good idea to limit weddings and other events on farmland.

My reason is more about the quality of life for us non-farmers who live near farm land and don't enjoy the traffic and noise that these events bring. The frequency of these events during peak wedding season is disruptive to daily life of folks just trying to get to work and sleep at night. I can't imagine the frustrations of a farmer dealing with it.

In addition, these events encourage more air bnb types of rentals in Skagit to provide accommodations for the guests. Houses that should be homes for families of Skagit just become another side hustle. I believe the housing crisis in Skagit is impacted by these air bnb rentals.

So that's my two cents.

Thanks for the work you do.

nancylee bouscher

**13. Robert Pare**

04 August 2023  
Brandon Black Senior Planner  
Skagit County Planning & Development Service  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273-5625

RECEIVED  
AUG 08 2023  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
PO BOX

c.c. Skagit County Commissioners' Office

Re: Agri-tourism (all Ag related zones)

Dear Mr. Black,

To all those who have worked for the future, Bravo!  
Enforcement will be the next task. Any modifications of approved uses, especially which have been manipulated with applicant statements under penalties of perjury being contradictory here in Edison, should be handled with judicial review.

My other concern is ongoing uses that diminish the available land area for food production and subsequently losses to their associated businesses that support the farming industry. Unless there is a statewide mandate for larger buffers, wetlands in Ag related zones, no more expansion should be tolerated and unapproved uses returned to productive status.

Either, furthermore, we agree to allow more salt water damage from overtopping our dikes, which is contrary to the proposed goals of preserving farmland, or specific plans for increasing protections and implementing them need to be established.

Thank you very much for your work. It is my hope that agriculture as agriculture will be further protected now and more so in the future.

  
Robert Pare

14114 Doser Street  
Bow, WA 98232  
360-391- 4277 cell-phone

P.S. We live adjacent to a dike and welcome any directions from our dike district should additional work be required for further protections. I would also serve as a dike commissioner when the need arises.

I am writing to express my full support of the proposed amendments to the Skagit County unified development code as regards Agritourism. I like many others believe there is a need to protect Skagit agricultural lands from inappropriate conversion to non-agricultural business ventures. The current infrastructure of the counties agricultural lands is not geared for tourism, farm roads are narrow and often have deep irrigation or drainage ditches adjoining them, making hazardous driving for gawking tourists. Many of the Agritourists business venues are utilizing septic systems not suitable or permitted the general public or for tourism. Perhaps the biggest waste is Utilizing fertile agricultural lands for parking lots and non food producing businesses ventures not only is this ignorant it also penalizes non agricultural business who complied with zoning rules and pay higher city and business taxes. Towns and cities exist for Non agricultural business use.

I did a quick review of one of the Vocal Newley formed pro Agritourist groups “Save Skagit Farm Venues” one of their claims is they utilize local products and businesses. A cursory check of the many photos used by the group to promote their views reveals that they were mostly produced by King County based businesses like Savanna Marlee photography and Tracie Howe photography one member business in the group “The Grand Willow” even features and promotes a Boston based film and photography business. I find it discouraging that these Agritourist businesses falsely claim that they are supporting local businesses yet they failed utilized the 34 professional photographers that are based in Skagit county.

Thank you for your consideration of my views and feelings on Agritourism.

Walter C. Zollars III

LaConner WA

## **15. Jennifer Smith**

August 9, 2023 Skagit County Planning Commission 1800 Continental Place Mount Vernon WA 98273 Dear Commissioners and staff, Our organization has represented farms of all sizes, male and female owned, in Skagit County for nearly 80 years. These farmers created the unique landscape and economic power of this County. Also, the world is dependent on the food we produce commercially. Our valley’s soil is rated in the top 2% of soil in the world. What we have here is unlike any other state and region in the U.S., and we must treat it as such. The Right to Farm Ordinance is as necessary today as it was in 1991, and any negative impact on farm operations or farmland must not be ignored. Skagit County’s success relies on agriculture and the many farm families who support our communities. Because of this, we support the proposed agritourism code language that the Ag Advisory Board drafted, with a few suggested changes. We acknowledge that agritourism has become another essential industry to the County. Event venues of this area are successful, however, because of the open spaces and beauty of agriculture. Without active, large-scale farming, they lose their unique opportunities and customer base. We support agritourism activity that is an accessory to a working farm operation, and does not negatively affect neighbors or cause the loss of farmland. We believe that agritourism should be defined as: “an activity that is an accessory to a working farm

operation. It is operated on land and accessory buildings within the farm and is operated by the owner or operator of the farm or family members.” We also support amending the current definition of agricultural accessory use in SCC 14.04.020: ● (6) Miscellaneous agricultural support buildings, including barns, sheds, corrals, farm offices, coops, retail spaces and seasonal roadside farm stands, which are used for on-site soil dependent agriculture on a working farm. ● (8) Any agricultural accessory use that is an agritourism event or activity shall be an accessory to the primary farming operation of the farm site. We support the County Ag Advisory Boards’ amendments for subsections 9 and 10. While we do not believe wedding events are agritourism events specifically, we support creating a pathway for responsible, working farm event venue operators to operate legally within the Ag-NRL under temporary special use permits that are renewed annually. We also expect event venues to be held accountable to standards and regulations that complement and protect agricultural operations and farmland in the County. There have been a number of negative impacts on agriculture from events that don’t operate responsibly, and we want to ensure that there is a clear process for enforcement of bad practices and negative impacts in the future. Our members have witnessed vendors and attendees illegally entering farm fields, attendees calling agencies due to farm smells, and vendors threatening farmers who don’t stop operations for ceremonies. Farmers face many potential challenges with event venue neighbors, including the obvious physical pressures of having additional people near fields and ranches. Many farms carry additional liability insurance because of these events. If a member of the public crosses onto a farmer’s property and is injured, the farmer is liable. Also, there are often additional food safety implications that farmers must manage when neighboring events happen. If someone crosses into a farm field and disrupts or urinates near a food field, that field will be unharvestable due to food safety regulations. We cannot stress how important it is to have a set of enforceable regulations for event venues to operate within the Ag-NRL. We support amending SCC 14.16.900(2)(h) to add additional criterion in Special Uses for a special use permit for temporary events: ● (v) Special use permits for temporary events in Ag-NRL are additionally subject to the following criteria: ○ (A) All events must be accessory to agricultural use on a working farm. ○ (B) Events should support the sale of products and food grown on the working farm. At least 50% of the products sold must be cultivated on the onsite farm throughout the season, or include products grown by the farmer-operator. ○ (C) Events may occur on no more than 12 calendar days per year. ○ (D) All permits are subject to annual review. ○ (E) Permit holders must be onsite during all events to monitor activities and uphold standards. ○ (F) Any structures, spaces, or septic infrastructure created for temporary events must be removed once the permit is no longer active and the land returned to original state with no farmable land loss (ie: parking lots, pathways, restrooms, eating areas, etc.). ○ (G) A proper traffic maintenance plan for the event must be approved by the county 30 days prior to the permit activation, and must have minimal impact on surrounding neighborhoods. ○ (H) Events must include a plan to keep visitors restricted to their property and guarantee zero impact (physical or other) on neighboring properties. This plan must be approved by the county 30 days prior to the permit activation. ○ (I) Permit holders will be held financially liable for any damages, harassment, distress, or loss of production on neighboring properties during the event caused by any intrusion of event attendees, hosts, or vendors. We also recommend that the Skagit Right to Farm Ordinance be included in the Special Use contract with the permit holder held accountable to reading and

understanding this ordinance. Finally, we recommend that fees for the permits and sizable fines for violators should be used to fund enforcement of the program. Fines for those who violate permit rules, or those who operate without a permit, must be large enough to deter non compliance. To operate an efficient enforcement program, the County may hire a third party contractor as enforcement staff, similar to how the Farmland Legacy program operates. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Respectfully, Jennifer Smith, President Western Washington Agricultural Association

President Jenn Smith Vice

President Tyler Breum

Treasurer Dan Gundersen

Secretary Aaron Taylor

Directors Owen Peth Jay Renwick Andrew Schuh Steve Strand Jon Vanderkooy Garrett Williams

## **16. Ellen Bynum Friends of Skagit County**

DRAFT

Friends of Skagit County - Skagit County Planning Commission - July 25, 2023  
Public Hearing - Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

Page 1 of 5

Skagit County Planning Commission  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed code changes on definitions, uses and related matters in Agricultural - Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRL).

Friends of Skagit County supports the proposed code changes that strengthen and clarify Skagit County's ability to conserve farmland for the future.

In 1990 the WA State Growth Management Act (GMA) required the Department of Commerce (then CTED - Community, Trade & Economic Development) to consult with "interested parties" and conduct public hearings in regions of the state to obtain input to write minimum guidelines to assist counties and cities in designating the classification of agricultural, forest and mineral resource lands under RCW 36.70A.170.

The Legislature required counties to start by "Inventorying, designating and conserving agricultural, forest and mineral resource lands....and considering the modification or adoption of comprehensive land use plans and development regulations" and provided funding to assist counties in meeting the requirements of GMA. Clearly agricultural and other resource lands were the focus of the GMA and the county planning process.

**RCW 36.70A.180 Chapter implementation—Intent.**

It is the intent of the legislature that counties and cities required to adopt a comprehensive plan under RCW 36.70.040A (1) begin implementing this chapter on or before July 1, 1990, including but not limited to: (1) Inventorying, designating, and conserving agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands, and critical areas; and (2) considering the modification or adoption of comprehensive land use plans and development regulations implementing the comprehensive land use plans. It is also the intent of the legislature that funds be made available to counties and cities beginning July 1, 1990, to assist them in meeting the requirements of this chapter.

**RCW 36.70A.030 Definitions.** "Agricultural Land" means land primarily developed to the commercial production of horticulture, viticulture, floriculture, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees.....finfish in upland hatcheries, or livestock, **and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production." (emphasis added).**

**Finding—Intent—1994 c 307:** "The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to identify and provide long-term conservation of those productive natural resource lands that are critical to and can be managed economically and practically for long-term commercial production of food, fiber, and minerals. Successful achievement of the natural resource industries' goal set forth in RCW 36.70A.020 requires the conservation of a land base sufficient in size and quality to maintain and enhance those industries and the development and use of land use techniques that discourage uses incompatible to the management of designated lands.

**RCW 36.70A.020 Planning goals.**

(8) Natural resource industries. Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.

**RCW 36.70A.050 Guidelines to classify agriculture, forest, and mineral lands and critical areas.**

By September 1, 1990, DOC had created guidelines for the classification of: (a) Agricultural lands....Counties were required to adopt development regulations by Sept. 1, 1991 to assure the conservation of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated under RCW 36.70A.170. Such regulations assure that the use of lands adjacent to agricultural, forest or mineral lands shall not interfere with the continued use, in the accustomed manner and in accordance with best management practices, of these designated lands for the production of food, agricultural products, or timber, or for the extraction of minerals. The state also required all plats, short plats, development permits, and building permits issued for development activities on, or within 500 feet of, lands designated as agriculture, forest or mineral resource lands, contain a notice that the subject property is within or near designated resource lands on which a variety of commercial activities may occur that are not compatible with residential development for certain periods of limited duration.

**RCW 36.70A.170 Natural resource lands and critical areas—Designations.**

(1) On or before September 1, 1991, each county, and each city, shall designate where appropriate:  
(a) Agricultural lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products;....(2) In making the designations required by this section, counties and cities shall consider the guidelines established pursuant to RCW 36.70A.050.

**RCW 36.70A.177 Agricultural lands—Innovative zoning techniques—Accessory uses.**

(1) A county or a city may use a variety of innovative zoning techniques in areas designated as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance under RCW 36.70A.170. The innovative zoning techniques should be designed to conserve agricultural lands and encourage the agricultural economy. Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, a county or city should encourage nonagricultural uses to be limited to lands with poor soils or otherwise not suitable for agricultural purposes.  
(2) Innovative zoning techniques a county or city may consider include, but are not limited to:  
(a) Agricultural zoning, which limits the density of development and restricts or prohibits nonfarm uses of agricultural land and may allow accessory uses, including nonagricultural accessory uses and activities, that support, promote, or sustain agricultural operations and production, as provided in subsection (3) of this section;...  
(3) Accessory uses allowed under subsection (2)(a) of this section shall comply with the following:  
(a) Accessory uses shall be located, designed, and operated so as to not interfere with, and to support the continuation of, the overall agricultural use of the property and neighboring properties, and shall comply with the requirements of this chapter;  
(b) Accessory uses may include:  
(i) Agricultural accessory uses and activities, including but not limited to the storage, distribution, and marketing of regional agricultural products from one or more producers, agriculturally related experiences, or the production, marketing, and distribution of value-added agricultural products, including support services that facilitate these activities; and  
(ii) Nonagricultural accessory uses and activities as long as they are consistent with the size, scale, and intensity of the existing agricultural use of the property and the existing buildings on the site.



Nonagricultural accessory uses and activities, including new buildings, parking, or supportive uses, shall not be located outside the general area already developed for buildings and residential uses and shall not otherwise convert more than one acre of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses; and (c) Counties and cities have the authority to limit or exclude accessory uses otherwise authorized in this subsection (3) in areas designated as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance. (4) This section shall not be interpreted to limit agricultural production on designated agricultural lands.

Skagit County in its policies, codes and Comprehensive Plan chose to limit or exclude non-agricultural accessory uses on Ag-NRLs and said accessory uses must be soil-dependent activities. Whether other counties chose to save farmland or not is irrelevant to Skagit County's decision to identify and conserve its Ag-NRLs.

Skagitonians recognized that the largest economic driver in the county was agriculture and wanted to comply with the GMA by creating certain protection in its rules. FOSC, SPF, Evergreen Islands and other organizations and individuals have prevailed in many appeals which sided with the protection of farmland in perpetuity.

Conversion of any Ag-NRL zoned land to any other use except agricultural production and soil-dependent products is illegal. As the now deceased president of Friends of Skagit County, June Kite liked to remind "Skagit County cannot permit an illegal activity".

Skagit further emphasized that Ag-NRL is to be used for agricultural activities by creating policies under Home Based Businesses. The policies state that HBBs are located inside single family homes or a permitted accessory outbuilding and remain clearly incidental and secondary to the primary residential use. Activities must be compatible with the primary use being residential or resource based. Policy 3C-10.6 states "For any type of HBB, there may be no indications of a commercial or industrial enterprise visible off-premises, and auto and truck traffic, noise, and pollutant emissions shall not exceed that normally associated with a residential property. No outside storage is allowed." Policy 3C-10.7 states: "Within resource lands of long-term commercial significance, care must be paid to protection of the primary resource activity and code requirements may limit the use in a manner to avoid conversion of resource lands and promote the primary resource-based uses. On lands of long-term commercial significant (Ag-NRL.....) HBB2 and HBB3 may be conditional permitted only if no conversion of resource lands is required to accommodate the business activity; except that HBB3 is not allowed in Ag-NRL under any conditions. Limitations on new structures may also be conditions.

Skagit County wrote its Countywide Planning Policies to achieve the GMA goal of "Maintain and enhance natural resource based industries; encourage conservation of.... productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses." RCW 36.70A.020(8). Among the CPPS starting on page 115 of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan are:

*Commercial and industrial activities directly related to local natural resource production may be allowed in designated natural resource areas provided they can demonstrate their location and existence as natural resource area dependent businesses. (CPP 5.4)*

*Lands within designated agricultural resource areas should remain in large parcels and ownership patterns conducive to commercial agricultural operations and production. (CPP 5.10)*

*Skagit County shall conserve agriculture, aquaculture, forest and mineral resources for productive use by designating natural resources lands and aquatic resources areas, where the principle and preferred land uses will be long term commercial resources management. (CPP 5.11)*

*Land uses adjacent to agricultural, forest, or mineral resource lands and designated aquatic resource areas shall not interfere with the continued use of these designated lands for the production of food, agricultural and aquatic based products, or timber, or for the extraction of minerals. (CPP 8.2)*

*Long term commercially significant natural resource lands and designated aquatic resource areas shall be protected and conserved. Skagit County shall adopt policies and regulations that encourage and facilitate the retention and enhancement of natural resource areas in perpetuity. (CPP 8.5)*

*Skagit County shall conserve agricultural, aquatic based, forest and mineral resources for productive use by designating natural resource lands and aquatic resource areas where the principal and preferred land uses will be long term commercial resource management. (CPP 8.9)*

*Agricultural Resource Lands. The Agricultural Resource Lands section establishes policies that ensure the long-term stability and productivity of the county's agricultural lands and industries. These policies are intended to provide clear guidelines for land use planning and implementation in agricultural areas. Also included are policies to establish programs and other measures that promote and protect the current and future needs of agriculture within Skagit County.*

Skagit County established detailed criteria for identifying Ag-NRL including identifying soils, been used for farming for the previous 10 years, be in Agricultural Open Space taxation, adjacent lands are in agricultural use, there is a pattern of landowner capital investment in agricultural operation improvements, etc. Among these criteria are (iii) Existing land uses are primarily agricultural and minimal financial commitment to non-farm uses has been made.

From Page 120 of the Comprehensive Plan - Guiding Principles: Agricultural Resource Lands  
Protect the agricultural land resource and farming in Skagit County; endeavor to minimize the loss of the resource; mitigate unavoidable losses; and replace lost resources whenever possible. These principles shall guide Skagit County's actions to:

- Preserve agricultural land for agricultural uses;
- Limit new non-agricultural uses and activities on agricultural resource lands;
- Provide education and support services that maintain the farming industry and lifestyle;
- Promote the economic benefits of farming;
- Resolve conflicts between agricultural and environmental objectives; and
- Monitor the long-term achievement of the goals and policies.

From Page 124 Allowable Land Uses of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal 4A-4 Land uses allowed on designated agricultural land shall promote agriculture, agricultural support services, and promote diverse agricultural industries.

policy 4A-4.1 Agricultural Production: Agricultural production is the highest priority use in designated agricultural resource lands.

policy 4A-4.2 Agricultural Support Services: Facilitate agricultural production by allowing agricultural processing facilities, direct farm sales, and agricultural support services that support long term agricultural use.

policy 4A-4.3 Farm-Based Business: Farm-based businesses shall be allowed as an accessory use in Agricultural Resource Land. Farm-based businesses are an accessory use, secondary to the primary agricultural use of a farm property, and shall not interfere with adjacent farming operations, cause nuisances for nearby residences or generate large amounts of traffic.

policy 4A-4.4 Residential Uses: Residential uses shall be allowed only as an accessory use in Agricultural Resource Land per Policy 4A-1.2 Agricultural Resource Land Density Policy.

policy 4A-4.5 Special Events and Activities: Special events and activities on agricultural lands shall be conducted in ways that reduce potential impacts resulting from the activity. Those impacts include but are not limited to traffic, litter, trespass, and sanitation.

policy 4A-4.6 Habitat Restoration Projects: Habitat restoration projects are a permitted use on agricultural lands so long as it is shown through project review that the proposed restoration project does not have an adverse impact on hydrologic functions, drainage infrastructure or the ongoing agricultural use of adjacent properties.

There are many additional examples of Skagitonians commitment to preserving agricultural zoned land for farm, fiber and soil related uses in the Comprehensive Plan, Countywide policies and code as well as amendments to the GMA.

BERK consultants identified and consolidated agritourism income in their study. While we appreciate the data developed, surely they did not include weddings as the figure for income from all agritourism in Skagit County (\$285,000). An estimated income from one wedding/event venue holding 50 events/year at \$6,000 is \$300,000 gross income.

We ask the Planning Commission recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that they pass the proposed code revisions to strengthen Skagit County's farmland protection and prevent loss of farmland from conversion to other uses.

Yours sincerely,

Ellen Bynum, Executive Director  
Friends of Skagit County  
419 S. Main St. #207  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

## 17. Friends of Skagit County

**Emphasis added where** noted. From Skagit County Comprehensive Plan or Code where noted

From Cambridge Dictionary - **Tourism** - *the business of providing services such as transport, places to stay, or entertainment for people who are on holiday.*

**Agricultural Natural Resource Land:** means land designated as Ag-NRL which is primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural (including fiber production such as hybrid cottonwoods), viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees (not subject to the excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140), finfish in upland hatcheries, or livestock (including livestock raised for personal use), **and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production. Emphasis added.**

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) for 1997 has several definitions for agriculture. The State Hydraulics Code (Chapter 75.20 RCW) is necessary to implement the riparian protection section of the CAO; it requires the use of the definitions of agriculture as given in RCW 84.34.020 and RCW 36.70A.030(2), - NOTE: now referenced as 36.70A.030(3).

RCW 84.34.020 - Property Taxes - OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURAL, TIMBERLANDS -- CURRENT USE -- CONSERVATION FUTURES definitions. Please click on the link and read.. Basically the section creates criteria that place limits on how the land has been or is used in order to qualify for certain taxation. Among other things, the section emphasizes that products are to be produced on site. The definition of "farm and agricultural conservation land" in this section gives the opportunity for land which had not been used as farmland in the past to be re-designated as agricultural land and returned to commercial production.

### RCW 36.70A.030(3) - GMA definitions.

(3) "**Agricultural land**" means land primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees not subject to the excise tax imposed by \*RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140, finfish in upland hatcheries, or livestock, **and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production. (emphasis added).**

**Agriculture or agricultural activity:** the use of land for commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products, or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, cottonwood trees, Christmas trees (not subject to excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.140), or livestock, including those activities directly pertaining to the production of crops or livestock including, but not limited to, cultivation, harvest, grazing, on-site animal waste storage and disposal, fertilization, the operation and maintenance of farm and stock ponds, drainage ditches, irrigation systems, and canals, and normal maintenance, operation and repair of existing serviceable structures, facilities, or improved areas.

**Agricultural accessory use:** an agricultural accessory use shall predominantly serve the principal use of the farm, but may also serve other farms. It shall be considered accessory to an agricultural use if it is located on either the same lot or other lots that collectively or in singular comprise a principal use of a corporate farm or farm held or leased by a farm manager or his immediate family. An accessory use to an agricultural use, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Outdoor storage of processed and unprocessed natural materials, waste materials, or other similar materials;
- (2) Impoundments under 1-acre feet in volume;
- (3) Farm animal or horticultural viewing by the public;
- (4) U-pick sales to the public;
- (5) Storage of agricultural products, ingredients, packaging and/or equipment used on-site;
- (6) Miscellaneous agricultural support buildings, including barns, sheds, corrals, farm offices, and coops, which are used for on-site soil-dependent agriculture; and
- (7) **Activities associated with tourism which promote local agriculture**; provided, that adequate parking and specified ingress and egresses are designated and permitted. **Emphasis added.**

**Use:** the specific purpose for which land or a building is designated, arranged, intended, or for which it is or may be occupied or maintained.

**Primary or principal building or use:** that structure or use for which a property is primarily used, that may be either permitted outright or through a special use process.

**Farm:** land, buildings and machinery used in the commercial production of land-based farm products.

**Soil dependent:** any use that is included in the definition of agriculture which is dependent on the use of native, indigenous soil and which allows continued and future use of the soil for growing crops.

**Primary or principal building or use:** that structure or use for which a property is primarily used, that may be either permitted outright or through a special use process.

**Accessory use:** applies to a use, building or structure, which is dependent on and subordinate or incidental to, and located on the same lot with, a principal use, building, or structure.

**Agricultural building:** This definition is to be used for purposes of implementing Chapter 14.34 SCC, Flood Damage Prevention, only. A structure designed and constructed to house farm implements, hay, grain, poultry, livestock or other horticultural products. This structure shall not be a place of human habitation or a place of employment, nor shall it be a place used by the public.

**RCWs**

**Search Results**

Query: "agritourism"

RCW 4.24.832

Agritourism – Immunity.

RCW 4.24.835

Agritourism – Warning notice.

RCW 4.24.830

Agritourism – Definitions.

Chapter 4.24 RCW

SPECIAL RIGHTS OF ACTION AND SPECIAL IMMUNITIES

RCW 28A.235.180

Farm-to-school initiatives.

**Search Results**

Query: "agricultural tourism"

RCW 67.28.180

Lodging tax authorized – Conditions.

Chapter 82.04 RCW

BUSINESS AND OCCUPATION TAX

RCW 15.64.060

Farm-to-school program.

RCW 67.16.200

Parimutuel wagering at satellite locations – Simulcasts.

RCW 43.84.092

Deposit of surplus balance investment earnings – Treasury income account –

Accounts and funds credited. (Effective until Jul

RCW 79A.30.050

Collaboration by authority and state on projects of shared interest – Cooperation  
with groups for youth recreational activities

RCW 9.46.0209

"Bona fide charitable or nonprofit organization."

RCW 90.56.010

Definitions.

RCW 79.10.520

Prioritizing investments on forest health treatments.

RCW 47.87.010

Findings.

RCW 43.79A.040

Management – Income – Investment income account – Distribution.

RCW 43.07.350

**RECEIVED**

**JUL 25 2023**

**SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS**

RCWs & WACs Search results Agritourism and related 020623  
Citizens' exchange program.

Page 2 of 2

**RCW 43.06.338**

Washington marine resources advisory council. (Expires June 30, 2032.)

**Title 36 RCW**

**COUNTIES**

**WACs -**

**Search Results**

Query - agritourism - no references.

Query - agriculture & tourism - no references.

Query - agricultural tourism - no references.

Query: "agricultural accessory use"

**WAC 173-26-241**

Shoreline uses.

**Title 296 WAC**

LABOR AND INDUSTRIES, DEPARTMENT OF

**Chapter 296-307 WAC**

SAFETY STANDARDS FOR AGRICULTURE

**WAC 365-196-815**

Conservation of natural resource lands.

**WAC 197-11-800**

Categorical exemptions.

**WAC 365-196-425**

Rural element.

**WAC 365-190-040**

Process.

**WAC 51-55-0500**

Special building construction regulations.

**WAC 296-24-990**

Definitions.

**WAC 51-50-1004**

Section 1004 – Occupant load.; Section 1004 – Occupant load.

**WAC 173-158-030**

Definitions.

**WAC 51-54A-1004**

Occupant load.



E mail Complaint to [change.org](https://change.org) sent 072123; revised 072523  
Full code citations edited or omitted for brevity.

1 of 8

To: [help@change.org](mailto:help@change.org)  
cc: Commissioners Wesen, Browning, Janicki; Jack Moore, Director, SCPD&S, Sara Ruether, Long Range Planning Mgr., SCPD&S; Tim Raschko, Chair, SCPC; Tammy Candler, Vice-Chair, SCPD; Michael Hughes, Chair, SC Ag. Adv. Board; Terry Sapp, Land Use Committee, SC -AAB.

The petition created on [change.org](https://change.org) on July 12, 2023 by [SaveSkagitFarmVenues.com](https://SaveSkagitFarmVenues.com) appears to violate the [Change.org](https://change.org) Community Policies. Your community policies state that you will remove content that violates your policies.

This post contains misinformation, disinformation and is misleading. We kindly ask that you remove the content and the petition as soon as possible.

Should you have questions, need additional information or wish to discuss, please contact me directly.

Thank you,  
Ellen Bynum, Executive Director, Friends of Skagit County

Ellen Bynum  
PO Box 909  
LaConner, WA 98257-0909 USA  
360-466-2202 (unlisted)  
360-488-3244 iPhone  
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**RECEIVED**  
**JUL 25 2023**  
**SKAGIT COUNTY**  
**PDS**

Skagit County is proposing code changes because of non-farm related businesses operating in the Agriculture - Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRL) zone. A few farms in the zone have hosted weddings and other public events that are not an accessory use to farming and are not a permitted use in the Ag-NRL zone.

Here is [Skagit County's analysis of the proposed code changes in the county's staff report](#). The exact language of the proposed changes is at the bottom of the document. The background and rationale for the proposed changes is in the report.

The Agricultural Advisory Board, a volunteer citizen committee made of farmers and landowners, researched and proposed these changes to clarify the code and as a solution to the problem of event venues on farms operating unpermitted accessory activities, some for many years.

Petitioners claim the new code "will severely limit and restrict Skagit farm venues, farm stands, and all agritourism businesses". This is simply untrue. Farm related activities like farmstands, farm festivals, farm tours or other agricultural related accessory uses and activities are unchanged. Roadside stands are permitted with size conditions.

Under 14.16.400 Agricultural - Natural Resource Lands permitted uses do not include weddings or other public events like music concerts. Permitted accessory uses cannot interfere with the active and ongoing farm operations. Permitted accessory uses are secondary to farming and must be related to the activities listed in the code.

The primary function of Skagit County's Ag-NRL zone is the production and distribution of food and fiber. Skagit County's definition of agritourism only includes accessory activities that are secondary to the production and/or distribution of food and fiber, and are related to farming. The proposed code changes states "Celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties, or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism."



E mail Complaint to [change.org](http://change.org) sent 072123; revised 072523  
Full code citations edited or omitted for brevity.

Please see the code below 14.16.400 for the list of permitted uses.

The County's Special Use Permit (SUP) currently allows property owners in any zone to hold temporary permitted events up to 24 days of events per year. The proposed code changes reduce to 12 the number of days temporary permitted events can be held in the Ag-NRL zone only. The code for other zonings have respective lists of permitted activities in that code.

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires Skagit County to identify and protect prime agricultural soils for food and fiber production in perpetuity. Other counties may or may not be in compliance with the GMA and their codes reflect various levels of protection for the other counties' farmland. Skagit County is one of last remaining commercial farming area in western Washington because of its commitment to not allow conversions of farms and farmland to other uses. Skagit County also wants to avoid speculative purchases of farms for other uses. Clarifying the codes lets prospective buyers know that farmland is to be used for food and fiber production and farm and agriculturally related accessory activities that are included in the code can be permitted with a special use permit.

The proposed code changes are the result of over two years of work by the Skagit Planning Commission, Skagit Planning & Development Services, the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board and BERK Consultants. All materials from meetings concerning the Agritourism study and associated work were publically noticed and minutes of the Planning Commission are posted on the County website. The upcoming hearing is part of the process of taking testimony from the public on the proposed code and will be part of the legal record that the Planning Commission members will review in order to make their recommendation to the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners.

**Skagit County codes (partial):**

**14.04.020 Definitions.**

**Accessory use:** applies to a use, building or structure, which is dependent on and subordinate or incidental to, and located on the same lot with, a principal use, building, or structure.

**Accessory use, residential**

**Act:** the Growth Management Act, Chapter 17, Laws of 1990, 1st Ex. Sess., Chapter 36.70A RCW et seq., Chapter 32, Laws of 1991, 1st Sp. Sess., and Chapter 6, Laws of 1993, 1st Sp. Sess., as now in existence or as hereafter amended.

**Agricultural accessory use:** an agricultural accessory use shall predominantly serve the principal use of the farm, but may also serve other farms. It shall be considered accessory to an agricultural use if it is located on either the same lot or other lots that collectively or in singular comprise a principal use of a corporate farm or farm held or leased by a farm manager or his immediate family. An accessory use to an agricultural use, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Outdoor storage of processed and unprocessed natural materials, waste materials, or other similar materials;
- (2) Impoundments under 1-acre feet in volume;
- (3) Farm animal or horticultural viewing by the public;
- (4) U-pick sales to the public;
- (5) Storage of agricultural products, ingredients, packaging and/or equipment used on-site;
- (6) Miscellaneous agricultural support buildings, including barns, sheds, corrals, farm offices, and coops, which are used for on-site soil-dependent agriculture; and
- (7) Activities associated with tourism which promote local agriculture; provided, that adequate parking and specified ingress and egresses are designated and permitted.

**Agricultural Advisory Board:** a formally established Board that reviews and monitors agricultural policies and programs, and advises the Skagit County Board of Commissioners, the Planning Commission, and Planning and Development Services on issues regarding agriculture lands in Skagit County. This group will be the principal group responsible for developing and implementation of the policies within the Agricultural Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Agricultural building:** This definition is to be used for purposes of implementing Chapter 14.34 SCC, Flood Damage Prevention, only. A structure designed and constructed to house farm implements, hay, grain, poultry, livestock or other horticultural products. This structure shall not be a place of human habitation or a place of employment, nor shall it be a place used by the public.

**Agricultural Natural Resource Land:** means land designated as Ag-NRL which is primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural (including fiber production such as hybrid cottonwoods), viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees (not subject to the excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140), finfish in upland hatcheries, or livestock (including livestock raised for personal use), and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production. The Revised Code of Washington, for 1997, has several definitions for agriculture. The State Hydraulics Code (Chapter 75.20 RCW) is necessary to implement the riparian protection section of the CAO; it requires the use of the definitions of agriculture as given in RCW 84.34.020 and 36.70A.030(2).

**Agriculture or agricultural activity:** the use of land for commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products, or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, cottonwood trees, Christmas trees (not subject to excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.140), or livestock, including those activities directly pertaining to the production of crops or livestock including, but not limited to, cultivation, harvest, grazing, on-site animal waste storage and disposal, fertilization, the operation and maintenance of farm and stock ponds, drainage ditches, irrigation systems, and canals, and normal maintenance, operation and repair of existing serviceable structures, facilities, or improved areas.

**Conversion, agricultural land:** any activity that alters the landscape so as to preclude a parcel or a portion of a parcel from the reasonable possibility of agricultural production. This includes the construction of structures or infrastructure or any other alteration which would make agricultural production of a parcel or portion of a parcel technically or economically infeasible. Locating structures within an existing developed area used as a home-site, or within an area not more than 1 acre in size on vacant parcels, shall not be considered conversion.

**Farm:** land, buildings and machinery used in the commercial production of land-based farm products.

**Farm-based business:** an on-farm commercial enterprise devoted to the direct marketing of unprocessed and/or value-added and soil-dependent agricultural products that are produced, processed, and sold on-site. Farm-based businesses are intended to supplement farm income, improve the efficiency of farming, and provide employment to farm family members. Farm-based businesses are separate and distinct from agriculture support services.

**Farm operation:** conditions or activities which occur on a farm in connection with the commercial production of land-based farm products, and includes, but is not limited to, market produce at roadside stands or farm markets; preparation for market, delivery to storage or to market, or to carriers for transportation to market; transportation of equipment; noise, dust, fumes, operation of machinery and irrigation pumps; ground and aerial seeding or spraying; application of chemical and organic fertilizers, conditioners, insecticides, pesticides and herbicides and associated drift of such materials; and the employment and use of labor.

**Farmers' market:** an open-air short-term market where produce and other related goods are sold. Does not include permanent physical structures.

**Natural resource lands:** lands designated on the official Skagit County Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map as Agricultural, Industrial Forest, Secondary Forest, Mineral Overlay, and Rural Resource, which have long-term commercial significance.

**Nonconformance or nonconforming:** any use, improvement or structure established in conformance with Skagit County rules and regulations in effect at the time of establishment that no longer conforms to the range of uses permitted in the site's current zone or to the current development standards of the Code due to changes in the Code or its application to the subject property.

**Nuisance:** all violations of land use ordinances, statutes and regulations contained in this Code are hereby declared to be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare and as such shall constitute nuisances.

**Ongoing agriculture:** the continuation of any existing agricultural activity on Agricultural—Natural Resource lands or Rural Resource—Natural Resource lands, including crop rotations;....Activities undertaken for the first time after May 13, 1996, the date Skagit County adopted Ordinance 16156, the Critical Areas Ordinance, do

not constitute "ongoing agriculture"; provided, that any lands that were fallow on May 13, 1996, but had been in agricultural production within 5 years prior to May 13, 1996, shall be considered "ongoing agriculture" for purposes of this definition. Activities that bring an area into agricultural use are not considered ongoing agriculture. In addition, in order for parcels of land under 20 acres to qualify under this definition, they must meet the criteria of RCW 84.34.020(2)(b) and (c).

**Permitted use:** any use authorized or permitted alone or in conjunction with another use in a specified zone and subject to the limitations of the regulations of such zone.

**Seasonal roadside stand:** small retail establishment accessory to an actively managed, ongoing agricultural operation dedicated exclusively to the sale of agricultural products and agricultural promotional items. A majority of the agricultural products must be grown on-site or be a product of the primary agricultural operation located in Skagit County. All agricultural promotional products shall be accessory to the primary use of the stand for agricultural products and shall be directly related to the agricultural operation and located solely within the stand. Signage is allowed per SCC 14.16.820.

**Soil dependent:** any use that is included in the definition of agriculture which is dependent on the use of native, indigenous soil and which allows continued and future use of the soil for growing crops.

**Temporary events:** commercial use of a property for any musical, cultural, or social event held either indoors or out of doors. NOTE: must be soil dependent related agricultural production on Ag-NRL.

**Zone and zoning district:** a legislatively defined and enacted policy, including standards, a detailed map and other criteria, all of which control and define areas of physical development of the County or any part thereof or any detail thereof and which are classified by the zoning ordinance as available for certain uses and unavailable for certain other uses.

### **Skagit County Codes**

#### **14.16.400 Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRL).**

(1) Purpose. The purpose of the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands district is to provide land for continued farming activities, conserve agricultural land, and reaffirm agricultural use, activities and operations as the primary use of the district. Non-agricultural uses are allowed only as accessory uses to the primary use of the land for agricultural purposes. The district is composed mainly of low flat land with highly productive soil and is the very essence of the County's farming heritage and character.

#### (2) Permitted Uses.

- (a) Agriculture.
- (b) Agricultural accessory uses.
- (c) Agricultural processing facilities. ..
- (e) Commercial greenhouse operations that are an integral part of a local soil-based commercial agriculture operation.
- (f) Individual or multiple farm composting as an incidental agricultural operation to a working farm with no net loss of soil. The composting operation shall be managed according to an approved nutrient management plan in conjunction with the local Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and all applicable environmental, solid waste, access and health regulations. Such use shall not generate traffic uncommon to a farm operation.
- (g) Family day care provider as defined in Chapter 14.04 SCC; provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed.
- (h) Farm-based business carried on exclusively by a member or members of a family residing on the farm and employing no more than 3 nonresident full-time equivalent employees.
- (i) Historic sites open to the public that do not interfere with the management of the agricultural land.
- (j) Home Based Business 1. ...
- (m) On-site sorting, bagging, storage, and similar wholesale processing activities of agricultural products that are predominantly grown on-site or produced principally from the entire commercial farm operation. Such activities shall be limited to those which are integrally related to the agricultural production and harvesting process.
- (n) Seasonal roadside stands not exceeding 300 square feet.
- (o) Single-family detached residential dwelling unit and residential accessory uses, when accessory to an agricultural use; and provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed for accessory uses....
- (q) Wholesale nurseries.

**(3) Administrative Special Uses.**

- (a) Agricultural slaughtering facilities.
- (b) Bed and breakfast, subject to SCC 14.16.900(2)(c), provided the use is accessory to an actively managed, ongoing agricultural operation and no new structures are constructed outside of the home for lodging purposes....
- (c)(i) or (ii) of this Section as well as the item in Subsection (3)(c)(iii) of the following requirements:
  - (i) The expansion is located within the existing building envelope which may include the required landscaping for the approved use;
  - (ii) It is to be sited on existing impervious surface or in existing right-of-way;
  - (iii) The applicant has proven that there is no other viable alternative to providing the expansion on non-natural resource lands.
- (d) Greenhouse operations not otherwise permitted in SCC 14.16.400(2)(e). Greenhouses operating in the Ag-NRL zone as an administrative special use, should they cease operation, shall be required to return the land to its former state or otherwise place the land in agricultural production.
- (e) Home Based Business 2, provided no conversion of agricultural land is required to accommodate the business activity.
- (f) Minor public uses related to the provision of emergency services where there is no other viable parcel or non-resource designated land to serve the affected area. Applicants shall demonstrate the need to locate the use in the natural resource land. Analysis of alternatives to the development of the use within the natural resource land must be provided.
- (g) Minor utility developments including those that are a necessary part of a salmon recovery or enhancement project pursuant to SCC 14.24.130, including stormwater management projects, where there is no other viable parcel of non-agricultural land to locate the project.
- (i) Seasonal roadside stands not exceeding 2,000 square feet, except as allowed in Subsection (2)(n) of this Section.
- (j) Temporary manufactured homes; provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed.
- (k) Temporary events related to agricultural production; and provided, that no agricultural land is converted and no permanent structures are constructed....

**(4) Hearing Examiner Special Uses.**

- (a) Aircraft landing field, private, as an accessory to an agricultural use only, provided the applicant has proven that there is no other viable alternative to providing the service on natural resource lands.
- (b) Concentrated animal feeding operation....
- (d) Home Based Business 3, provided the use is accessory to an actively managed, ongoing agricultural operation and no conversion of agricultural land is required to accommodate the business activity...
- (g) Major utility developments where there is no other viable parcel or non-agricultural designated land to serve the affected area. Analysis of alternatives to the development of the utility in the natural resource land must be provided....
- (k) Seasonal roadside stands not exceeding 5,000 square feet, except as allowed in Subsections (2)(n) and (3)(h) of this Section.
- (l) Shooting club (outdoor), with no associated enclosed structures allowed except as needed for emergency communications equipment; and provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed.
- (m) Temporary asphalt/concrete batching as defined and limited in Chapter 14.04 SCC, provided there is no other viable parcel of non-resource designated land to serve the purpose.

**(5) Dimensional Standards.****(a) Setbacks.****(i) Residential.**

(A) Front: 35 feet minimum, 200 feet maximum from public road. If a parcel is located such that no portion or developable portion of the property is within 200 feet of a public road, the maximum 200-foot setback shall be measured from the front property line. The maximum setback may be waived by Planning and Development Services where critical areas, preventing the placement of residential structures, are located within the 200-foot setback area. The maximum setback may also be waived by Planning and Development Services in cases where nonfloodplain or nonprime agricultural land is located on the lot outside of the setback area, which would provide for a more appropriate placement of residential structures. In cases where a residence exists outside the setback area, residential accessory structures may be placed outside the setback area if located in accordance with the siting criteria outlined in Subsection (6) of this Section.

(B) Side: 8 feet adjacent to a property line.

(C) Rear: 35 feet.

- (D) Accessory: Same as principal structures.
- (ii) Nonresidential. (A) Front: 35 feet. (B) Side: 15 feet. (C) Rear: 35 feet.
- (b) Maximum height: 30 feet or shall conform to the Skagit County Building Code.
- (i) Height Exemptions. Flagpoles, ham radio antennas, church steeples and fire towers are exempt. The height of personal wireless services towers are regulated in other SCCs.
- (c) Minimum lot size: 1/16th of a section of land or 40 acres. Smaller lot sizes are permissible through CaRDs or as provided in SCC 14.16.860.
- (6) Siting Criteria. In addition to the dimensional standards described in Subsection (5) of this Section, new, non-agricultural structures shall be required to comply with the following provisions:
- (a) Siting of all structures in the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands district shall minimize potential impacts on agricultural activities.
- (b) When no structures or no compatible structures exist on the subject property or adjacent properties, new structures shall be located in a corner of the property and all development including but not limited to structures, parking areas, driveways, septic systems and landscaping shall be contained within an area of no more than 1 acre.
- (c) When structures exist on the subject property or adjacent properties, siting of new structures shall comply with the following prioritized techniques:
- (i) Locate new structure(s) within the existing, developed area of any compatible structure(s) in the same ownership, and utilize the existing access road.
- (ii) When the provisions of Subsection (6)(c)(i) of this Section are not possible, locate new structure(s) within the existing, developed area of any compatible structure in the same ownership.
- (iii) When the provisions of Subsection (6)(c)(i) or (6)(c)(ii) of this Section are not possible, site new structure(s) to achieve minimum distance from any existing compatible structure on either the subject property or an adjacent property.
- (7) Additional requirements related to this zone are found in SCC 14.16.600 through 14.16.900 and the rest of the Skagit County Code. (Ord. O20090006; Ord. O20080012 (part); Ord. O20080004 (part); Ord. O20070009 (part); Ord. O20050003 (part); Ord. O20030021 (part); Ord. R20020130 (part); Ord. 18375 §§ 4 (part), 5, 2001; Ord. 18069 Appx. A (part), 2000; Ord. 17938 Attch. F (part), 2000)

#### **14.44.275 Special use permits in Ag-NRL.**

- (1) As certain uses in the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands zone are allowed only in conjunction with or accessory to an agricultural use/operation, specific documentation may be required to evidence an existing agricultural use/operation.
- (2) Whenever the Administrative Official has reason to believe, or an RFI is filed alleging, that there is a violation of a special use permit on a parcel in the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands zone with no obvious indication of an agricultural use/operation, the following documentation may be required as evidence of compliance. The Department should review and verify the following documentation when required, but not copy or retain either item for permanent record.
- (a) Temporary Manufactured Home—Accessory to Farm Dwelling Unit. If requested by the Department, the farm owner/operator must submit an IRS Form 943, filed in the current or previous year, indicating that at least one farm worker was employed in farm work.
- (b) Special Uses Allowed as Accessory to an Agricultural Use/Operation. If requested by the Department, the farm owner/operator must submit an IRS Form 1040 Schedule F, filed in the current or previous year, indicating income from agricultural activities.
- (3) If documentation meeting the above stated requirements is requested but not submitted, the activity may be deemed a violation. (Ord. O20140004 § 1 (Att. 1 (part)))

#### **14.16.900 Special use permit requirements.**

- (1) Special Uses.
- (a) Purpose. To provide a means to recognize and approve land uses not specifically identified as allowed uses. A special use permit must demonstrate that the proposed activity will not adversely affect or prevent those uses normally allowed within the respective district.
- (b) Process/Authority for Special Use Permit.
- (i) Administrative special uses shall be reviewed as a Level I permit, pursuant to Chapter 14.06 SCC.
- (ii) Hearing Examiner special uses shall be reviewed as a Level II permit, pursuant to Chapter 14.06 SCC.
- (iii) The Hearing Examiner shall have authority to order that a special use permit be revoked, suspended, or modified based on a finding that the conditions have not been satisfied by the applicant. The Administrative Official

- or party of record may request a review by the Hearing Examiner on a special use permit pursuant to a Level II action, pursuant to Chapter 14.06SCC.
- (iv) The approving authority's decision may be to grant or to deny an application.
  - (v) The burden of proof shall be on the applicant to provide evidence in support of the application. The criteria for approval or denial shall include the following:
    - (A) The proposed use will be compatible with existing and planned land use.
    - (B) The proposed use complies with the Skagit County Code.
    - (C) The proposed use will not create undue noise, odor, heat, vibration, air and water pollution impacts on surrounding, existing, or potential dwelling units, based on the performance standards of SCC 14.16.840.
    - (D) The proposed use will not generate intrusions on privacy of surrounding uses.
    - (E) The proposed use will not cause potential adverse effects on the general public health, safety, and welfare.
    - (F) For special uses in Industrial Forest—Natural Resource Lands, Secondary Forest—Natural Resource Lands, Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands, and Rural Resource—Natural Resource Lands, the impacts on long-term natural resource management and production will be minimized.
    - (G) The proposed use is not in conflict with the health and safety of the community.
    - (H) The proposed use will be supported by adequate public facilities or services and will not adversely affect public services to the surrounding areas, or conditions can be established to mitigate adverse impacts on such facilities.
    - (I) The proposed use will maintain the character, landscape and lifestyle of the rural area. For new uses, proximity to existing businesses operating via special use permit shall be reviewed and considered for cumulative impacts.
  - (c) Approved special uses identifiable through the Department's permit tracking system shall be mapped upon request.
  - (d) All special uses, including master planned resorts, shall require a development project be commenced for the entire parcel within 2 years of the permit approval, unless development is phased. For the purposes of this Section, "commenced" shall mean either (1) the use permitted by the permit has been established or (2) a complete building permit has been filed with Planning and Development Services for the principal building which will allow the use. Upon building permit approval, the principal building shall be completed (i.e., final inspections completed) within 3 years. Those portions of the property, which are not included within the development area and where the above time frames are not met, shall automatically be removed from the special use approval, unless a phasing plan is approved pursuant to Subsections (1)(d)(i) and (iii) of this Section. For purposes of this Subsection, "development area" shall mean all portions of the site needed to meet UDC requirements, such as lot coverage and setbacks.
  - (i) If an applicant desires to phase development of a special use, a phasing plan shall be submitted and reviewed as part of the special use permit application. When a special use includes a phasing plan, the initial phase shall be commenced and completed within the time frames articulated above, except that for master planned resorts, development in the initial phase must be commenced consistent with the approved phasing plan. Subsequent phases for special uses, except for master planned resorts, shall be commenced and/or constructed within the time frames established in the phasing plan, or within a 6-year period. Subsequent phases for master planned resorts shall be commenced and/or constructed within the time frames established in the approved phasing plan. Otherwise, the special use shall expire for those portions of the property where these requirements are not met.
  - (ii) Where a special use did not initially include a phasing plan, but prior to the automatic permit reversion an applicant desires the phasing of the operation, a phasing plan may be submitted to the County for consideration. This plan shall be reviewed through a Level II review process and be reviewed for compliance with the special use criteria.
  - (iii) The time limits established above shall be tolled pending resolution of any appeals, and may be extended by the Board of County Commissioners upon a showing that the applicant is diligently taking actions to obtain necessary permits and approvals to establish the use.
  - (2) **Special Uses with Specific Criteria.**
    - (h) **Temporary Events.** Special use permits for temporary events are also subject to the following criteria:
      - (i) Events may occur on no more than 24 calendar days per year.
      - (ii) Parking for all events shall be fully contained on the subject property and shall not include the use of any road right-of-way.
      - (iii) Does not create a detrimental level of electrical interference, line voltage fluctuation, noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, traffic or other environmental impacts on the surrounding area.
      - (iv) All lighting is directed away from neighboring residences or businesses.



**19. Janet Patterson <[janetpatterson1961@gmail.com](mailto:janetpatterson1961@gmail.com)>**

**Agritourism Code Change Proposal**

My concern is that the term "Agri-tourism" not be used to define any enterprise one wants to develop on farmland!

We have a number of established farm related businesses already such as tulips and produce that fulfill the tourism objectives. Additionally we already have existing businesses that do not meet the previously established criteria for agri-tourism. We do not need to expend the regulations so that more can be created.

Let's remember the Agriculture Roots of our economy. Seed crops, Potatoes, Berries, Dairy, Cattle to name a few. Without farmland we won't be a source of tourism....unless we want Skagit County to be just another passing roadside attraction.

What I don't want is neighborhoods changed by turning farms into short term rentals with people coming and going. I don't want RV camping in designated ag Open Spaces, nor tenting nor Bubble Glamping. A limited number of weddings is one thing; a revolving event venue is quite another. Weddings, bands, conventions, parties for any and all, political fundraisers, movies, all allowed and unlimited, is not desirable.

I support holding the land usage as it is and enforcing the permits and planning codes that preserve our bountiful Skagit Valley. Therefore, I support the proposed staff recommendations.

Sincerely, Janet Patterson

[jpatterson@wavecable.com](mailto:jpatterson@wavecable.com)

18383 Burkland Road Mount Vernon, WA 98274

Sent from my iPad



**20. Kraig Knutzen (Knutzen Farms)**

9255 Chuckanut Drive, Burlington, WA 98233  
360 757-6771 • fax 360 757-3222



[www.knutzenfarms.com](http://www.knutzenfarms.com)

Skagit County has fought diligently to protect the land where we grow all of our world renowned crops, notably vegetable seed, flowers and potatoes. A long history of protecting our agricultural industry by Skagit County via the planning commission and commissioners has been successful in keeping this county the beautiful and productive place it is today. Continued pressure to weaken the Ag NRL zoning and code by introducing non compatible uses will always exist. The diversity of crops that this land can nurture needs to be continually preserved and protected.

There are currently many entities operating outside the legal parameters of the code without enforcement. The reason these commercial venues are so desirable to operate in the Ag-NRL zoned land is the open space and beauty of being in an agricultural environment, but the ability to operate a productive farm in the vicinity of these operations is challenging at best. Enforcing the Ag- NRL code and the soil based industry it was written to protect is the only way agriculture will remain sustainable in Skagit County in the future. We urge that we are not just preserving crops in the next few years, but the crop harvested in this fertile soil for many decades to come.

Agriculture is essential in keeping Skagit County the stunning place it is to live and work for Skagitonians. Utilizing the rich soil to produce high quality products, agriculture is the largest financial driver in the county and with proper zoning and code enforcement it will continue to thrive well into the future. The clarifications to the existing code presented by the Ag advisory board will continue to serve the agricultural industry and Skagit County well. With a long history of defending Skagit agriculture I encourage you to continue that trend by supporting Ag advisory's proposal.

Respectfully,

Kraig Knutzen

9255 Chuckanut Drive

Burlington, WA 98233

Trading Member



Since 1905

*Six Generations of Farming • Incorporating knowledge of the past with the insight of the future.*

## 21. Randy and Aileen Good



Skagit County Planning Commission  
Planning and Development Services  
1800 Continental Pl  
Mount Vernon Wa. 98273



July 24, 2023

**Agritourism Amendments to Skagit County Code -Public Comment**

The Agriculture Advisory Board has worked diligently in putting forward and clarifying this proposed amendment proposal for over two years with Agritourism Survey's, public meetings, workshops and newspaper articles. The Board membership is made up of representation from all aspects of the Skagit County agriculture community with long time wisdom passed down from generation to generation with knowledge and expertise on Skagit agriculture. I was one of the founding members of the Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program and member of the Ag Advisory Board that helped develop existing county agriculture code with the intent to preserve and protect agriculture and to fortify the 1991 right to farm Ordinance without interference of any kind as required under the Growth Management Act. If Skagit County was enforcing these existing codes we would not be here today discussing these amendments. If the existing codes had been enforced the public would have been well aware what was permitted or not. Now all county citizens are dealing with misinformation to mislead the community to change county code to allow non agriculture activities on farmland. Non-agriculture activities such as weddings, concerts and meetings are going to interfere with the right to farm. If these venues are allowed, agriculture in Skagit County as we know it today will be gone forever. Are we going to preserve and protect the right to farm?

The failure to uphold the right to farm has resulted in 5 crop farmers losing their right to farm in Eastern Skagit County, because of the imported non-native elk contaminating fresh and organic produce and other damages making it impossible to raise produce or think about a seasonal roadside stand.

We encourage the Planning Commission to support the agriculture advisory boards recommendations and adopt the proposed minor changes to be in compliance with the right to farm in Skagit County.

Randy and Aileen Good  
35482 State Route 20  
Sedro Woolley Wa. 98284  
360-856-1199

Handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature reads "Randy Good" and the second reads "Aileen Good".

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** dolores lohman <dolkw@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 2:46 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

#####  
CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.  
#####

Hello  
My farm borders an active venue on McLean Road. I am in favor of the proposed agritourism code changes. This venue is disruptive to the quality of life on my farm. Their advanced high powered PA system ought to be silenced. After the afternoon gatherings, the concert level music with heavy bass blasts on from 7ish to almost 10 pm. With the overwhelming noise my calves become separated from their mothers and the herd often huddles in a corner. I have contacted the sheriff on numerous occasions and I understand it is a courtesy call for an officer to respond. Please consider my thoughts on limiting the activities of agritourism in Skagit County.  
Thank you  
Dolores Lohman  
16821 Britt Road  
Mount Vernon,WA 98273

Sent from my iPhone

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**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Terry Sapp <tfsapp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:55 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Topic: Agritourism  
Name: Terry Fender Sapp  
Mailing Address: 804 Ferry St, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

While I am a member of the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board, I am writing for myself and do not herein represent the AAB.

I support the proposal currently before the Planning Commission as presented by the Planning and Development Services Department.

**Essential Features**

1. The definition of agritourism would establish that commercial, non-agricultural uses of Ag-NRL lands for public gatherings and celebrations (tourism on ag land) be incidental and subordinate to actual farming on the site or by the owner/farmer. This notion is consistent with existing code which establishes that accessory uses connect to soil-based agriculture.
2. Buildings and facilities should be used in support of agriculture. This notion is present in existing code, as well.
3. Where non-agricultural activities and events do not satisfy the obvious uses as accessory to agriculture, a special use permit would be required, allowing for a further evaluation of a proposed activity and testing it against the code and policies of the county. Thus, parking, lighting, traffic, noise, water quality, sanitary services, food services and food safety, environmental conditions, public safety in buildings and on the grounds, and other conditions appropriate to public activity would be observed through a permit "contract" with the county.

I support these essential, common-sense features of the proposal that are intended to give agriculture primacy in the ag lands, in line with a long and treasured history embedded in existing code.

**Good Actors, Bad Actors, and Responsible Vendors**

Much has been said in oral public comments on this topic, mostly suggesting that current vendors of agritourism activities (wedding vendors, largely) are "responsible" and do not and would not violate common standards for neighborly behavior and rights to farm, in particular. Accepted. However, vendors do not control the actions of the public, even if the operator is on site. Further, general pledges of good citizenship do not control the choices of future or unnamed actors. Disputes over proper civic behavior likely involve parties each of which believes they are "good." Judicially, most accused persons claim innocence.

My wife and I operate a farm next to a property owner who decided to create a wedding venue in old farm buildings. While the vendors certainly believed they were "good actors," we did not, and neither did another neighbor who called the sheriff. All did not end well. Most certainly, the buildings could not have met codified standards for

public assembly, and parking and noise were a major neighborhood conflict. A regulatory framework must apply to such large public gatherings.

"Good actors" may be good in some observable ways but act badly in other ways. As an example, we attended a lovely in-barn celebration in this county where a dinner was served to a large gathering and alcoholic beverages were prominently available. On our way out of the event we observed young people spraying off used dinner service wares onto the ground with a garden hose. This could not be "responsible." A regulatory framework does apply to food handling, food safety, and alcoholic beverage services. Locating activities out in the countryside, and out of sight, does not exempt them from responsible choices. Not in town, not out of town. .

#### **Grandfathering**

It would alter the general understanding, if not legal meaning, of grandfathering to allow that something that is illegal could somehow be made legal by a tangential code change. Grandfathering is for uses, once legal, that become non-conforming through code changes that would otherwise make them illegal. Venues and non-agricultural activities that are not legal cannot be grandfathered into legitimacy. Such intentions require a direct, affirmative legislative action that creates new law for them or names them in a "carve-out" within the law, I believe.

#### **"Big A, little t" and Creep**

While the current policy discussion surrounding the proposal before the Planning Commission revolves around a primary set of identified activities -- weddings, concerts, restaurants -- because those activities and their associated economic product are existent and known, policy and code must consider other activities on the cusp or not now, or yet, in existence. The greater impact on the county and ag-zoned lands that a more lenient standard for non-agricultural, accessory uses will have involves those activities not foreseen or not in the discussion. Several types have recently come into visibility that create regulatory concern. It is important, also, to consider the kinds of activities that could take place where the current intention and value is in, say, weddings, but could become something far different when driven by economic benefit and where venues are available for rent.

Non-agricultural accessory activities will become an increasingly difficult realm to administer as the window is opened wider and pressure from the local population and a far larger and far-flung metropolitan tourist sector seeks entertainment in the precious ag lands. The possibilities are endless and all of them could likely be girded by an economic rationale, ironically, supporting ancillary income to a farmer. Agriculture may not be the most profitable use of low-lying, flat, accessible ag lands, but a wedding is not a carrot, nor is a Ferris wheel.

**24. Michael Hughes**

Skagit County Planning Commission

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

August 17, 2023

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Skagit County has made the tough decision to protect agricultural lands many times in its history. The adoption of the Growth Management Act and the following code adoption set strict rules on Agricultural Natural Resource Lands to protect soil-based production of food, seed, flowers, and other products that require the productive soils of our County. Over the years, there have been many attempts to place non-conforming uses in the agricultural areas, and the County has repeatedly chosen to protect agriculture. The only thing that keeps Skagit County different from the other now urban valleys of Western Washington is our firm belief and resolve to protect agricultural areas.

The proposal from the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board will help clarify existing code language and continue our long and strong history of protecting soil-based agricultural activities. Continuing to turn a blind eye to activities not allowed in the Ag-NRL will weaken the agricultural economy, and like nearly every other once productive area, lead to land conversion into an urban landscape.

I urge you, our Planning Commissioners, to continue their strong leadership in protecting soil-based agriculture. This leadership is recognized across the nation and has been emulated by counties nationally. Let's keep Skagit County a leader in Agricultural Protections and the envy of counties nationally who have already lost their agricultural economies.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Michael Hughes

**25. Josh Speck <[josh5887@gmail.com](mailto:josh5887@gmail.com)>**

Good afternoon,

I personally enjoy seeing folks get out and explore what this beautiful county has to offer and I am blessed to have lived in it my entire life. My concerns are based on the fact that the wedding event's take place in agricultural zoned properties. That goes back down to basic's where an individual owner of such parcel had obtained permits based on agricultural storage whether being a barn or a shop space and has gone around the system to make a fortune off

Attachment 1 – Support

the land without paying equal permit fees, taxes and most importantly, not safe for event's holding that many people. They are not compliant in public health standards for bathrooms or wash areas for folks who attend and that is because they rent honey buckets and were not built to host such events. A couple prime examples are the Stepping stone garden venue on cook road where people park in grass. This time of year our grasses are dry and the potential for a fire is extreme which will burn down neighboring crop lands. The other example is Santucci farm on Mclean road. Both places were not established and permitted to comply with mixed use code and public health standards. They make a fortune and our county see's zero revenue from them as it's a business and occupation tax and not sales tax because they rent it to a couple not a product being sold.

Josh Speck

845 Keta Ave

Burlington, WA 98233

## Attachment 2 - Opposed

Count	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Rohrs	Jill	Skagit's Best Salsa Company 12375 Reservation Road Suite B Anacortes WA 98221	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
2	Watts	Amber	Burlington Co-Owner Garden Path Fermentation	Opposed/Frustrated with restrictive zoning	Email	7/27/2023
3	Mayer	Andrew	Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce	Opposed/Wants to fastrack permitting existing business	Email and Mail	8/17/2023
4	Napoliello-Ivory	Angela	910 Alpine View Dr. Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	08/12/2023
5	Winkles	Anne and Ken	PO Box 586 Conway, WA	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	08/16/2023
6	Gastellum	Carolyn	14451 Ashley Place Anacortes, WA 98221	Opposed/More Time	Email	7/23/2023
7	Gubitosi	Cecily	523 N. 4th St. Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/More Time	Email	8/11/2023
8	Collins	Charly	2701 Old Highway 99 N Rd Burlington, WA	Opposed	Email	7/26/2023
9	Dariotis	Chris and Margy	17389 Hulbert Rd Mount	Opposed/Frustrated with	Email	8/10/2023

## Attachment 2 - Opposed

			Vernon, WA 98273	restrictive zoning		
10	Oster	Dana	Bow, WA	Opposed	Email	8/4/2023
11	Wudtke	Erika	16924 Nilson Rd. Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	8/9/2023
12	Garner	Floyd	23404 Prairie Rd Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	8/8/2023
13	Thoreen	Flan	29517 S. Skagit Hwy Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Opposed	Memo	7/25/2023
14	Jones	Gifford	1600 5th St Anacortes WA, 98221	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	7/29/2023
15	Hardie- Hill/Woll	Heather/Nichol as	Bow, WA	Opposed	Email	8/9/2023
16	McFarland	Jacob	3836 Summersun St Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	8/8/2023
17	Martin	Jacqueline	746 Westpoint PI Burlington, WA 98223	Opposed/Conc erned with aspects beyond agritourism	Email	7/26/2023
18	Gordon	Jan	16544 Colony Rd Bow WA	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	7/24/2023
19	Edgley	David and Jane	La Conner, WA	Opposed	Email	8/2/2023
20	Pocock	Jeanne	24443 Wicker Rd #25 Sedro Woolley, WA	Opposed	Email	7/27/2023



## Attachment 2 - Opposed

21	Christianson	John	Christianson's Nursery	Opposed/Preservation	Email	8/15/2023
22	Lisenby	Joseph	711 Maple Avenue La Conner, WA 98257	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/9/2023
23	Henderson	Judah	Anacortes WA	Opposed	Email	8/6/2023
24	Chilcote	Judith	22303 Little Mountain Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/16/2023
25	Hillard	Larry	Maddox Creek, Mount Vernon	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/4/2023
26	Frye	Amy	Boldly Grown Farm 8855 Ershig Rd Bow WA 98232	Opposed/More Time	Mail	8/17/2023
27	Cecotti	Nick	15195 State Route 536 Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Mail	8/17/2023
28	Katapodis Lee	Nancy	Double Barrel BBQ Sedro Woolley WA	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/28/2023
29	Shanin	Norman and Peter	13140 Josh Wilson Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/6/2023
30	Woods	Rob	CFO SaviBank 208 E Blackburn Suite 200 Mount Vernon WA 98276	Opposed	Email	8/3/2023
31	Haglund	Robin	11430 Walker Rd Mount	Opposed/Focused on	Email	7/17/2023

## Attachment 2 - Opposed

			Vernon WA 98273	economic impact		
32	Hass	Ron	9100 Marshal Rd Bow, WA 98232	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Mail	8/8/2023
33	Wechsler	Suzanne and Roger	Samish Bay Cheese 15115 Bow Hill Road PO Box 202 Bow, WA 98232	Opposed/More Time	Email	8/17/2023
34	Muggee	Sondra Platte	La Conner, WA	Opposed	Email	7/28/2023
35	Jewett	Sarah	Skagit County	Opposed	Email	7/26/2023
36	Anderson (Smith)	Susan	18321 Dike Rd Mt Vernon, WA 98276	Opposed	Mail	8/7/2023
37	Hughes-Hayton	Susan	Skagit County	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	7/30/2023
38	Champeaux	Tina	1641 SR 9 Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Opposed/Conc erned with aspects beyond agritourism	Email	7/26/2023
39	Stewart/Hurta do	Kayalan/Vicot	1087 Digby Rd Mount Vernon WA 98274	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	8/10/2023
40	Sandstrom	Brett	Sedro Woolley, WA	Opposed/Focu sed on economic impact	Email	7/28/2023
41	Crowell	Nancy	528 Road Street PO Box 173 La Conner WA 98257	Opposed	Email	7/28/2023

## Attachment 2 - Opposed

42	Extract	Ron	Co-Owner Garden Path Fermentation	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/27/2023
43	Self	Scott	915 S 19 St Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
44	Phou	Sunchea	22723 Grip Rd Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
45	Farrar	Judy	13033 Sunrise Dr Mount Vernon WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/16/2023
46	Jensen	Larry	15356 Produce Ln Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Concerned with aspects beyond agritourism	Mail	7/25/2023
47	Verge	Cynthia	Executive Director Skagit Valley Tulip Festival PO Box 1784 Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed	Letter	7/28/2023
48	Kmet	Mike	12596 C St Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/17/2023
49	Axthelm	Shannon	17000 Dike Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/2/2023
50	Dimock	Claire	Skagit County	Opposed	Email	7/26/2023
51	Kravolic	Diana	Mount Vernon WA	Opposed	Email	7/24/2023

52	Duvall	Gary	Skagit County	Opposed	Email	8/3/2023
53	Smith	Heather	Skagit County	Opposed	Email	8/11/2023
54	Phillip	Julia	Mt Vernon Chamber of Commerce Board Member	Opposed	Email	7/27/2023
55			Multimember Stakeholders	Opposed/Provided Recommendations	Email	8/17/2023
56	Smith	Leslie	409 Center St. La Conner, WA 98257	Opposed	Email	7/24/2023
57	Randall	Morgan	609A S 1st St Mount Vernon Wa 98273	Opposed	Email	8/2/2023

**1. Jill Rohrs <[jillrohrs@live.com](mailto:jillrohrs@live.com)>**

Dear Planning Commission and Commissioners,

I hope this email finds you all well. I am writing to express my wholehearted support for allowing farm venues to host weddings, celebrations of life, and other events that showcase our local valley's beauty and productivity. These businesses play a vital role in our community, and it is crucial that we provide them with the support they need to thrive.

Farming and events go hand in hand, complementing each other in a way that benefits both our agricultural sector and our local economy. By permitting weddings and events at venues like Willowbrook Manor and the Saltbox in Conway, we can create a win-win situation for landowners, farmers, and the community at large. It will help preserve our agricultural heritage while also allowing these venues to diversify their income streams and contribute to the economic growth of our region.

It is essential to find a balanced solution that addresses any concerns while embracing the benefits of farm venues for events. A compromise that respects the interests of all parties involved will pave the way for a thriving and harmonious community.

Here are some reasons why supporting farm venues for events is crucial:

- 1. Economic Resilience:** Allowing weddings and events on farms will provide an additional revenue stream for farmers and landowners, helping them weather economic challenges and sustain their livelihoods.

**Preservation of Agricultural Heritage:** By encouraging agritourism through events, we can promote the preservation of our agricultural heritage and educate people about the importance of sustainable farming practices.

**Local Business Support:** Embracing farm events will boost the local economy by driving tourism, supporting event-related businesses, and increasing overall spending in the area.

**Community Pride:** These farm venues have become an integral part of our community's fabric, providing unique and memorable experiences for residents and visitors alike.

As a small business owner and concerned member of this community, I urge the Planning Commission and Commissioners to work collaboratively with farm venue owners to find a compromise that allows these events to take place while addressing any valid concerns. By doing so, we can continue to foster economic growth, preserve our agricultural roots, and celebrate the beauty of our valley. Our Magic Skagit!

Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter. I trust that you will make a decision that benefits our community as a whole.

Sincerely,

***Jill Rohrs***

**Skagit's Best Salsa Company**

COO, Owner

12375 Reservation Road Suite B

Anacortes, WA 98221

[jillrohrs@live.com](mailto:jillrohrs@live.com)

[fresh@skagitsbestsalsa.com](mailto:fresh@skagitsbestsalsa.com)

360-610-9818

**2. Amber Watts <[amber@gardenpathwa.com](mailto:amber@gardenpathwa.com)>**

My name is Amber Watts, and I am a Burlington resident and the co-owner of Garden Path Fermentation, a brewery, winery, and cidery located at the Port of Skagit. Garden Path prides itself on making products using hyperlocal ingredients—99% of which come from within 20 miles of our site—and may be the only producer in the world making hyperlocal, naturally fermented beer, wine, cider, and mead.

My partner Ron Extract and I had the choice of moving anywhere in the world to start Garden Path in 2016, and we ended up choosing the Skagit Valley for a number of reasons, most importantly because of the abundance of small farms and farmers in the county. Our dream at that point was to purchase a small farm, where we could grow our own hops, cider apples, and

wine grapes, while making delicious beverages for our customers to enjoy in the place they were grown and made.

Very early on, we learned that dream was not to become a reality, at least not for the foreseeable future. We have been continuously told that it's not within the code to open a brewery/winery tasting room on Ag-NRL land or Rural Reserve land, despite numerous examples of similar venues within both zones.

We have also continually been told that the county is working on modifying the code to include ways for small businesses to be compliant with the county code while offering year-round agritourism experiences. We have attended countless planning meetings, EDASC meetings, meetings with the County Commissioners, meetings with the Port of Skagit, meetings with the IPZ, and were also part of every Agritourism Town Hall that has taken place since 2016.

And we were shocked to see that, despite the results from the BERK study showing overwhelming support for expanded agritourism activities in the county, the Ag Advisory Board instead recommended a code modification to further restrict them—one that the Planning Commission seems to be ready to adopt.

Agritourism is one of the best ways to make Skagit farming matter to those outside of the Valley. Allowing people to appreciate the beauty we take for granted is an easy pathway for them to appreciate, support, and build up farming as an industry. Limiting it in such a stringent way is both short-sighted and financially irresponsible.

This is not a plan that helps small farmers trying to subsist on a small farm's income. As you heard repeatedly at the meeting on Tuesday 7/25, the proposed code change instead has the potential to financially devastate numerous small farms—who are *farming*, while also holding events on their farms. For a place that prides itself on preserving farmland and family farms, changes like this imply that the priority is land over people. This about so much more than the vision for our little company. It's about the farmers we work with, our friends and neighbors, and the meaning of Skagit farmland as a whole.

In the past 7 years, through all the meetings and forums and town halls we've attended, the impetus from Skagit County has always been to pass the buck, to wait and decide about agritourism sometime later. With a proposal this unpopular and detrimental, it seems instead that the Ag Advisory Board would like to table it forever.

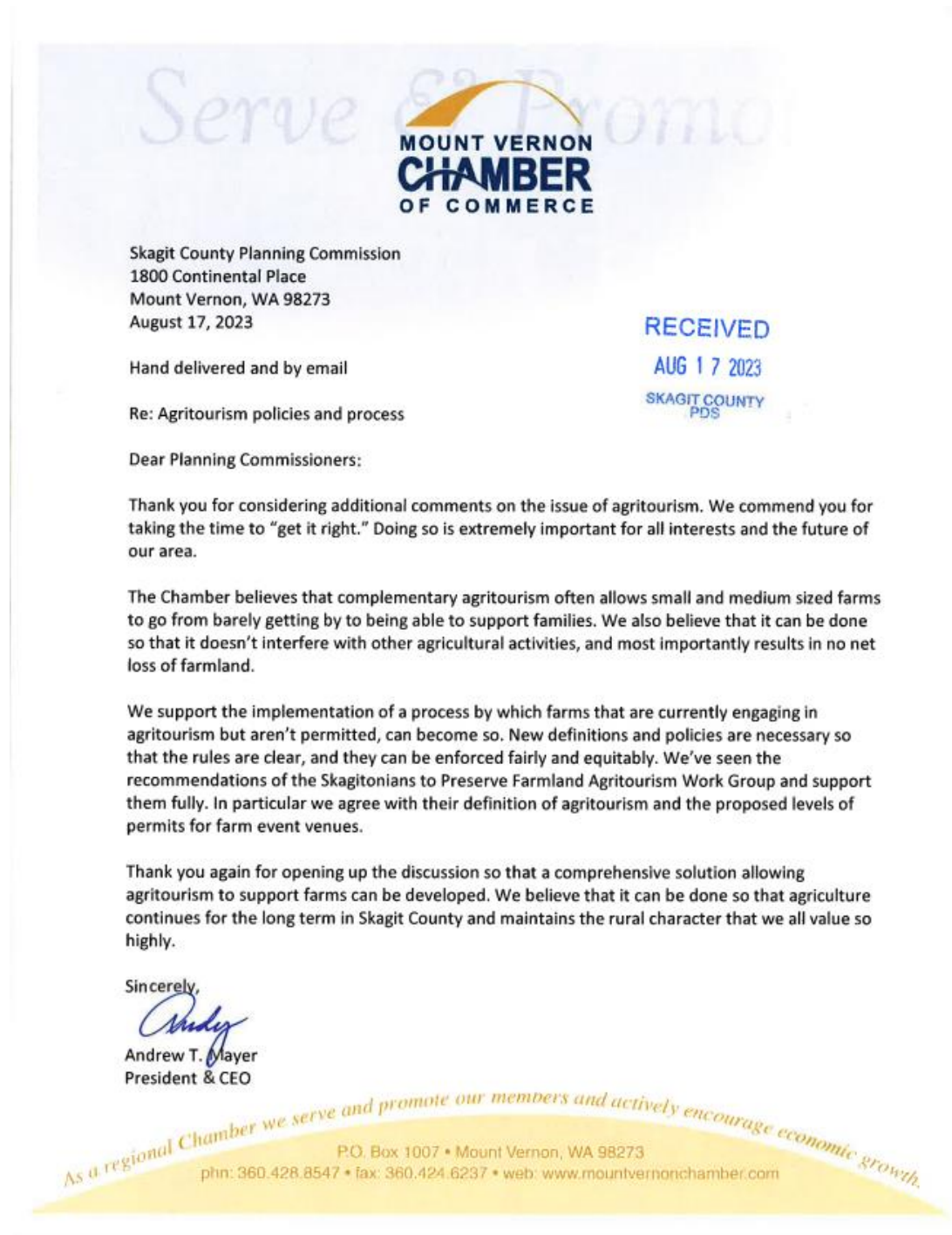
It is easier to say no to something new than to implement change. But the county is changing, the face of agriculture is changing, and the faces of small farmers are different than they were 30 years ago. If the county is not willing to compromise and to allow a legal path forward for small farms, the long-term change is going to be devastating.

We have been strong advocates for the Skagit Valley since the day we arrived, but decisions like this make me wonder whether this is the best place for our business to thrive.

Sincerely,

Amber Watts

**3. Andrew Mayer**



4. Angela Napoliello-Ivory <[anapolielloivory@gmail.com](mailto:anapolielloivory@gmail.com)>

Hello,



I moved to Skagit County with my husband three years ago this month. I had previously lived all my life in southern New Jersey. I have been a member of the Zoning Board in Clayton Borough, N.J. and a member of the Planning Board of Winslow Township, N.J. While serving on both of those boards I participated in several hearings for commercial enterprises and voted on the decisions of same. We considered the economic impact and the environmental impact of all applications that came before our boards.

I listened, via Zoom, to all the testimony on the Proposed Agritourism Code Changes and I have several questions.

My first question relates to the economy of the county. What will be the economic fallout of outlawing or limiting commercial enterprises? I understand that the Tulip Festival would be exempt from any new Agritourism restrictions, I assume Agritourism's economic impact on the county is a major consideration. Multiple people spoke about the impact such a decision would have on small farms that host these events and on those that provide auxiliary services. Have the immediate and secondary economic impacts of smaller events been considered? If so, what are they?

Secondly, are the proposed Agritourism rules changes an attempt to address a zoning issue? Do farms that derive a given portion of their income from events rather than generating their total income from agriculture endanger their agricultural or open space zoning? If so, what portion of their income would that be?

My third question has to do with the reported story of someone laying down in front of a tractor to stop it from "disrupting" a wedding. If the goal of these new proposed rules is to eliminate such things from happening again, how would that goal be accomplished by limiting the number of events from 24 to 12 per year? Is there a guarantee that with 12 events, the people attending these events will not behave badly?

There are other questions of course, like are you going to use the results of the completed survey to guide your decision on rules changes. Are farmers who grow flowers or tea also at risk of having their farms outlawed? Is this in fact an issue of big farms versus small farms?

The issue of Agritourism seems to come down to the issue of big and small. In our agricultural county where the portion of farmland owned by large operations increases every year, smaller farms are being squeezed out. So, what effect will curtailing the number of events held on small farm venues have on this trend? Is that the future the county wishes? A future of exclusive corporate ownership?

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your deliberations. I hope my questions support your efforts to clarify what is in the best interests of our community.

I do hope your decision on the Proposed Agritourism Code Changes will be on the side of enabling the growth of small business to ensure that our economy will prosper at every level.

Angela Napoliello-Ivory

910 Alpine View Drive

Mount Vernon, WA. 98274

**5. Anne Winkes <[annewinkes@gmail.com](mailto:annewinkes@gmail.com)>**

Dear Skagit County Planning Department,

We are writing to express our concerns about the code changes regarding agritourism proposed by the Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) that are currently under consideration by the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners.

We have lived in Conway for almost 40 years, witness to the changes in farming practices and crops and the rise of agritourism around Conway over the years. We believe that because agriculture is a vital part of Skagit County's economy, Skagit County's farmland and farms must be preserved, but we have also come to understand and appreciate the growing role agritourism, including the use of farms as event venues, has in that economy.

As noted in the PDS staff report the code changes were developed exclusively by the AAB and then modified by the Planning Commission. The staff report states that the "intent of these proposed code changes are for clarification and to ensure that any event businesses that go forward in Ag-NRL are intermittent and cannot operate as full-time event centers."

The proposed code limits event venue owners to only holding temporary events requiring an administrative special use permit, limiting the number of events held to no more than 12 a year. It defines agritourism as "A common, farm-based, commercial activity serving the public that promotes agriculture, is directly related to onsite agricultural production, is incidental and subordinate to the working farm operation, and is operated by the owner or operator of the farm or family members. Celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism."

Such a limited definition of agritourism is short-sighted. It turns a blind eye to the fact that event venues and farmers can coexist amicably and to mutual benefit without either causing the other loss of livelihood, without farmers losing prime farmland to event venues and without event venues limiting farm work.

Removing event venues from the definition of agritourism ignores the reality that many family farms are sustainable only because those families supplement their farm income by working other jobs off the farm. Other farm families have come to supplement their farm income by hosting events.

The proposed code, if adopted, will cause event venues, many on small family farms, to close their doors, eliminating families' livelihood, and negatively impacting secondary support businesses—motels, bed and breakfast inns, caterers, beauticians, and florists, among many others. It fails to recognize how event venues help preserve agriculture in Skagit County, providing places for locals and tourists alike to celebrate memorable events close to our County's extraordinarily productive and beautiful farmland. In both their economic impact and the image they project to visitors, event venues are farm friendly.

In short, instead of protecting existing farms, the proposed code changes may put some out of business. Family farms exist precariously. The county, in its effort to protect Skagit Valley's farming community, should not make it harder for them to survive`.

We urge PDS, the planning commission and the county commissioners to take a step back from the current code proposal and acknowledge the importance of involving not just AAB but all the stakeholders involved--local farmers, farm venues, business owners and community members-- in writing reasonable code that helps protect and preserve the county's agricultural and agritourism economy and the families that make it possible. Take a deep breath and collaboratively write code that works for everyone.

Thank you for considering our thoughts.

Anne and Ken Winkes

PO Box 586

Conway, WA, 98238-0586

**6. Carolyn Gastellum <[cgastellum67@gmail.com](mailto:cgastellum67@gmail.com)>**

To: Skagit County Planning Commission

Re: Proposed code changes for farm venues and agritourism

I oppose the proposed code changes for agritourism because they are too extreme. Much more time needs to be taken to bring our farming community to the table together so a more reasonable plan can be created.

I am a strong supporter of protecting Skagit County's world class soils and the farmers who work diligently to grow various crops. I read with interest the July 22, 2023 front page article in the Skagit Valley Herald entitled "Farmers weigh in on agritourism code changes."

In particular dairy farmer Jason Vander Kooy who has five wedding venues bordering his fields said most of the time there are no issues because event managers are responsible and respect their signed contract stating that farming comes first. But he also explained that some wedding planners, photographers and guests are much less responsible and have been a concern.

Farmers markets, farm stands, wedding venues, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, art shows all are important economic support for our farming community and our county in general. We have lived in Skagit County for 34 years and completely appreciate these agritourism additions because they are high quality, tastefully done, and respectful of Skagit's farming tradition.

The only thing I have found to be objectionable was the use of a neon sign and a laser light show at a new tulip farm last summer. That is highly inappropriate in my opinion so I contacted the farm owner directly with my concerns.

If wedding planners are the primary problem then one idea would be to strengthen the contract language and enforce it. Hold them to higher standards and make it consistent. I also think Skagitonians to Preserve Farmlands, also quoted in the July 22 article, have some good ideas that are worth considering.

Thank you for accepting my comments on this important issue.

Carolyn Gastellum  
14451 Ashley Place  
Anacortes, WA 98221

**7. Cecily Gubitosi <[cecilygphotos@gmail.com](mailto:cecilygphotos@gmail.com)>**

Cecily Gubitosi

523 N 4th St, Mt Vernon, WA 98273

Good Morning,

I am a wedding and elopement photographer in Skagit County, I was born in raised in Sedro Woolley and attended and graduated MVHS and SVC with a BAS in Business management. My mom recently retired as the director of the Office of Assigned Counsel in Skagit County, and I previously worked at the Public Defenders Office while starting my business. I have spent many days in the superior court building as a child and teenager and always valued the local county government, and employees of Skagit County. Reading this code update and proposal was a disappointment and brought distress to myself, and many residents within the community.

As a small business owner within Skagit County, this proposed code change is concerning, and a place where I have lived my whole life would no longer be a feasible community for me to live in if there is no business. Based on other comments on this issue, this new code would drive people and small businesses ( including farmers) OUT of Skagit County. As spoken about in the public hearing, Skagit County's weddings bring in up to 30 million dollars to skagit county per year because of the umbrella of businesses that are hired to make a wedding happen. The tulips bring 65 million to skagit county each year, and there are 300,000 visitors to see our farmlands. Why are wedding venues any different?

We all agree there should be protection for the land, and proper codes in order to keep Skagit beautiful, if the farm venues get shut down and don't have the means or ability to farm themselves, what will happen to these farm venues? They will be sold to non-skagit residents or non-USA residents, because of their price tag. The resolution seems as simple as affordable, conditional, and contractual permits that outline what is and what is not allowed for a wedding.

We understand this is AG-NRL land, that needs to be protected, however, a complete shutdown is not the way to appease this narrative. The wording used in the proposal was vague and confusing which seemed intentional. This proposal is written based on fear and hypothetical situations that the AG advisory board "thinks" could be a problem, not based on fact.

The farm venues have done their due diligence and care to the grounds of their farms and venue plots. The income that comes from weddings has been used to take care of grounds, barns, and their families, and revenue is put back into Skagit County's economy. Collaborating and coexisting with farmers who don't own venues is as simple as a sit-down conversation.

**This entire proposal has created a divisive situation within Skagit County between farmers, venues, and small businesses.** In the current state of government, even as low as county government, this is not the time to create more disunity within our community. The code would be detrimental to small businesses, and responsible for part of the deterioration of the economy.

The proposal as currently written needs to be revisited and promptly rejected by the Skagit County Commissioners. Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this issue as well as with multi- stakeholders' involvement to bring a collaborative solution.

Thank you.

- Cecily Gubitosi

(

<https://www.skagitmg.org/home/events/tulip/#:~:text=Skagit%20County%20is%20known%20worldwide,in%20revenue%20to%20the%20county.>)

**8. Charly Collins <[mscharly.02@gmail.com](mailto:mscharly.02@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County is home to a diverse and growing population. The needs of the community have and will continue to evolve over time. Preserving farmland is and should be a part of our current and future goals. But preservation does not necessarily need to be at the cost of small farm owners, nor should it be inordinately balanced in favor of larger farming concerns. Farm stands, concerts, tastings, community fund raisers, weddings, proms, etc... are a part of the creative and economic evolution of the small farm. Should the small farm be penalized because larger farms are inconvenienced by the manner in which they operate? This speaks more to bullying and intolerance than cooperation and fair-handedness. Small farms and farmlands ARE preserved when there is economic diversity. Please withdraw the plan for new regulations that restrict and limit the way in which small farms are able to make decisions about how use THEIR land.

Sincerely,

Charly Collins

Property owner

2701 Old Highway 99 N Rd

Burlington, WA

**9. Chris Dariotis <[captzeno@gmail.com](mailto:captzeno@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County Planning Commission: August 9, 2023

I, together with 200-250 other citizens of Skagit County, attended the Planning Commission meeting of July 25, 2023 to hear about proposed code changes relating to Agritourism. I, along with many other tax paying citizens, were not in agreement with many of the proposed changes and feel that they will significantly diminish the value of my property and my ability to obtain the income required to maintain my property and to continue to live on it. Accordingly, I am submitting this testimony as a public comment and pray that it be considered in the formation of any code changes.

The proposed definition of Agritourism is very limited and excludes many potential activities that traditionally encompass Agritourism in other parts of the world. I take my examples of Agritourism from the examples of world famous Agriturismo from the Tuscany region of Italy. Please follow this link for examples: <https://www.travelmag.com/articles/agriturismo-tuscany/>. The Skagit Valley has no less beauty nor fewer nearby attractions than Tuscany. With the enlightened development of Agritourism our region could obtain such world wide acclaim.

My farm operation maintains a roadside stand where we sell agricultural products grown on site. We have many loyal customers, both local residents and visitors from out of town. I delight in trying to identify the languages spoken by foreign visitors. We invite our customers to view our crops where they are grown to learn about them and our cultural practices. Some of these visitors have expressed a desire to spend the night on our property to be able to cook the food that they have purchased from us. Apparently, this is not permitted by the restrictive code as it is currently written and is proposed to be made even more restrictive, as we have been issued a Code Compliance violation identified in Case #CE23-0146 for hosting a "Primitive Campground" when we have allowed these visitors to spend the night in their camper on the gravel parking area behind our building in the 1 acre parcel P121069. Attracting additional customers to our farm stand is essential to our ability to obtain an income from our farming operations. Restricting customers is contrary to the goal "Intended to supplement farm income, improve the efficiency of farming, and provide employment from agricultural support services." I propose that such temporary stays by self contained travelers be a specified allowed use in the Agricultural-Natural Resources Lands SCC 14.16.400.

In the future we may desire to host a Farm to Table Dinner on our farm and to temporarily establish a tent or other outdoor covering to protect people from the elements. The proposed wording in the proposed Code changes "that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism" are overly restrictive and would prohibit such activities. As long as such structures meet safety requirements they should be permitted to be used for temporary or recurring events. Our goal would be to attract additional customers to our farm, not to keep them away.

Additionally, Agricultural Support Buildings "used by the public" which have been constructed to meet safety standards should not be prohibited from use for Agritourism activities. Existing no longer used buildings or newly constructed structures, whether temporary or permanent, should not be prohibited from use, but should be encouraged to be reconfigured to support Agritourism. Some historic barns have been saved by converting them to houses or event venues and this activity should be promoted and encouraged, not prohibited. Prohibiting their use would eliminate one of the charms of the Skagit Valley, decreasing the value for all citizens.

Some properties in the Agricultural zone are too small to support an "active farming operation" as is practiced by the large scale industrial farmers. Small scale farming is still farming and adds to the charm of our valley.

Limiting events to the arbitrary limit of 12 calendar days per year is not sustainable for the long term health of an event. A farmer who has spent several hundred thousand dollars renovating a no longer used barn would need to charge thousands of dollars per event to recover his costs and would likely dissuade him from taking on the investment.

Agricultural products that are grown on the farm or the surrounding areas that are then processed into value added products, meals, or drinks should be allowed to be sampled in the Skagit Valley, just as in the wine producing areas of Tuscany. The goal should be promoting the "Genuine Skagit Valley" terroir and introducing it to the population of our region.

Sincerely submitted,

Chris and Margy Dariotis

17389 Hulbert Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**10. Dana Oster <[dana.oster4@gmail.com](mailto:dana.oster4@gmail.com)>**

The planning commissions original assessment that the existing code was strong but needed enforcement is reasonable. Allowing the agricultural advisory board to ignore the process of assessment and public input is a clear breach of just process and allowing incredibly biased board create overreaching, self serving code.

My primary concerns are around the following new rules, and their creation based on subjective whims, rather than being based on studies justifying why a change from 24 to 12 days is an apparent solution relative to the undue burden that creates on livelihoods. Additionally, examples exist across the county of important diversity of uses and activities on Ag\_NRL land as a necessity for the business to stay viable. This is written by those of larger farms opposed to create solutions of younger generations and those who did not inherit a long running business.

*" The purpose of reducing the number of events allowed under and administrative special use permit in Ag-NRL is to ensure that any event business is smaller or incidental and subordinate to a larger farming operation."*

The inclusion that neighboring properties should have any bearing on ones business and livelihood creates too much ambiguity and influence of other properties.

*(10) Accessory uses shall be located, designated, and operated so as to not interfere with, and to support the continuation of, the overall agricultural use of the property and neighboring properties.*

I ask that the planning commission reconsider and reject the additional codes created by an

advisory board that is biased and has not honored the fair process of reviewing information and taking public comment into consideration. The reports summarizing focus group sentiment clearly oppose the additional codes and proceeding with them undermines the validity of the planning committee and county government process.

Resident of Bow, WA

--

Dana Oster,

360-582-7807

### **11. Erika L Wudtke**

Name : Erika L Wudtke

Address : 16924 Nilson Road

City : Mt. Vernon

State : WA

Zip : 98273

email : [ladycabella@gmail.com](mailto:ladycabella@gmail.com)

PermitProposal : [ladycabella@gmail.com](mailto:ladycabella@gmail.com)

Comments : Viva farms reported earlier this year that in the next ten years, 70% of farmers in Skagit County will be of retirement age and their families do not plan on continuing their farming legacy. There is a push for large corporations taking over small farms in the US to put the small farms out of business. Skagit County relies on local farming as it's main revenue source. This County enjoys some of the most fertile land on earth and local farmers produce much needed food that is becoming in short supply. Pushing this agenda in the name of preserving farmland is absurd. Why are you making a difficult job that farmers already have to deal with worse for them by limiting their income resources that only serve to facilitate farmers in keeping their farms viable? Seems like you have bought and paid for into the world woke agenda of socialism to control everyone into submission. Let the farmers do what they have always done best instead of dictating how they can use their land. They are not currently using their land as venues as a replacement to farming. They are trying to supplement their incomes to keep their farms going. Not only farmers stand to suffer. Look at all the satellite businesses you will harm or completely put out of business is if this is allowed to pass. Look at how many migrant workers farmers employ. How many will families stand to lose by limiting what farmers can do on their land? Please rethink this control you are trying to assert. Without the farms of Skagit County, what are we? Farms drying up and going out of business will lead to more and more local poverty. Your plan seems short-sighted, ridiculous and self-serving. Please do not allow this to pass.

Respectfully,

Erika Wudtke



**12. Floyd Garner <[blackhartleather@yahoo.com](mailto:blackhartleather@yahoo.com)>**

The specificity of the proposal's wording speaks to "events". It can be argued that small booths or sales promotions associated with agricultural events such as "Tulip Festival" would also need to be stopped. In reality the entire ecotourism set of events in Skagit County the should be discontinued. If farmland is only for growing, then allowing horses of tourists to wander through the fields is circumspect.

Events such as weddings, funerals, anniversary dinners cause a number of support businesses to share in the revenue. As of yet, I have been unable to find instances where an event (other than tulip festival traffic snarls) has impeded or caused a hardship beyond the event farm's physical space.

Floyd Garner

23404 Prairie RD

Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**13. Fran Thoreen**

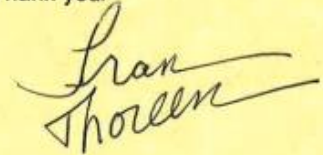
*Fran Thoreen, M.S.W.*  
Adoption Social Worker

Professional Services with a lot of Heart ♥

DATE: Tuesday, July 25, 2023  
TO: Skagit County Planning Department  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
ATTENTION: Planning Commissioners  
FROM: Fran Thoreen  
RE: Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

**PUBLIC COMMENT: *I am against the proposed county code changes.***

I am the land owner of parcels # 40182, 40183, 40184, 109074, approximately 60 acres. My former husband and I purchased our initial 40 acres in 11-73 and later added 20 more acres. My land has always been for the growth and harvest of trees and is zoned accordingly. I have a certified tree farm and am a member of the Washington Farm Forestry Association. I will be retiring next year. I plan to look into ways that I can further enjoy my beautiful woodlands during my retirement years and share it further with my children, grandchildren, community members and others. I resent the restrictive language and object to the restrictions on land use beyond what it already restricted by applicable zoning. Please keep me informed of decisions on the code changes. Thank-you.



**RECEIVED**

**JUL 25 2023**

**SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS**

29517 S. Skagit Hwy. Sedro-Woolley, Washington 98284

1-800-331-8620

Dear Skagit County:

I am a both a Skagit County commercial property owner and an appreciative customer of Willowbrook Manor English Teahouse and Farm Stay.

I understand that Willowbrook is facing a potential 50% reduction in the number of farm venue events they are able to offer. I am writing, therefore, in full support of this contributing member of our Skagit County property ownership. I suspect that Willowbrook Manor offers their fair share of property and/or business tax revenues.

Willowbrook Manor offers a pleasant and healthy business and recreational environment while engaging in nothing of obvious detraction. I am aware of no reason that the offerings of this quaint and affable Skagit County farm/teahouse should be abridged in any way.

I strongly urge the removal of this threat to the future of Willowbrook Manor from our Skagit County code revision.

Sincerely,

Gifford T Jones

1600 5th Street

Anacortes, WA. 98221

[GiffJones@gmail.com](mailto:GiffJones@gmail.com)

**15. Heather Hardie-Hill <[hhardieh@gmail.com](mailto:hhardieh@gmail.com)>**

As part of a family that lives on and actively farms their 40 acre property in Bow, we are in support of allowing celebratory gatherings on agricultural land.

Thanks,

Heather Hardie-Hill and Nicholas Woll

**16. Jacob McFarland <[jacob.mcfarland84@gmail.com](mailto:jacob.mcfarland84@gmail.com)>**

Absolutely, it's vital to recognize that while we're rooted in farming, our offerings have a unique allure for people. Our local farm owners not only provide distinctive event options within the county but also infuse our valley with much-needed funds and attention. The risk of losing these opportunities could redirect attention and resources to neighboring counties, potentially dealing a severe blow to our economy, especially given the uncertain times we face.

What's even more worrisome is the potential outcome of forcing our beloved small farms to sell, leaving the door open for large corporations to take over and set the agenda for their interests, harming our way of life. That's far from the county I want to call home.

We must seek a middle ground that fosters the success of both parties. People need to witness the origins of their food, stand by our small farms, and relish the land we all hold dear.

Remember, when people leave, they take their money, attention, and external support with them, endangering the thriving farming community that Skagit is known for.

Attachment 2 - Opposed

68% of the Skagit public supports these events, to go against this majority would weaken the trust in our local government at a time when governments cannot afford to loose an ounce of trust.

Jacob McFarland

3836 Summersun St

Mount Vernon Wa 98273

**17. Jaqueline Martin**

Official Public Comment on Agricultural Advisory Board Code and Policy  
Recommendations for Agritourism

July 26, 2023

Jacqueline Martin  
746 Westpoint Pl  
Burlington, WA 98233

First and foremost, I would like to start with my concerns about the methodology utilized in the survey. As somebody who does evaluation for a living, I am concerned with the lack of analysis, use of statistical significance, and lack of themes analysis for the qualitative writing answers. In addition to a lack of analysis of survey data, there appears to be decisions made contrary to the little bit of analysis conducted. Example: arbitrary limit of 12 weddings per year. Has there been an environmental impact study regarding how weddings and other ever tourism events actually impact Skagit County? If so, where is that data published and how was it used to form these new proposals? It is my understanding that the environmental impact must be reported for any changes in law, policies, or regulations as stated in [RCW 43.21C.030](#) and produce such a study if there is a proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.

Additionally, we should be looking at the large-scale commercial farms and how their use of heavy machinery, pesticides, fertilizer, and other chemicals are impacting soil viability. How can we ensure that large farms are adhering to conservation and preservation activities when Washington doesn't even have a vehicle emissions inspection requirement? These chemicals and practices can leave long lasting impacts on soil and human health. My uncle has non-Hodgkin's lymphoma due to exposure to Round-Up as a landscaper. Our farms also have a duty to the safety of the people in the county as well as the people in the county have a duty to protect farms.

Looking at some of the write-in answers, there appears to be concern for pollution and drainage and traffic as well as wear and tear on the lands and roads. Many places throughout this country have a tourism tax of about 1 percent for businesses that are in the business of tourism. We can identify how much income personage identifies the business of tourism as part of this discussion. However, these cities have identified that 1% tourism tax to be solely dedicated to addressing things like pollution, road improvements, etc.

Additionally, there are many, many factors that are integral to the economy of Skagit County beyond farms. [In 2019 it was identified that the largest contributor to the Skagit County gross domestic product was manufacturing.](#) How are we ensuring the increase in manufacturing is not polluting the farmable land? How are we integrating this shift in infrastructure development? As we are looking at potential issues with pollution let's consider that the people of Skagit County have limited access to public transportation

as compared to the rest of Washington and the rest of the country. [Seventy-seven percent of residents report driving alone to work](#), 34% report a commute of over 30 minutes each way driving alone. Consider this as we look at how many positions are available for remote work since the COVID 19 pandemic. [The median household income is \\$72,800 and living wage is \\$47.07 per hour](#). However, the Skagit County [median hourly wage in 2020 was \\$25.74](#). This means that a person living on their own could not afford to live in Skagit County. Additionally, farms and farm workers do not have a predictable schedule or income and would need to supplement this with other work (and possibly letting the farm fall to weeds and overgrowth) or supplementing with agritourism-type activities.

In addition to living wage issues, Skagit County has a lack of affordable housing and mental health care. Washington state is working on updating WACs to accommodate the 23-hour model to facilitate licensure more behavioral health access and reducing those incarcerated for mental health issues. This is quite prevalent in Skagit and is something to be addressed beyond the [North Start project](#). This needs to be addressed at the basic level of being able to create and maintain an income. If you are wondering what farming has to do with mental health, just look at the success of [Growing Veterans](#). Growing Veterans operates in Whatcom and Island Counties... they skipped Skagit. If the commissioners would like a list of academic articles about the mental health benefits of nature, farming, gardening, etc. I will gladly supply one.

Changing, even minor updates, of codes impacts *everyone*. From what I heard at the commissioner meeting on July 25, 2023, it appears that many of these changes are proposed without the inclusion of those that may be impacted. There is no evidence of partnership with EDASC or local Chambers of Commerce to discuss how this will impact small farmers and small businesses. Skagit County is so uninhabitable for small businesses that EDASC reached out to the Oregon-based organization RAIN to try to get small businesses to be viable in Skagit County. Many of these proposed edits will directly impact small, women and BIPOC owned businesses.

I see no alignment with the [Washington Conservation Action](#) organization, [Skagit Public Health](#) or [Population Health Trust Advisory Committee](#) in their efforts to improve Skagit County. I don't see collaboration with Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, the Skagit Tourism Bureau, or even an effort to support the [Skagit County Strategic Plan](#) in the long-term growth and sustainability of Skagit County. I see no reference to the Treaty of Point Elliott in means to conserve and collaborate with our Native brothers and sisters to ensure we are not destroying their land and fishing areas. Or how do we align with the [global Save Soil](#) movement, or the national [Health in All Policies](#) movement? Washington is not the first to have to face these issues. We can learn from other sources.

There were references to WACs and RCWs in the commissioner's meeting. I want to know how [RCW 43.21C.020](#) is being supported by these proposed amendments. I am including the full verbiage below in the event that the commissioners are unable to utilize the link:



**RCW 43.21C.020**

**Legislative recognitions—Declaration—Responsibility.**

(1) The legislature, recognizing that a human being depends on biological and physical surroundings for food, shelter, and other needs, and for cultural enrichment as well; and recognizing further the profound impact of a human being's activity on the interrelations of all components of the natural environment, particularly the profound influences of population growth, high-density urbanization, industrial expansion, resource utilization and exploitation, and new and expanding technological advances and recognizing further the critical importance of restoring and maintaining environmental quality to the overall welfare and development of human beings, declares that it is the continuing policy of the state of Washington, in cooperation with federal and local governments, and other concerned public and private organizations, to use all practicable means and measures, including financial and technical assistance, in a manner calculated to: (a) Foster and promote the general welfare; (b) create and maintain conditions under which human beings and nature can exist in productive harmony; and (c) fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Washington citizens.

(2) In order to carry out the policy set forth in this chapter, it is the continuing responsibility of the state of Washington and all agencies of the state to use all practicable means, consistent with other essential considerations of state policy, to improve and coordinate plans, functions, programs, and resources to the end that the state and its citizens may:

- (a) Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- (b) Assure for all people of Washington safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- (c) Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- (d) Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage;
- (e) Maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- (f) Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- (g) Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

(3) The legislature recognizes that each person has a fundamental and inalienable right to a healthful environment and that each person has a responsibility to contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the environment.

There were references to the Growth Management Act, yet there was *no* mention of how Skagit can come together to apply for the [Governor's Smart Communities Award](#) to support all residents of Skagit County, including the farms. It also did not discuss the changes made in the GMA to address housing and climate change. There are opportunities that are being given to other counties because Skagit County is not collaborating that we desperately need. We need to apply for more [small rural business support](#), [affordable housing](#), [clean energy](#), [festivals](#), and more that are available through the Department of Commerce to support everyone in Skagit County.

There are other resources that support the development of rural areas and rural infrastructure, like the [FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund](#), that can support the needed infrastructure changes to support a growth in agritourism.



**18. Jan Gordon <[janimals1@yahoo.com](mailto:janimals1@yahoo.com)>**

I don't have the # of the issue so i hope this goes to the right place.

i am concerned about the loss of venues and local incomes with the proposed limitation/changes to agritourism. This proposal is over the top restrictive and should not pass. this subject needs more time to sort out.

Due to weather we have a short season for outdoor events and farming takes place at the same time.

If there are bad actors causing problems there should be penalties in place, like fines, for disrupting farming. And for famers deliberately making weddings unbearable by spraying pesticides or manure. Hopefully people can be mature enough to work out schedules. perhaps the venues should have some security requirements to keep unruly guests from interfering.

I have heard complaints in non ag areas about late night noise, parking problems and public drunken urination on private property. I don't know if this happens on farmland as well but it is not ok and there should be routes to stop bad behavior. but not having agritourism is not the answer. Tho i dont attend such events generally i do enjoy driving by places like Maplewood. for their beauty.

I believe the proposal as it stands is harmful and a bad idea.

I am a homeowner in Skagit of 33 years.

Thank you

Jan Gordon

16544 Colony Rd

Bow

**19. David & Jane Edgley <[edgley@whidbey.com](mailto:edgley@whidbey.com)>**

Please do not develop new restrictions and regulations on farm venues. We the people should have the liberty and freedom to attend and use farms for weddings and festivals.

Sincerely, Jane Edgley, U.S. citizen and La Conner resident

**20. Jeanne Pocock <[pocockjeanne@gmail.com](mailto:pocockjeanne@gmail.com)>**

My full name and mailing address is:

Jeanne Pocock

24443 Wicker Rd #25

Sedro Woolley Wa 98284

I oppose the Proposed Agitourism Changes, please forward my wishes, thank you. I could not find a way to email the Planning Commission.

**21. John Christianson <[johnchristianson@gmail.com](mailto:johnchristianson@gmail.com)>**

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for extending the comment period for agritourism rule changes. It clearly means so much to so many people.

My wife and I own Christianson's Nursery, a family owned retail and wholesale nursery near LaConner. The nursery was started as Hart's Nursery in 1946 on a 6.8 acre corner of the 240 acre Jennings farm. We purchased the nursery from Bob Hart in 1990 and we have since grown to include potato storage, the Food Hub warehouses and 60 acres of blueberries.

We are longtime supporters of farmland preservation and we host the Skagit Valley Farmers Market June through October, the Skagit Valley Giant Pumpkin Festival and, we are also one of many sponsors of the Tulip Festival.

A quote I read recently is "Skagit farmland will be changed forever" with wedding venues.

Well, farming has changed forever in the last 50 years. Dairy farms once numbered over 900 at the beginning of the last century, and now number around 25. Hundreds of historic barns and granaries have been lost. Times change, and the original use for hay, cattle and grain storage has passed. Unattractive metal industrial buildings have replaced many of them.

There still are many historic barns that can be saved by repurposing some of them as venue spaces, with no conversion of farmland. Our nursery has preserved several.

The logo for Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland shows a field, tractor and barn. That very barn on Mclean road was not preserved, and is now long gone. Could the preservationist have saved that barn?

Our next door neighbor, the late Bob Hart (former county commissioner) restored his 1914 Granary and developed a display garden and the Granary Cafe. His farm and garden income was supported with weddings (including our daughter's), and events. He had no "wedding permit", because weddings were harmless.

His good example of a farm venue is emulated by others:

- 1) Preserve historic agriculture structures, with no loss of farmland.
- 2) Did not interfere with surrounding agriculture
- 3) He had a positive coexistence with surrounding farmers

4) Family owned and a supplemental income for his family farm.

5) He created and promoted his cafe and display garden to help grow his nursery business.

Small family farms benefit the most from agritourism and they need this diverse income to survive.

All venues promote Skagit Valley farms to visitors and increase the interest in preserving Skagit Valley farmland.

The right to farm is a county code and farmers should have the right to have farm venues included in that right. This will preserve small family farms and historic agricultural buildings.

The enforcement of the many existing rules and regulations already prevent the noise and traffic issues, and farmers can continue farming no matter what.

This venue income should not be limited with arbitrary rules (12? 24? 36? Birthdays? Memorials? Non profits? GOP celebrations?)

Change is happening, and I think for the better, if it can save small family farms.

Sincerely,

John Christianson

**22. Joseph Lisenby <[jlisenby@ejmjets.com](mailto:jlisenby@ejmjets.com)>**

I've lived in Skagit County since November of 2020. My residence lot in La Conner shares a land border with a family owned farm in Skagit County. Our town has enjoyed a robust return of visitors since the end of COVID and our tourists are the main source of commerce. Our locally owned and operated bed and breakfasts, and hotels rely heavily on tourism of visitors both local and distant. The use of Skagit Valley farms as venues for farm themed weddings and farm to table dinners is an important part of supporting our local Skagit County businesses from guest accommodations to catering and florists. Additionally, having visitors who attend these events stay in our local hotels and bed and breakfasts helps support all the other businesses the visitors frequent, including our local Skagit County restaurants and shops.

The venue rental of local farms for weddings and other events is really no different than the tourism produced as a function of the Tulip Festival, except that these farm venue events spread the season across many months rather than a two to three week period in the spring.

As a Skagit County resident and tax payer, I fully support the continued allowed use of farms for wedding and dinner/party venues. As the son of 3rd generation farmers, I know how hard it can be to keep a farm profitable and I fully support allowing county farms to be used as destination venues. It's a great way to share the beauty of our county with visitors while helping support our local economy.

Very Respectfully,

Joseph W. (Jay) Lisenby  
711 Maple Avenue  
La Conner, WA 98257  
Cell 206-580-5094

**23. Judah Henderson <[judah.elisabeth@gmail.com](mailto:judah.elisabeth@gmail.com)>**

I am writing this email to express my concern about restrictions on Agritourism in Skagit County. I spent time traveling through Italy before agritourism really became popular abroad. Since the Italians have invested in hosting tourists on their farms and villas, they have been very successful. The tourists write rave reviews about how much they enjoyed seeing Italy from that perspective. I think the farmers in Skagit County are no different from the Italians. I have seen the small ventures by farmers in Skagit County and enjoyed their products and the farm atmosphere.

If a small business owner can be so restricted as to use the farm only for farming, I think there is no vision in that rule. Farming is a very financially challenging business venture. I think the farmers should be given incentives to develop agritourism. The more agritourism, the more we get to enjoy the land in our beautiful county.

Regards,

Judah Henderson

Resident Anacortes, Washington

[judah.elisabeth@gmail.com](mailto:judah.elisabeth@gmail.com)

**24. Judith Chilcote [judithchilcote@gmail.com](mailto:judithchilcote@gmail.com)**

Name : Judith Chilcote  
Address : 22303 Little Mountain Rd  
City : Mount Vernon  
State : WA  
Zip : 98274  
email : [judithchilcote@gmail.com](mailto:judithchilcote@gmail.com)

PermitProposal :

Comments : I am writing about the proposed Agritourism Code changes. I oppose the changes that would outlaw celebratory venues. Small farmers are important to our future. Their incomes may be dependent on needing to bring in other income to support the farm.

I am hopeful the farmers of all types can come to compromises to meet each other's needs.  
Judith C.

**25. Larry Hilliard <[lj\\_hilliard@juno.com](mailto:lj_hilliard@juno.com)>**

I fully support allowing agritourism in the Skagit Valley, to include weddings, AirBnBs, U-Pick, the annual October Farms Festival, produce stands, ice cream and pie stands such as Schuh's Farms and other commercially related activities. I would draw the line at large events such as concerts (but not Tulip Festival activities.)

Restricting agritourism will, in my opinion, have very damaging impacts on the local economy. This is not incompatible with my very strong stance against FCC's which is a completely different matter.

Thank you for considering my input.

Larry Hilliard

Maddox Creek

Mount Vernon

## 26. Amy Frye (Boldly Grown Farm)



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AUG 17 2023  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
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Planning and Development Services  
Comments on "Proposed Agritourism Code Changes"  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Aug 17, 2023

Dear Skagit County Planning Commission,

My name is Amy Frye. I own and operate Boldly Grown Farm in Bow, Washington, a family-owned organic vegetable farm in our 9<sup>th</sup> season of operation in Skagit. I'm a first-generation farmer with a mid-scale farm, growing approximately 30 acres of vegetables plus grains, seed crops, flowers and more. I spoke at the July 25<sup>th</sup> public hearing regarding the proposed agritourism code changes. I am writing to provide additional public comment to ask that you please create additional time and opportunity for more multi-stakeholder engagement in order to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

The volume of public comments from multiple affected stakeholder groups makes it clear that the current proposed amendments miss the mark. These proposed amendments do not reflect or address viewpoints identified in multiple community surveys conducted by Skagit County over a two-year period. Nor do they reflect the Agritourism Policy Options as presented and recommended to Skagit County in March 2022.

Specifically, I'm concerned that the voices and needs of beginning and small to mid-scale farms have been left out of the conversation. These farms do not necessarily have the benefit of inheriting land or a working farm operation, and the path to financial viability often looks different compared to the generational farms of the valley. These farmers need to have flexibility to innovate in their operations to achieve financial viability. I believe these small farms provide valuable diversity to the valley and are often the ambassadors that give an increasingly urban population positive associations with agriculture and keep it in the public mind. To be clear, this is not a debate between "big ag" vs "little ag", as I believe we are all in this together. But, I am concerned that small to mid-scale farms will end up being penalized or unnecessarily limited in order to regulate the more thorny issue of event venues in the Ag-NRL zone.

In addition, the proposed agritourism code amendments were released to the public during the start of the primary harvest window for farmers and is also the busiest time for farm venue



operators. While this is likely coincidental and unintentional, the timing has the real impact of disenfranchising many farmers, landowners and citizens who participated in the County's agritourism process noted above. It is vital for key stakeholders to be able to participate and have their voices heard on this critically important issue.

Given we are now in the middle of harvest season in Skagit County, we urge Skagit County leadership, at all levels, to create additional time and legal pathways to allow for greater stakeholder engagement and participation from those most impacted by the current proposed code amendments. I am part of the Agritourism Stakeholder Working Group organized by Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland. This group is making some great progress through difficult discussions, and we believe we can find win-win solutions that will accommodate the needs of all stakeholders. But more time is needed to get this right.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Frye".

Amy Frye  
Owner, Boldly Grown Farm  
8855 Ershig Rd., Bow WA 98232

CC: Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
CC: Jack Moore, Planning Director

## 27. Nick Cecotti

August 16, 2023

Planning & Development Services  
Comments on Proposed Agritourism Changes  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Skagit County Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the vote to save Skagit Farm Venues and hope you will read and consider my position on this matter.

Reflecting on the discussion during the recent meeting, I took it upon myself to review the specific venues mentioned. My findings regarding these locations are as follows:

The development and operation of these venues have not encroached upon our cherished farmland. Rather, they stand as testimony to the remarkable custodianship exercised by the owners of these Skagit Valley properties. These owners are exceptional stewards of their Skagit Valley land. They continue to make improvements to both the land and structures under their care. This, in turn, has served as an inspiration to fellow landowners and homeowners, prompting enhancements to their own properties.

The addition of farm venues has also contributed significantly to the economy here in the valley. Every event brings money (with an average of \$30,000 per event) into the Skagit Valley economy. When guests attend these events, they also experience the beauty of our Valley, inspiring them to return during other times of the year, further contributing to the prosperity of our beloved county.

Without the additional income from these events (weddings, funerals, family reunions, parties, meeting spaces, fundraisers, etc.) many of these barns would not be standing. These structures, which stand today as symbols of local history, owe their safeguarding to the income derived from these occasions. As taxes continue to rise at an extreme rate, many landowners have needed to find supplemental income to offset these costs. Event income has become vital to many local families and businesses. Maintaining historical buildings is expensive, and it is undeniable that these funds are pivotal in ensuring their continued existence for future generations.

This decision is not simply about venue owners and farmers battling for rights and land ownership but preserving the beauty and history of our valley for current and future generations, while maintaining critical income for local families and business owners.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Nick Cecotti

15195 State Route 536  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

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AUG 17 2023

SKAGIT COUNTY  
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**28. Nancy Katapodis Lee <[Nancy@doublebarrelbbq.com](mailto:Nancy@doublebarrelbbq.com)>**

I am writing to you to express my concern over the proposed changes and how they will affect the hospitality industry. My husband and I own Double Barrel BBQ in Sedro-Woolley and we have catered hundreds of weddings in our 21 years in Skagit County, many of them at venues located on or adjacent to a farm. We value these venues tremendously as they not only highlight local farms but also educate folks about the farming in our valley.

I had not lived in or near a farming community before moving to Woolley from Houston. This city-slicker is thoroughly impressed by and grateful for the farms and venues in this lovely land. Whether catering at a large venue, shopping the local farmers' markets or simply purchasing eggs and flowers from neighborhood farm stands, I benefit from the surrounding agriculture.

Like everyone in the hospitality industry, I have suffered tremendously from the pandemic and the state and local governments' reactions and restrictions. The proposed changes to the agritourism code will further devastate our industry and will discourage small business owners. Most of the venues we work with for weddings are family-owned and family-run by hardworking folks who are your neighbors in the greater community. These families and their businesses are the lifeblood of the valley. Your proposal will do more harm than good to upstanding community members who have already suffered devastating and life-altering financial crisis. Your proposal will further limit and threaten this livelihood.

Your proposal will bring immense and far-reaching devastation to myriad small, local businesses way beyond the venues themselves. Your proposal will negatively impact the caterers, event planners, florists, bakers, DJs, bands/singers/musicians, hair stylists, makeup artists and tailors. Small businesses have huge impacts on the communities they serve and in fact are often more valuable than corporations. Small businesses punch above their weight and do a lot for their communities, such as:

- Bring local people together
- Build the local community's character
- Help regional economies thrive
- Contribute unique and diverse elements while sharing common values
- Sponsor youth sports and support local foodbanks and charities
- Increase city revenue from multiple streams
- Create more self-sustaining communities
- Build strong local relationships, both with customers and other small businesses
- Innovate in ways specifically helpful to our community
- Inject jobs and revenue locally
- Foster financial stability, particularly in moderate-income areas like ours
- Create more jobs that are impactful to our community
- Reinvest money and resources into our local community

Your proposal makes it harder, if not impossible, for so many small businesses to survive. It's policies like yours that discourage businesses like mine from expanding in Washington. Please reconsider your proposal and let small businesses like mine continue to shine.

*Nancy Katapodis Lee, owner*

(713) 213-5145

<https://us01.z.antigena.com/l/UQPzocnio33JMfaH3VFFG8pgLmAM18Mso58yzahQ6ozBeo9qJNgW9mvt8LU2qmN~B5shzDwHBG4RWM4QfdwcOhNzM7sEw4ti73GSA4B9xSlo-o3R-dvUlpoAJTeHhQcXDV7sfVEnMZpwby1UMp>

**29. Norma Shainin <[nabys@mac.com](mailto:nabys@mac.com)>**

Hopefully, everyone is on board about keeping the Valley a beautiful place to live. (If not, we might as well just go ahead and let big businesses determine the quality of our lives.) Tourists come here to experience what they cannot in other places. And we locals enjoy what is on offer as well, picking our own produce or shopping at farm stands. If you destroy the agritourism, people will not come. So many other income-bringing businesses have flourished because of the influx of visitors. But, more importantly, you will force out those smaller farms that struggle to stay alive. These have been here for generations and we all know the family names. They rely on these activities to maintain their properties. What will encourage new generations to choose farming as a way to make a living?

If you must, set limits on the non-agricultural improvements that can be added to farmland. But don't squeeze out the smaller places that make the Valley the unique and beautiful place that it is. And don't bow down to the pressures of the big guys.

Respectfully,

Norma and Peter Shainin

13140 Josh Wilson Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**30. Rob Woods <[rwoods@savibank.com](mailto:rwoods@savibank.com)>**

I would just like to comment that I am not in favor of the new proposed code changes limiting venues near farmland.

**Rob Woods, EVP**

Chief Financial Officer

P 360.399.7000 C 360.202.9030 F 360.707.2375

208 E. Blackburn, Suite 200, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

[RWoods@SaviBank.com](mailto:RWoods@SaviBank.com)

[www.SaviBank.com](http://www.SaviBank.com)

**31. Robin Haglund <[robin@gardenmentors.com](mailto:robin@gardenmentors.com)>**

I am writing regarding Agritourism Proposed code changes. My name is Robin Haglund. My address is 11430 Walker Road, Mount Vernon, WA 98273.

I'm concerned about some of the wording in these proposals.

1. I actively shop farm stands in our community, and the wording of the proposal indicates that the public will not be able to access farm buildings by stating: "agricultural support buildings shall not be a place of human habitation or place or be a place used by the public; This permits use of farm buildings for farming. Other uses of buildings would not be permitted and may be permitted only through administrative special use permits." If the public cannot use ag support buildings, how is the public going to be able to access farm stands to shop legally?

2. I also attend events, farm dinners, art shows, and give classes on Skagit farms, and participate in other non-farm events that support our community but do not limit farming activities. Some of these farms may or may not be active. All of these locations have preserved the history and character of our farming community. In many cases they have restored old barns rather than tearing them down. And they have brought in tourism funds that help support our community and our small farmers. I'm concerned that farmland not being farmed (for any reason) may come into terrible dis-use if agritourism is made prohibitively restricted through this code change via statements such as "Any agritourism accessory use must be part of an active farming operation."

While I do agree that some may be making poor use of farm land for (say) parking more polluting cars on farmland, this code change needs more work before being put into place.

I appreciate your consideration of my input. And I hope you will revisit this set of changes to make it better for all in Skagit.

Sincerely,  
Robin Haglund

11430 Walker Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

### 32. Ron Hass

August 8, 2023



Commissioner Ron Wesen

Commissioner Lisa Janicki

Commissioner Peter Browning

Dear Commissioners,

After reading the recent front-page article in the Seattle Times, I feel compelled to register my concern.

As a native Northwesterner and long time Skagit resident, I have great appreciation for the agricultural community and its importance to our identity and its contribution to our way of life.

But the GLARING REALITY is the agri industry is incapable of providing the necessary horsepower to generate an economy capable of meeting the basic needs of our county residents as a whole. With both automation and consolidation of small farms into large operations, the County must look beyond farming if it is sincere in its obligation to serve the needs of our entire community.

For generations Skagit County has allowed the farming community excessive influence on the political processes that influence the balance of our local economy. Changing that dynamic to recognize changes within the regional economy must be considered if we are ever going to move beyond the no growth mentality currently paralyzing our local job market.

This is the burden being offered our political leaders. Do we finally recognize the value of our location in the middle of the growing tech corridor between Seattle and Vancouver. Or do we hang on to the economy of the past and try to stave off the detrimental effects of automation and consolidation. Do we make changes to encourage job growth, or continue to let neighboring counties create jobs and opportunities at our expense.

Agriculture will always play heavily in the identity of our beautiful county. But the future well being of the families here will not be provided for by the agricultural industry alone. As our political leaders, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to lead Skagit County as it appropriately redirects the economy to diversify and better meet the needs of the families who hope to live here. The opportunity for growth is certainly obvious. With your collective leadership, great things can be accomplished on behalf of all of us who recognize that growth is essential to the survival of any local community.

Thank you for your service.

Respectfully,

Ron Hass

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Ron Hass".

9100 MARSHAL RD  
BOW, WA 98232

**33. Suzanne and Roger Wechsler (Samish Bay Cheese) <[cheese@samishbay.com](mailto:cheese@samishbay.com)>**

Having operated Samish Bay Cheese for 25 years, we have benefitted greatly from Agritourism. People come to our dairy farm every week from the city, from around the country and around the world. They love to see the cows, calves, and other animals, peek in the observation window to see our cheese and yogurt being made and taste the products we make here. It has enabled us to get retail pricing on a major portion of the products we make - basically double the amount we get from wholesale sales. Agritourism is a boon to small and medium size farms.

We attended the overflow crowd public hearing and heard many opinions and lots of food for thought. Let's not rush the process. Many good ideas came out of the public comments and the proposal you are considering does not, in our opinion, best serve the interests of the broader agricultural community in the county. Please, let's take more time to come up with a consensus that is more widely accepted.

Sincerely,

Suzanne and Roger Wechsler

Samish Bay Cheese

15115 Bow Hill Road

PO Box 202

Bow, WA 98232

**34. Sondra Ann <[sondra\\_ann@yahoo.com](mailto:sondra_ann@yahoo.com)>**

Hello: I live in La Conner and strongly support Terry & Willowbrook Farms. It is a charming facility and truly exemplifies our beautiful PNW!! I do NOT support our county limiting the activities of our local Farms. Most of these facilities are owned and operated by families as their sole means of support. They add to the charm and

"specialness" of our area! They are also one of the reasons so many of us have relocated and made Skagit County our new and permanent homes!

Please carefully consider your decisions!!

*Sondra Platte Muggee*

*La Conner, WA*

**35. Sarah Jewett <[sarahdjewett@gmail.com](mailto:sarahdjewett@gmail.com)>**

My name is Sarah Jewett. I've lived in Skagit County my whole life. You can not take away from the farming community. Our Valley thrives on small local farm venues and agriculture. It brings so many outsiders in. Why would you take away from that? This needs to stop! Keep Skagit Valley special. I stand with the farmers!!

Sincerely,

Sarah Jewett

**36. Susan Anderson (Smith)**

August 7 2023

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Skagit County Planning Commission

To Whom it May Concern,

I was at the recent hearing where many folk spoke about changes to the new Committees AG Code in the Valley. There are several points I'd like to address.

1. Why is the Planning Committee + AG Committee not listening to the large majority of survey respondents that are IN FAVOR of having venue + event spaces + farm stands in the Valley? Jan. 23 SV Herald
2. It has been suggested that only active farming sites can be allowed to host events. Are you serious? Having grown up on a large farm operation (Smith + Buckland Farms now S+B Farms) I can tell you there is nothing beautiful or clean or serene about a working farm!! There is dirty equipment, dust + mud, fractas, trucks, oil barrels, rusting parts, heaps of old junk, bins, etc.!

And on a Dairy Farm? The smell alone is enough to dissuade any person with a nose! Silage, manure, slop are all ever present.

The amount of work to even clean up an area to make it suitable for a lovely event is prohibitive + makes this a ridiculous + absurd suggestion!! Come on, folks!

3. I can't speak for all the venues but the operations I am aware of in + around Conway have not encroached on a single foot of farmland. Instead they have taken old buildings that sat abandoned long ago + breathed new life into them at much expense over many years! I would like someone to take an inventory of just how much "farmland" has been lost to these venues. I suspect the number is low if not miniscule.

4. Here I would like to address the opposite side of the same coin: in other words what it is like to live near farming + dairy operations. Every Spring + Fall the huge, loud, fast trucks hauling silage or corn chop go flying down



roads at an astonishing & dangerous speed. I have many times thought of notifying the driver that their drivers are going way too fast on a road that often has walkers or bikers on it. And who among us that lives in our beautiful Valley hasn't had to join in a long procession behind a slow moving piece of farm equipment? This happens frequently from March - November. When the potatoes are being dug the roads are a sloppy, muddy, slippery mess. These are but a few of the inconveniences that rural people face over & over but we understand this is a necessary part of farming & we handle it with patience & grace. It seems to me that these large farm operations are looking at any minor infraction or annoyance & complaining loudly but I can assure you, we the citizens & neighbors near these operations have much more to complain about, but we do not.

I hope the members of the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners think long and hard and fairly about this important aspect of our

Valley and really deliberate before making a decision based on the recommendation of a Committee that didn't even include a single Venue/Event owner. As I understand it they weren't even aware of this action until nearly the end of July!

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter that I spent several hours writing.

Sincerely,

Susan M Anderson (Smith)  
18321 Dike Rd.  
Mt. Vernon WA 98273

([threesisgarden@gmail.com](mailto:threesisgarden@gmail.com))

**37. Susan Hughes-Hayton <[hugheshayton@gmail.com](mailto:hugheshayton@gmail.com)>**

As someone who has been involved in a multi-generation centennial Skagit Valley farm for many years and has a daughter with a venue and another with a farmstand, it was both thrilling and shocking to attend the Agritourism Code Changes Public Hearing during the Skagit County Planning Commission Meeting on July 26th.

It was thrilling to be part of a crowd of over 200 people passionate about preserving farmland and making a life for themselves and their families working here in Skagit Valley.

It was shocking to read proposed code that threatens the livelihood of many of them - multigenerational neighbors and relatives, as well as 1<sup>st</sup> generation and returning community members involved in agriculture and agritourism.

The idea that event venues co-opt farm buildings and farmland was dispelled time and time again through testimony.

It was convincingly put forth that event venues and small farms play an essential role in promoting agriculture through the opportunities memorable events provide for interfacing with the public regarding the importance, rich history, and current challenges of farming.

As for concerns regarding “flies in the honey” incidences between big ag and ag tourism, they’ve been far and few between, and in one instance, untrue. Every relationship involves some flies with the honey, better to work through a concern as a good neighbor, rather than work to close down your neighbor’s business.

And as for permitting. There was a very compelling incident involving several local multigenerational farmers that elected to pursue a project without getting the proper permits, so this feels a bit like the pot calling the kettle black.

It is time for new code; it’s an opportunity to create code that supports preservation of community as well as preservation of farmland. Agriculture and agritourism are mutually beneficial activities.

Commitment to our farmland *and* community is a legacy worth taking great care and sufficient time to consider.

Susan Hughes-Hayton

**38. Tina Champeaux <[tinac21747@aol.com](mailto:tinac21747@aol.com)>**

Planning and Development Services

Dear Planning Commissioners,

It is the due diligence of the governed to remind government officials on a consistent basis of the following:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. - That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the Consent of the Governed. -

Declaration of Independence 1776

Furthermore,

The Constitutional Convention from May 25th to September 17th

1787 was made up of 55 delegates from 12 states. These delegates were intelligent and well-educated with vast and varied experience.

Delegates agreed on basic values and principles- among these were God-given unalienable rights- life liberty and Property.

It appears that we have strayed from the foundation upon which this country was built.

We own property upon which we pay exorbitant taxes and are so compromised by government bureaucracy that in many cases we cannot use the land upon which we dwell.

Now we hear the common cry, "Save the farmlands! " From what? And for what?

Our farmers are so overtaxed and over- regulated that our farms and farmlands are dwindling. Our Skagit farmers are consequently seeking ways to continue farming and still earn a living.

While our current administration in Olympia has never seen a tax it didn't love, it appears that Skagit government has never seen a permit fee it didn't love with employees who act like elected judges to carry out verdicts.

Take for example, the Skagit Fish and Wildlife employee who told me that if I touched a frog or its eggs in the river in which 100 feet of my taxable property is submerged, I would go straight to prison without due process.

What a Constitutional genius on the county

payroll!

Then there are the farm buildings which cannot be used for human habitation unless, of course, permits are obtained. I do believe we are in the age of miracles because with the issuance of a permit, the entire farming enterprise changes!

On Tuesday one of the attendees in the public meeting shared her experience in buying her property that was previously a farm before being purchased by Chinese buyers. It consequently was in a state of deterioration because it appeared to be bought for investment and left

unattended. She is now not only farming but restoring the property to its original condition. There are those encroaching on our farmlands who do not care the way that our Skagit community of farmers care.

If small farmers cannot earn a profit above growing, this is a glimpse of what is to come and the future of Skagit farming in the 21st century. The demise of farming as we know it is inevitable due to governmental overreach.

With the possibility of food shortages on the horizon due to the whims of government, farmers, both large and small, must have their right to conduct secondary businesses to supplement their earnings and continue farming. Our food supply depends upon them.

It is extremely short-sighted to think that farming must be a single means to an end when we are living in a climate of covid-related failed businesses, inflation, never-ending tax increases, and food and supply shortages.

Come let us reason together. Our farmers need breathing room, not suffocation. Small farmers need a helping hand up, not governmental water boarding until they give it up.

Tina Champeaux

1641 SR 9

Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

**39. Victor and Kayalyn HurtadoStewart <[victorandkayalyn@gmail.com](mailto:victorandkayalyn@gmail.com)>**

Our mailing address is

1087 Digby Rd, Mt Vernon, WA 98274

On Thu, Aug 10, 2023, 6:41 AM VictorAndKayalyn HurtadoStewart <[victorandkayalyn@gmail.com](mailto:victorandkayalyn@gmail.com)> wrote:

To Whom It May Concern:

As a long time Skagit County resident, parent, local educator, and lover of our Skagit agriculture and land, I am writing to urge you to continue allowing farm venue events.

I am not completely sure what the reasoning is for trying to greatly reduce/outlaw the events on smaller Skagit farms, but I know that many local businesses and thus families benefit from such venue use.

Have there been studies showing grand negative effects on our economy or ecology? Have these studies been shared with the public in open forums?

I only became aware of the issue by reading an article written by King 5 news.

In the absence of any overwhelming scientific studies and data illustrating the negativity of small farm venue use, I urge the County to keep venue use for such events as weddings, memorials, fundraising events, etc as allowed.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Kayalyn Stewart and Victor Hurtado

Mount Vernon homeowners

**40. Brett Sandstrom <[xbrettiex@gmail.com](mailto:xbrettiex@gmail.com)>**

We have rare and beautiful lands here in our Skagit wonderland community, but being mostly rural, businesses of all kinds depend on tourism of all kinds to thrive. Agritourism is an important facet to this economy, especially for communities east of HWY 9, where a lot of economic security is based on agritourism. There are many, but to list a few, heart-held assets like Eagle Haven Winery, Cascadian Farms, and Big Lake Tree need our support. These farms also bring people into our community to stop and shop in our cities and towns. Tourism of all kinds is a great need for us in Skagit County and these new rules and guidelines are what is needed to help support and keep our community thriving. Thank you ~ Brett Sandström Sedro-Woolley

**41. Nancy Crowell <[nkcrowell@hotmail.com](mailto:nkcrowell@hotmail.com)>**

Nancy Crowell

528 Road Street

P.O. Box 173

La Conner, WA 98257

Dear Commissioners –

I was riveted to the screen as I watched my friends and neighbors, one after another, stand up and speak to you about how much they love the Skagit Valley as it is and how much respect they have for farming – strong feelings I also have – and why allowing small farmers the flexibility to make money with other things beyond farming is critical to keeping the valley intact.

After the crowd left the room you did not appear to have been moved by the comments, except to extend the public comment period in order to “appease” the crowd. I was very disappointed to see your lack of understanding of how the potential changes will impact such a large portion of our community. Since you did concede to reopen the comment period, I feel compelled to ask you to reject the proposed changes. Even though one of you commented that

you'd rather not "drag this out another two years," I believe the people who spoke at the public meeting had valid concerns and you should listen to what they are saying. Vote no on the proposed changes and please go back to the drawing board, make a concerted effort to include everyone in the conversation and come up with a better solution than the current proposal. So what if it takes another two years? Better to take longer and get it right than to rush to make changes which will have negative fallout for years.

Nancy Crowell

La Conner, WA

**42. Ron Extract <[ron@gardenpathwa.com](mailto:ron@gardenpathwa.com)>**

Hello, my name is Ron Extract. I'm a Skagit County resident and co-owner of Garden Path Fermentation, located at the Port of Skagit.

My partner, Amber Watts, and I settled in Skagit County in 2016 after doing a global search for potential sites for our business. We chose Skagit because we wanted to be closer to our ingredients, with the goal of making hyperlocal products, and the hope that we might one day be able to grow some of our ingredients ourselves and offer visitors a true seed-to-glass experience.

We were initially under contract to purchase Eagle Haven Winery, but during a pre-development meeting with County Planning, were told that we would not be allowed to operate the type of business that we'd envisioned, which included the future possibility of a very small farm-to-table restaurant, within the Ag-NRL zone. As a result, we ended up starting our business at the Port of Skagit, within the Light Industrial zone, which does not give us the opportunity to grow our own ingredients or offer visitors the type of immersive experience that we'd hoped to create, but which we thought could be a good first step toward our longer-term vision.

In the meantime, we've worked closely with the County and other interested parties to try to make that long-term vision a possibility. We were given hope by the County's Agritourism Initiative and seeming commitment to finding paths forward for businesses like ours.

The current proposal not only fails to offer any semblance of such a path, it risks forcing existing businesses to cease operations and puts small farmers that are unable to survive on commercial agriculture alone at serious risk of losing their land and their livelihoods.

It's unclear how the Tulip Festival, which has long been a huge economic engine for the County, could even continue under the current proposal, unless special allowances were made, which would be highly discriminatory against small non-generational farmers and aspiring farmers who may not have had the opportunity for generational wealth.

The message that's been sent by the current proposal is that the Agritourism Initiative has been a huge waste of County resources and of everyone's time and that, contrary to the ongoing

assurances we've received over the course of the last seven years, Skagit County does not, in fact, have any interest in supporting businesses like ours.

If that's truly the case, it would have been good to have known that seven years ago, before we built our business and invested our lives' savings here, but it isn't, if Skagit County does indeed want businesses like ours to be here, we would strongly encourage you to reject the current proposal, which makes that all but impossible, and to work with us to develop an alternative that leaves room for large farmers, small farmers, and agricultural businesses, alike.

Regards,

Ron Extract

**43. Scott Self <[scottaself@outlook.com](mailto:scottaself@outlook.com)>**

**Scott Self**

915 S. 19 ST

Mount Vernon, WA 98274

360-540-5613

**Regarding Proposed Rule Changes to Agri-Tourism Codes.**

To whom it may concern,

Greeting and thank you for hearing my opinion on this matter.

I believe the proposed code changes do far more harm than good. Instead of trying to restrict small farm venues from additional sources of income in the hopes that it will curb outside influence of large companies, I believe it will have the opposite effect. Instead of growing their business and ultimately making their own farming business stronger it will make it weaker and force some to close. What happens then? Will another farm buyout the property? Unlikely! Too many farms, with dilapidated buildings, rusting machinery and acres of land that sits idle have become the norm, because there are fewer and fewer generational family farms willing to take on the risk or the children are no longer interested in grueling life of a farmer for little financial reward. Let's change that! We've seen it in the dairy industry where the small farm with 75-100 milking cows can't compete and is taken over by the mega corporation with 400+ milk cows. The land was saved, but at what cost? To line the pockets of outside investors I'll bet.

To think this is helpful is shortsighted. I bet if Janicki Industries wanted to take bankrupt farm of 50 acres and convert it into an industrial complex then county officials would make every effort and exception to accommodate them. How would that protect farmland and agriculture?



I've heard a few negatives about these venues, but very little in the way of backing up those stories or negatives with concrete facts. Anecdotal Stories, opinions and hearsay are not facts!

**Here are some positives to these venues from my point of view:**

Fosters a culture of community: Old friendships are renewed; new ones are formed. Neighbors are actually neighbors and not just the one next door. If we make it personal it's going to be relevant and if it is relevant it will be important to all involved. Friends and neighbors will look out for one another. The community as a whole will be proud to call Skagit County home and will do everything they can to protect it and help businesses and farmers there thrive.

Examples of absolute positives from these Agritourism Business

- **Family Reunions** (I have been to one)
- **Class Reunions** (SWHS Class of 1983 had it's 40<sup>th</sup> High School Reunion at Eagle Haven Winery and invited the Classes of 1980 through 1986. This was a smashing success and we raised over \$700 for the SWHS Alumni and Friends)
- **Music Concerts:** Local and Northwest bands and recording artist performing for large paying crowds.
- **Fund Raisers** in support of local organizations. Each time raising tens of thousands of dollars (with the owners of these agritourism business contributing out of pocket each time)
- Toys for Tots
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- SWHS Alumni and Friends (This August)
- Who knows what we can accomplish next.
- **Weddings:** Locals and out of towners enjoying and getting exposed to Skagit County and all it has to offer.
- **Funerals, Remembrances and Celebrations of life:** Connecting family and friends and remembering loved ones in a beautiful setting for hours instead of minutes. (more smiles and laughter than tears and sorrow)
- **Markets:** Sharing the vegetables and fruits of one's labor
- **Wine Making and bottling** (who would have thought that 40 years ago Skagit County would become famous for wines). These wineries aren't selling thousands of cases to a distributor and you won't find their wines in most stores. They make their money from tasting room sales, wine club members and especially events like these. The money goes to fund farming activities and reinvesting in the farm, not some corporation. No one is doing this to get rich, but rather to earn a living and promote Skagit County as a tourism destination, stop and to foster goodwill and community to Skagitians.
- Local **artists, craft makers and entrepreneurs** given a forum to promote and sell their goods
- **Tax Revenue** for the City and County
- Additional **Revenue** for locally owned and operated businesses
- The Agritourism Business itself

- Restaurants (Even most chain restaurants have a local or northwest owner through franchising)
- Flower Shops & Photographers
- Hair Stylists and Makeup Artist (private business with local ties)
- Mom & Pop convenience stores (Franchise Owners)
- Gas Stations (Franchise Owners)
- Coffee Shops (most are locally owned and operated)
- Clothing stores like Oliver & Hammer (I see their logo all over the state)
- A great addition to other **Community** Events
- Tulip Festival (Think if they were restricted to 12 events a year or tulips and daffodils could only be sold wholesale)
- Berry Dairy Days (how fun would that be if you couldn't buy local berries at a roadside farm stand)
- Loggerodeo
- Anacortes Arts Festival
- Festival of Family Farms
- Any number of other Events and Festivals

Maybe it is time to think outside the box:

- **Fewer Restrictions** that make it easier for smaller farms to compete (they won't be willing to give it up so easily)
- Limit Indoor/Outdoor events during the months of April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> to no more than 30 Events and No event can Start before 10am and must end by 10pm each day. Not every event makes money, in fact some lose money, so having some flexibility will be important for the venue owners to learn, make improvements and recoup lost revenue. This will help limit the impact to other farms during the planting/growing/harvesting season.
- Unlimited exclusively indoor events November 1 through March 31 (minimal impact to farming as a whole)
- Require any new Farm/Venue business to obtain special permit and review every 3 Years. All existing Farm/Event Venues to be grandfathered in and review only every 6 years. Just to make sure they aren't getting too far out of scope.
- Establish a review board to review new and existing Agritourism Businesses for approval with both Advocate and Non-Advocate members. Would also hear grievances and offer arbitration/mediation to resolve conflicts before litigation. All those impacted should have a voice.
- A County Commissioner
- Traditional Farm Owner or Owners
- Agritourism Farm/Venue Owner or Owners
- Non-Farm Business owners or executives
- City Mayors

In Summary, please reconsider the proposal and really consider alternative solutions that meet the needs of all. Do we want to live in a world where fear dictates what we do? Do we continually want more restrictions or do we want everyone to do the right thing for the right reasons? I think with proper language and oversight we can both encourage the preservation of farmland and foster a strong community where we (Farmer and Non-Farmer) can get along in a community that is mutually beneficial and promotes Skagit County as a great place to live, work, raise a family, farm and visit as a tourist.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely, **Scott Self**

**44. Sunchea Phou <[sunchea@yaywallet.com](mailto:sunchea@yaywallet.com)>**

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to express my support for farm venues, like Willowbrook, Eagle Heaven Winery, wedding venues, farm stands, etc... These venues not only provide a charming escape for city dwellers but also showcase the essence of the countryside. They attract tourists, bolster local businesses, and preserve the quaint atmosphere of small towns. Moreover, given the current economic challenges, especially for small enterprises, it is unnecessary for the government to exacerbate the situation further.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Sunchea Phou

206-852-8589

Address: 22723 Grip Rd Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**45. Judy Farr [JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM)**

Name : JUDY FARRAR

Address : 13033 SUNRISE DR

City : MOUNT VERNON

State : WA

Zip : 98273

email : [JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM)

PermitProposal : Proposed Agrotourism code changes

Comments : I am writing to state my opposition to code changes that would outlaw celebratory gatherings at farm venues. These events can be an important source of income for small farmers, who struggle in the face of corporate takeovers. I am in favor of doing what we can to encourage and support small farmers. They are an important part of the beauty and uniqueness

Attachment 2 - Opposed

of our valley.

**46. Larry Jensen**

Larry R. Jensen  
15356 Produce Lane  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
360-770-5133  
lrjensen@hotmail.com

July 25, 2023

RECEIVED  
JUL 25 2023  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

RE: Agro- tourism code change and Right to Farm

First a little about me. I only tell you these things to give you some idea of the perspective that I come from when I talk about agriculture and the situation we face today.

I am from a farm family with 3 generations of history on the valley. My dad and grandparents were dairy farmers. I became involved in crop farming and marketing of crops for my own farm and for other farmers in the valley with sales across the USA, Canada, and into Mexico, with occasional sales to Australia, Japan, and other off shore places. In addition I also owned and operated a fresh fruit operating plant in Central Mexico. I have been involved in production, processing, fresh packing, national and international marketing, transportation, distribution, and agro-tourism. You should also know that I have put hundreds of prime productive acres into the farmland legacy program to preserve it for the future generations.

Over the years I have observed the changes in agriculture.

In the 60's there were lots of strawberries, raspberries, cucumbers for pickles, as well as cauliflower and broccoli for processing, and seed crops. Strawberries and raspberries continued to diminish in acres until today there is only one packer of strawberries with limited acres of their own. Raspberries are gone except small acres of fresh market. Seed crops existed and still do today but with the off season production moving to south America they have been reduced in acres. Dairy was a big industry with many farms.

In the early 70's there were processors like National Frozen Foods, Twin City Foods, and others that bought corn, peas, carrots and other crops. Most of those acres were harvested by the company that bought them. These companies went out of business or moved to the eastern part of the state. There are virtually none of those crops grown here today for that market. Seed crops like spinach, beets, and cabbage still played a roll.

This was followed in the 80's with a transition to fresh market crops from the traditional process crops. If farmers were to survive they needed to hire professional full time marketers to sell their crops and establish relationships with large retailers and distributors. These crops included carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, and red potatoes and some other minor crops like leeks, and other specialty crops.

The last 30 years has seen additional pressures, here are a few:

A. **Water** has become something taken for granted in earlier years but now it is a requirement in order to guarantee the production of crops that are expensive to produce, without a reliable source of water the risk reward ratio works in the wrong direction. Some crops have left the valley as a result.

B. **Overtime Labor**, the state supreme court decide to rewrite the law by saying that overtime was required to be paid on agricultural labor. This discouraged growing hand harvest crops that could be produce in other states and nations at lower costs.

C. **Quality and Quantity of Labor**, mandatory sick leave, high L&I rates, domestic workers consider agriculture work as secondary (low class) work, work ethic declining, and lack of labor willing to work on farms all contribute to a squeeze in farmers to find ways to make more money but by using less labor for low value enterprises. In addition to these constraints farms need food safety people, professional marketing people, professional accounting people, and a legal suave leader to navigate regulations.

D. **Regulations of all kinds**, higher fuel taxes, higher employment taxes, higher L & I taxes, mandatory sick leave, mandatory health care,etc

E. **Consolidation of Grocery chains**, which has meant that the buyers for these large stores do not want to deal with small growers. They want to deal with large suppliers that can supply them year round or seasonally but in a volume that can cover most of their needs for a single distribution center at a minimum. In addition to this requirement, growers must also provide a Certificate of insurance to name the retailer as an additional insured in case there is a food recall of the growers product, this can be from \$1,000,000. to \$2,000,000. in required coverage. They also require a third party safety audit that costs around \$10,000. per audit paid for by the grower.

F. **Foreign Supplies and Trade Deals**, US trade policy has generally worked to promote manufactured products, software, commodity crops, and Boeing jets at the expense of fresh vegetables and fruits that are grown in our region. They essentially allow other places to ship in fruits and vegetables with no or low tariffs in exchange for manufactured goods entering in other places with favorable trade treatment.

G. **Dollar exchange rate**, this too has generally been a problem as we have had a strong dollar making it hard to sell our products overseas and cheaper for foreign suppliers to sell here.

H. **Expensive equipment**, when labor gets expensive people seek to trade labor expense for technology and mechanization, but this typically can cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars making it impractical if not impossible to justify (or finance) for smaller growers.

I. **Property rights**- I also see this as a property rights issue, if we truly own the property and not just care takers then how many regulations should be placed on person's using their land to farm and make a happy venue for their customers?

J. **IRS- Schedule F** , if you file this form according to the IRS, you are a farmer.

All of these things have pushed growers to become larger with bigger volumes, high mechanized, and employing the newest in technologies but when that is not possible.

There is an alternative:

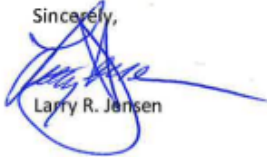
Growers need to focus on value added specialty boutique type products, selling direct to the public and providing a farm experience where margins are larger and capital investment is substituted by labor and personal experience (relationship building).

The proximity to the Seattle and Vancouver BC markets make us a prime location to use our small parcels of land, creativity, and hard working farm families with limited capital to build relationships with the urban public. These relationships come in the form of events on the farm such as weddings, wine tasting, County kitchens that use the fruits of their production, overnight stays, etc. When the urban public can relate to farm families in these ways they will seek to protect them with good legislation for all famers big and small.

I FULLY SUPPORT INCREASING, NOT DECREASING AGRO-TOURISM IN THE SKAGIT. There are so much that is added to the community when we can work together with those that will be making laws for our future. If we chose the other route you will see small farms become private estates for well to do work from home adults that don't like the commute and how can let the land become a pasture and riding track for their favorite polo pony.

Just one last thing... One of the problems farmers have is that they must deal with unfounded complaints. I think this should end. I have attached a complaint form that should be required by the county before they take a complaint about a farmer on Ag-NRL parcels. This form is a first draft but I think you get the idea.

Sincerely,



Larry R. Jensen

## Complaint Form (NLR land activity)

I wish to complain about something happening on farm land (one of the NRL -zones). I have confirmed that the action, event, or activity that I want to complain about **fails to meet at least one of the following tests:**

1. It is allowed under the US Constitution.
2. It is allowed under the Washington State Constitution.
3. It is allowed under the Right to farm for either the USA or the WA state governments.
4. It is allowed under the Skagit County Right to farm and/or other Skagit County Codes.

The incident that I want to complain about is or has occurred on parcel(s) # \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of parcel owner  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address to send notice of complaint  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The description of the reported activity is as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
and violates item # \_\_\_\_\_ above (describe specifics in detail under that point) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My name and contact information is: (This must be fully completed before an investigation can be started as well as paying the fee.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Complainant  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

Initiation fee to investigate complaint on NLR land..... \$50.00

The information provided here becomes public information so anything that is provided will be made available to the public and a copy will be sent to the person(s) or company that owns the parcel(s) referenced above. (Non adjoining parcels or parcels with different ownership require an additional form and an additional payment.)

The complainant so agrees: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**47. Cynthia L. Verge**

July 28, 2023

Dear Skagit County Planning Commission:

I am writing this letter in support of agritourism in Skagit County. There are \$65 million+ reasons for the county to support agritourism in the guise of the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival. As we learned in 2020, the festival is a vital part of our economy and without it out, all the citizens in the county suffer from lost wages, lost tax revenue and lost revenues to our charitable organizations.

I am concerned about several provisions that have been put forth in the agritourism policy currently being proposed by Skagit County. Based on my 20 years of experience in putting on a major agritourism event, many of the proposed changes will have a chilling effect on the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival AND on any subsequent agritourism event or activity. Specifically the following sections are concerning:

A new definition in SCC 14.04.020 defining "agritourism." "A common, farm-based, commercial activity serving the public that promotes agriculture, is directly related to onsite agricultural production, is incidental and subordinate to the working farm operation, and is operated by the owner or operator of the farm or family members. Celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism."

Section (6) ... including barns, sheds corrals, farm offices, and coops, which are used for on-site soil dependent agriculture and which agricultural support buildings shall not be a place of human habitation or place or be a place used by the public; This permits use of farm buildings for farming. Other uses of buildings would not be permitted and may be permitted only through administrative special use permits.

Amending SCC 14.16.900(2)(h) to add additional criterion in Special Uses for a special use permit for temporary events:

- (v) Special use permits for temporary events in Ag-NRL are additionally subject to the following criteria:

- o (A) Events may occur on no more than 12 calendar days per year.

- o (B) All events must be accessory to agricultural use and incidental and subordinate to a working farm.

Chapter 14.16.900 Special Use Permits

(h) (iii) Does not create a detrimental level of ... traffic or other environmental impacts on the surrounding area.

(h) (v) (A) Events may occur on nor more than 12 calendar days per year.

(h) (v) (B) All event must be accessory to agricultural use and incidental and subordinate to a working farm.

The new definition of agritourism means the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, a month-long celebration of the tulip bloom, does not appear to meet the criteria of agritourism. We celebrate the tulip bloom, invite nonprofit organizations like art shows to be in the tulip area and even have food at various sites during the festival, none of which appear to be allowed in the proposed policy. We bring hundreds of thousands of people here to our valley to view an agricultural event AND we enrich their stays by providing events, activities and facilities to accommodate the temporary nature of the visits. I believe the county's definition of agritourism should allow an event like the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival to continue to operate and thrive.

The restrictions on the use of buildings would be very detrimental to the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival. Many of our events invite the public in to use their barns and facilities. My question is what would happen to Tulip Town, Christianson's Nursery, art shows, or Schuh Farms operations, just to name a few?

The Skagit Valley Tulip Festival lasts all 30 days of April, specifically in recognition that the tulips don't bloom to a set schedule because we are inviting people to come and VIEW AN AGRICULTURAL crop and can't say exactly when that will be! With the current proposed changes, festival operations would be limited to 12 days, effectively shutting it down.

Lastly the entire goal of agritourism is to bring people to our area to appreciate and be a part of agriculture. The prohibition against "traffic" makes it impossible to succeed at agritourism. When a nonprofit organization like the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival does its job, there will be more traffic to our area, something that is not allowed under the proposed policy.

I hope there are substantial changes to the proposed policy before it is adopted so that the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival can continue to thrive and be a vital part of the Skagit County landscape for many years to come.

Thank you for your time,

Cynthia L. Verge

Executive Director, Skagit Valley Tulip Festival

Cc: Skagit County Commissioners

**48. Mike Kmet**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Mike Kmet <kmet@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 8:39 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

\* Spam \*

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Hello,

I am against the proposed changes to Agritourism code. These changes will slowly strangle Skagit counties small farms, these farms through small are vital to the county. The concept of the large corporate farm is fairly new, traditionally farms have had multiple income sources to survive.

I have tried hard to see and find where the large corp. farms are being harmed by Agritourism. That they do not like them isn't a good enough reason, exactly what is their fear?

Agritourism contributes greatly to the local economy and surrounding quality of life.

Much was made in an article in The Seattle Times about wedding venues, including The Salt Box on Fir island. I drive by there several times a day, including when events are put on, it has never been a bother. Ever. This location refurbished an old barn, I understand the cost and time of doing this, I have been doing the same over the past 7 years on a 123 year old building. I'm sure it would of been easier to just replace it but they maintained it, not letting it fall to ruin and they didnt replace it with a metal shed.

Next to the Salt Box is a church, its on former farm land, by the thought process of the rule changes shouldn't the church fall under the same restrictions? Rhetorical question, no it shouldn't and these rules should be shelved.

I am a 20 year volunteer firefighter with Skagit District 12, I care deeply about this county and I have no affiliation with any Agritourism, I have been self employed since 1976 and know what it takes to make a business survive, I do consulting to firms just in this, these rule changes will choke off the small farm activities and their owners. These small farms hire local and pay living wages.

If there are concerns and issues, there are other avenues to address them and there are rules and codes in place, we do not need these sweeping changes. I live across the street from the Bay View Community Hall, it is an historic piece of our community, the only way it will survive is with community events, will these changes stifle those?

Thank you,

Mike Kmet  
12596 C St.  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

360-770-0663

**49. Shannon Axthelm <[shannonaxthelm@msn.com](mailto:shannonaxthelm@msn.com)>**

Hello, I am in support of allowing food service on farms, wedding venues, temporary event spaces, etc. I feel we need to adjust with the times and diversify the economy in our county. We need to allow people to be entrepreneurs.

Skagit County is a weekend destination so we need to have activities for the tourists. i.e. Tulip Festival, Snow Goose Ice Cream, etc. If this passes will the wineries who have food and music have to close? Would the Tulip festival have to be cancelled? I think it is taking it too far to limit food service on farms, wedding venues, temporary event spaces, etc. It sounds like those who have venues need to communicate with the farmers and perhaps compensate them a bit if they have to delay doing something to their crop as the farmer may need to pay overtime to catch up. Also, some that have Venues do not need to use all the farmland that might be part of their property. This land might already be rented out to a farmer. Perhaps it can be rented at a reduced rate to compensate the farmer. Just trying to come up with ideas to help everyone coexist.

The farmers and the venues need to co exist so Skagit County can thrive.

Thank you,

Shannon Axthelm

17000 Dike Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

tel: 206-910-2915

**50. Claire Dimock <[katnlucy@gmail.com](mailto:katnlucy@gmail.com)>**

July 26, 2023

To the Skagit County Planning Commission,

I am writing to you today about the proposed agritourism bill.

I have lived in Skagit County my entire life, and have grown up going to the Tulip Festival, to farmer's markets, to weddings, and more, many being out in the farmlands. My family buys produce and starts from the local farms, because we know what its like to be a small business, and we want to support our local farmers.

The proposed agritourism bill of which there was a meeting about Tuesday July 25, is over reaching, and we the community are asking that you take more time to consider an alternative that can reach middle ground for the big farms and the farms who want to host events and stands to continue supporting their farm and families.

The law that this bill is referring to is outdated and does not take into account the changing nature of events over time. Weddings are no longer 300 person events from Hollywood blockbusters- most people who have weddings in the farmlands of Skagit County are having micro weddings. Small farm stands are not intruding on the big farms nearby.

Farmer should be allowed to do with their land what they want to do. The farms with venues who want to host events or have produce stands are using their farm land to farm- Christianson's Nursery, The Saltbox Barn, Hayton farms, and many more grow produce and have livestock on their farms. Most of their land is used for that, while a small portion of it is used to host events or stands that help support their family and the farm, allowing them to continue doing what they love and serving this farming community. We all want to save Skagit farmlands, nobody is saying otherwise. All of these farms that hold events have working farms. This bill would prevent new farm stands from starting, and would make it extremely difficult for any farms to get permits to hold events. This will make it harder for people to hold events in Skagit County, because other venues will hold a monopoly and be able to hike prices as high as they want, making it inaccessible to residents. You would be taking jobs from vendors inside Skagit County, and in turn this will cause money to leave Skagit County. We as a community do not want that, and we do not understand why you would want that.

We want people to come to visit Magic Skagit and experience its beauty, and people come here for the purpose of attending events such as the Tulip festival, weddings, or wine tastings. It's a great way to bridge the gap between the farmers and the community.

Please find a way for everyone to have a place in Skagit County.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email,

Claire Dimock

**51. Diana Kralovic Barn Cat Creations <[barn.cat.products@gmail.com](mailto:barn.cat.products@gmail.com)>**

Good evening,

I am a resident of Mount Vernon, as well as a small business owner here. I grew up in Central Washington surrounded by orchards, and feel that I can empathize with both sides of this issue.

As a small business owner and member of Genuine Skagit Valley, I regularly am a vendor at events and markets held at farm venues. More than 50% of my income comes from small markets such as farmers and arts markets. Skagit is seriously lacking in large event space, and these venues are a huge part of supporting the small maker's community. Not only are there few options, but the beautifully restored farm venues lend charm and Skagit magic to events. They showcase the amazing agriculture and associated industry in our valley. Please don't take these event spaces away. Without event venues here, I will have to travel further and further to sell my products, instead of getting to support my own community, not to mention collect and remit taxes here.

I can certainly understand the arguments from farmers that their work needs to continue regardless of events. I think a solution lies more in communication and agreement from those using these venues than simply taking them away. I think the examples of people laying in front of tractors or yelling at farmers are extreme and in no way represent the typical users of these venues.

I just don't feel that taking away a huge stream of income for many small business owners (including farmers) is the way to solve this issue. Please reconsider the vast economic impact this will have.

Thank you,

Diana Kralovic

Barn Cat Creations

**52. Gary Duvall <[grduvall@live.com](mailto:grduvall@live.com)>**

Skagit County,

I am a Skagit County voter living in zip code area 98274, and I am commenting on the Agritourism proposals. I favor liberalizing any limits on agricultural owners with respect to their property, and avoiding imposing any new restrictions. I therefore oppose any limits on agritourism in Skagit County. The reasons are as follows.

**Legal Reasons:** Limits on subdividing or developing farmlands enacted by King County voters were declared unconstitutional by the state Supreme Court several decades ago. The government cannot take away private property owners' rights except in very limited situations. Someone who lives in Mount Vernon who has a garden cannot be told he or she cannot therefore add a bedroom; and likewise for restrictions on activities of rural farmers.

**Macroeconomic Policy Reasons:** In developed countries we throw away 40% of our food that is processed and delivered to groceries and restaurants, and worldwide we produce more than 20% excess food. Obesity indirectly kills more people than food insecurity, and that trend is increasing. There is no objective reason to preserve farmland, and worldwide farmland should be and is being converted to other purposes. These lands were originally forests, and voluntary reconversion to forests would be both consistent with preservation and best for the environment, but this is not being proposed. Farmland preservation therefore has no support in policy or logic. Nostalgia for the past is not a reason to make poor economic and environmental decisions.

**Specific Reasons:** It is hypocritical to both visit and enjoy agritourism events like the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, and to try to "pull up the ladder" to limit other future agritourism events. Why is a corn maze that exists now more valuable than a wedding venue that might exist in the future? Why is an owner or a forested 40 acres able to subdivide, but if crops were once grown there, it can't be subdivided? Why can a resident of Laconnor convert his house to a wedding venue, but if the house were on a farm 5 miles away, it cannot be used as a wedding venue?

Why aren't historic hardware stores told to limit the days that they are open, or whether they can sell, remodel or subdivide their businesses? Why farm preservation, but not lumberyard preservation, grocery preservation, doctor office preservation, etc.? It is hypocritical that no other Skagit county business, part-time or full-time, is subject to similar restrictions.

**The Greater Public Good:** The reason given for limits on agritourism is nostalgia for farming ("farm preservation"). This reason is a false front for NIMBYism (I don't want services on my street, but ok anywhere else) and selfish hidden interests of those agritourism businesses already grandfathered in. It is the role of government to give value to the greater public good over selfish private interests, including generating more tax revenue from overall economic activity. The public is served by more agritourism, both for future customers of those businesses, and for the interests of those future small business owners and taxpayers.

Thank you.

Gary Duvall

206 419 5325

**53. Heather Smith <[heather\\_smith3@hotmail.com](mailto:heather_smith3@hotmail.com)>**

Good evening,

I write to you as a local resident of Skagit County who was born and raised in Mount Vernon and has been around the farming community most of my life.

I recently learned that Skagit County wishes to make "celebratory events" such as wedding venues illegal in our county on farmland.

I ask you how this came to be? Can you not see that by bringing business to our county we support other businesses? Every wedding requires many more things, hotels for guests, bakers, florists, each that are usually sourced here in Skagit County.

I understand that farmer's are upset over farm land becoming wedding venues but aren't the vast majority of the farmland being used owned by local small farmers or tax paying residents?

This is not the County that I remember as a child. There are very few true small farms. Most land is either owned by the few mega farming families or by people from out of our area. Why are we punishing our residents who are trying to make ends meet by hosting weddings on their property?

I cannot believe that Skagit County is even considering this as a way to protect farmland. If the County wishes to protect what is left, why not crack down on the farmers who sell land to developers?

It saddens me to have to write this but please consider whether this measure actually protects the few mega farmers who were angered by small farmers making ends meet. Surely there is a business license that can be obtained by these wedding venues that can appease both sides.



I thank you for your time and ask you to reconsider what you are doing by making these demands on wedding venues.

Sincerely,

Heather Smith

**54. Julia Phillip <[julia.phillip.realty@gmail.com](mailto:julia.phillip.realty@gmail.com)>**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very confused as to why this is even being proposed. There's a reason the term "magic skagit" exists. It embodies not only the beauty of this area, but the small town county feel as we care about our neighbors and communities. Obviously we are a farming community as a whole and this proposal not only takes away the reinforcement of that ideal, but also will harm small business owners.

If we continue to allow large corporations to buy up all the farmland it will continue to push small farmers out of not only their businesses, but their lifestyles. The magic part about our farmland communities is that many of them allow us, along with visitors to the county, access to this type of lifestyle while allowing support to these small businesses.

WA state is already tough for small businesses due to taxes and cost of living. Let's not turn Skagit into another metropolitan area. Let's keep skagit Magic.

I absolutely do not support this change.

Julia Phillip

Mt Vernon Chamber of Commerce Board Member

**55. Multimember Stakeholders**

**Thursday, August 17, 2023**

**Skagit County Planning Commission**

1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**Via hand delivery and email**

**RE: Comments on Agritourism Amendments to Skagit County Code**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

On behalf of the many stakeholders listed below who are members of the Skagit Agritourism Stakeholder Group, we are submitting some agritourism policy/code concepts for your review and consideration. These have been developed collaboratively under a consensus decision-making model. The stakeholders participating are representative of the agricultural community, the tourism community, and the farm event venue community.

Members of this group joined in a collaborative effort to review and consider the proposed code through the lens of the policy positions of:

- The Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board, April 12, 2023
- The Skagit County Policy Concepts as presented by BERK Consulting in March 2022
- Western Washington Agricultural Association as presented in their position paper dated July 30 2023
- Skagit County Farm Bureau as presented in their position paper dated August 2, 2023 and
- Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland as presented in their position paper dated April 2022

The goal of the group is to capture the spirit and intent of the various stakeholder interests with regard to agritourism within the Ag-NRL zoned lands of Skagit County.

Additionally, this multi-stakeholder group recommends for your consideration the creation of additional opportunities for stakeholders to engage with you and/or other County staff on this important issue. With the release of the proposed code amendments during the peak season for both farmers and farm venue operators, the timing has had the real impact of making it extremely difficult for stakeholders to engage in the current process.

With additional time to work after the peak of harvest is over, we are confident we can develop additional and more detailed recommendations reflecting broad stakeholder support. It is vital for key stakeholders to be able to participate and have their voices heard on this critically important issue.

Big Lake Trees & Events  
Boldly Grown Farm  
Christianson's Nursery  
Country Cousins, Inc.  
Eagle Haven Winery  
Gordon Skagit Farms  
Maplehurst Farm

Saltbox Barn  
Skagit County Farm Bureau  
Skagit Tourism Bureau  
Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland  
Skagit Tulip Festival  
Skagit Valley Wedding Rentals  
Washington Bulb / RoozenGaarde  
Willowbrook Manor

**Agritourism Multi-Stakeholder Work Group  
Agritourism Policy / Code recommendations**

Recommend **adding** the following definitions to SCC 14.04.020

**Agritourism** - Agritourism is a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owners. Activities may involve education, entertainment, outdoor activities, hospitality, life events, farm events, food service, farm stays, or similar purpose. These activities link to and support the primary agriculture activity of the land and its economic viability. Agritourism activities are separate and distinct from Farm-based businesses and Agricultural Support Services.

**Farm Event Venue** - means an ongoing business operation at a privately-owned facility or site within the Ag Natural Resource Land (Ag-NRL) zone for the purpose of hosting Agritourism events or activities.

Recommend **amending** the following existing definitions in SCC 14.04.020

**Agricultural support services** - any nonagricultural use which is directly related to agriculture and directly dependent upon agriculture for its existence. These support services generally exist off-site and within districts that are intended to facilitate the production, marketing, and distribution of agricultural products. [Agricultural support services are separate and distinct from Farm-based businesses and Agritourism.](#)

**Farm-based business** - an on-farm commercial enterprise devoted to the direct marketing of unprocessed and/or value-added and soil-dependent agricultural products that are produced, processed, and sold on-site. Farm-based businesses are intended to supplement farm income, improve the efficiency of farming, and provide employment to farm family members. [Farm-based businesses are separate and distinct from agriculture support services and Agritourism.](#)

Recommend including Agritourism as an Agricultural Accessory Use subject to the following:

- Demonstration of farm income as evidenced by IRS federal form Schedule E, F or equivalent. Agricultural Lease income may be included pursuant to Skagit County's implementation of Chapter 84.34 RCW, Open Space Taxation Act.
- Will not result in the permanent conversion of farmland,
- Will not interfere with surrounding farming operations and practices.
- Agritourism activities are subject to Skagit County's Right to Manage Natural Resources Ordinance (SCC 14.38) and Skagit County's Right to Farm Ordinance No. 12815 incorporated therein.
- Will provide experiences to visitors that promote and enhance Skagit agriculture overall.

**Recommend creating a new Limited Entry Permit for Farm Event Venue**

It is recommended that Skagit County create a limited entry permit system for Farm Event Venues with a primary purpose of Agritourism.

- Establish a cap on total number of permits available with preference for existing Farm Event Venues.
- Limited Entry Farm Event Venue Permits should be subject to renewal every three (3) to five (5) years.

**Recommend adding the following to Permitted Uses within SCC 14.16.400(2)**

- **Farm Event Venues** serving no more than 25 persons for the primary purpose of providing educational classes, direct instruction, workshops, trainings or similar, which are directly related to on-site agricultural production.

**Recommend adding the following to Administrative Special Uses within SCC 14.16.400(3)**

- **Farm Event Venues** serving up to 100 persons for the purposes of Agritourism subject to the following:
  - Events may occur no more than 24 days per year.
  - No new buildings can be built except when using the footprint of an existing building or from an existing foundation that is still intact.
  - A conservation easement with a binding site plan is placed on the subject parcel where the Farm Event Venue is located.

**Recommend adding the following Hearing Examiner Special Uses within SCC 14.16.400(4)**

- **Farm Event Venues** serving more than 100 persons and/or events occurring more than 24 days per year, for the purpose of Agritourism subject to the following:
  - Events may occur more than 24 days per year as determined by the Hearing Examiner based on site-specific evaluation and provided that events do not create a detrimental level of electrical interference, line voltage fluctuation, noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, traffic or other impacts to adjacent farming operations, neighbors, and/or other environmental impacts on the surrounding area.
  - No new buildings can be built except when using the footprint of an existing building or from an existing foundation that is still intact.
  - A conservation easement with a binding site plan is placed on the subject parcel where the Farm Event Venue is located.

**56. Leslie Smith <leslie@edcometalfabricators.com>**

Please forward to the appropriate officials:

I am a long time Skagit County Resident from La Conner. I take great joy in driving the fields and supporting many farmers, farmers markets, and the creative agritourism type of events our hard working families engage in to help them become diversified and strong. I fully support the press release below from SPF and respectfully request the County officials follow the suggestions below.

Sincerely,

Leslie Smith, POB 246, 409 Center Street, La Conner WA 98257 360-410-9239

SPF's statement regarding Skagit County's proposed agritourism code amendments

Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland's (SPF) mission is to ensure the economic viability of Skagit County agriculture and its required infrastructure through farmland protection, advocacy, research, education, and public awareness.

The recently released proposed agritourism code amendments by Skagit County's Planning and Development Services appear to conflict with our mission and our previously adopted [policy position towards agritourism](#).

Further, the amendments do not seem to reflect or address concerns identified in the multiple [community surveys](#) conducted by Skagit County over a two-year period.

We believe the proposed amendments as currently drafted will have the unintended consequence of further restricting current legal uses authorized under existing code and create ambiguity with regard to a person's legal use of their existing farm operation(s).

SPF encourages the Skagit County Planning Commission to re-engage the agricultural and agritourism community more deeply to develop a suite of code amendments to allow for the continued economic viability of all of Skagit County's farms and farm operators, while ensuring the protection and preservation of our farmed lands and compatibility with surrounding farming operations and practices.

By working together, the SPF Board of Directors believes a code path can be created, based the following policy framework, which would result in a win / win for all of agriculture and the broader Skagit community:

1. *Agritourism activities must be accessory to the primary use of agriculture on the site - as evidenced by providing proof of farm income (Schedule F or other).*
2. Any proposed tourism-related activity must be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - (a) Must relate to and support the primary use of agriculture on the site,
  - (b) Must not interfere with surrounding farming operations and practices,
  - (c) Will provide experiences to visitors that promote and enhance Skagit agriculture overall, and,
  - (d) Will not result in the permanent conversion of farmland.
3. Agritourism permits should be required and issued on the basis of level of impact to the long-term viability of agriculture, agricultural soils, the environment, and adjacent farming operations. Activities that have the potential to be large in scale and impact should be required to obtain permits subject to review and renewal every three years.

**LESLIE SMITH**

(360) 488-4388 | OFFICE

(360) 410-9239 | MOBILE

**57. Morgan Randall <[rabbitsrising@gmail.com](mailto:rabbitsrising@gmail.com)>**

Times change. Small farms, restaurants, caterers, servers, marriage officiants, breweries, wineries, wedding dress vendors, DJs, seamstresses, rental businesses, hotels, BnBs, barbers, hairdressers, estheticians and floral arrangers all earn a portion, if not all, their income from the Skagit County wedding industry. How can we make this work for everyone?

Morgan Randall 🐰

609A S1st Street 🐰

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

360.202.2722 🐰

[rabbitsrising@gmail.com](mailto:rabbitsrising@gmail.com) 🐰

"Be joyful though you have considered all the facts." —

🐰 🐰 Wendell Berry 🐰 🐰

## Attachment 3 – More Time to Comment

Count	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Chambers	Nancy	37634 State Route 20 Concrete, WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
2	Redd	Susan	20145 Cook Road Burlington WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
3	Pratt	Marcia	423 Reed Street Sedro Woolley WA	More Time Wants to find ways to please both venues and farmers	Email	8/16/2023
4	Parker	Kathryn	2306 21st Street Anacortes WA	More Time Wants to be able to support local business	Email	8/16/2023
5	Ramanauskas	Elena	20800 Hermway Heights PI Mt. Vernon WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
6	Beck	Kristine	Skagit City Mount Vernon WA	More Time wants agritourism to teach others about farmland	Email	8/16/2023
7	Frye	Ashley	Boldly Grown Farm 8855 Ershig Rd. Bow WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
8	Hoffman	Diana	2505 Northwoods Loop Rd Mt Vernon	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
9	Gifford	Terry	Willowbrook Manor 27420 Minkler Rd Sedro Woolley	More Time	Email	8/16/2023



Attachment 3 – More Time to Comment

10	Johnson	Julia	Mayor of Sedro Woolley	More Time wants Sedro to have a better chance of recovering from COVID - 19	Email	8/16/2023
11	Matheson	Audrey	Bow Hold Blueberries 15628 Bow Hill Rd Bow WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
12	Wechsler	Suzanne and Roger	Samish Bay Cheese 15115 Bow Hill Rd Bow WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
13	Queen	Erika	2008 Margaret Pl Mount Vernon WA	More Time referenced the BERK Survey	Email	8/17/2023
14	Buganski	Jake	Skagit Tourism Bureau	More Time wants the commission and county to work with STB	Email	8/17/2023
15	Dariotis	Chris and Margy	La Conner Gardens 17389 Hulbert Road	More Time wants to find ways to make it feasible for farmers to take on the challenges associated with venues/renovations	Email	8/17/2023
16	Versage	Linda	Blanchard Mountain Farm 15404 Estes Rd Bow WA	More Time feels that much of the public feedback has been dismissed	Email	8/17/2023

Attachment 3 – More Time to Comment

17	McKellar	Christine	520 Columbine Ct Mount Vernon WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
18	Krause	Patrica	Mount Vernon WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
19	Sloan	Jacqueline	Mount Vernon WA	More Time/Oppose d	Email	8/16/2023
20	MacKinnon	Anna	Sedro Woolley WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
21	Plank	Marci	Mount Vernon WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
22	Healy	Erica	45034 Cedar St. Concrete WA 98237	More Time	Email	8/10/2023
23	Sciglibaglio	Caylie		More Time/Concern ed about people choosing Whatcom or Snohomish County for venues.	Email	8/16/2023

**1. Nancy Chambers**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Nancy J Chambers <no1pbpmom@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:00 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Nancy J. Chambers  
37634 State Route 20  
Concrete, WA 98237

## 2. Susan Redd

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** REDD, Susan <redd2cv@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 1:22 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes. Deadline 17 Aug.23

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16 August 2023

Dear Skagit County Commissioners:

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

I support not only agriculture but the related tourism industry that brings us (both rural & city dwellers) outdoors for events such as weddings, teas, graduation parties, biking tours.

Do not penalize the farmers who have both the good locations & the good ideas to bring people out of their homes into the lovely Skagit countryside.

Sincerely yours,  
Susan Redd  
20145 Cook Road  
Burlington WA 98233  
\*\*\*\*\*

### 3. Marcia Pratt

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** marcia pratt <justmesinging@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 2:13 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

\* Spam \*

#####

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#####

Resubmitting with name address etc.. Marcia Pratt 423 Reed Street Sedro-Woolley 360-941-4992 I'm just a regular old born and raised Skagit County lady. Not particularly graceful in my speak but hear me, my heart feels for the farmers who want maintain the integrity of the longtime history of farming in our valley and also for the owners of agriculture zoned land that would not be able to monetarily support itself without an additional business draw. We all know farming is vital to the valley.

BUT so is sharing the beauty of the outdoors in many ways whether it is a wedding, outdoor tea, family memorial or U-pick. Many of our friends and family are not fortunate enough to have been raised in an area that allows them to enjoy the farming community in this small way of a festive gathering.

There MUST be some better way to allow agriculture businesses to survive and thrive without being limited to a small number of events held yearly. Many of these businesses will not survive and what does that say about us? Should we not support our local small businesses? Can we not share our community with others in beautiful outdoor settings?

Skagit County commissioners, please find a way for both our farmers and our agricultural businesses to CO-EXIST and thrive, I believe it can be done! You can do it!

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sent from my iPhone

#### 4. Kathryn Parker

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Kathryn M Parker <kmpbozeman@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:29 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Re: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

\* Spam \*

#####  
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#####

This includes my complete physical address:  
Kathryn Parker  
2306 21st Street  
Anacortes WA 98221

> On Aug 16, 2023, at 12:46 PM, Kathryn M Parker <kmpbozeman@yahoo.com> wrote:  
>  
> Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.  
>  
> I have many wonderful memories of having High Tea at Willowbrook with my Granddaughter. This nourished my soul. As does attending the multiple adventures at both Skagit Acres and of course, Christianson's nursery. Both of these places were frequented by MANY, multiple times, during Covid. Not only to assist and help combat the fear and stress during that time. I purchased plants and starts for my vegetable garden. Nourished my soul. Nothing should limit the belief and good of shopping local...otherwise the only option is shopping national chain grocery stores for flowers? "fresh" fruit and veggies?  
> How anti-local is that.  
>  
> Please try to come to a better and inclusive conclusion. That would include ALL the voters in Skagit County.  
>  
> Kathryn Parker  
> 360-420-4940  
> Anacortes

**5. Elena Ramanauskas Ricardo\_Ausrele Ramanauskas <[ra.ramanauskas@hotmail.com](mailto:ra.ramanauskas@hotmail.com)>**

A proposed change in the county code would restrict businesses like Willowbrook Manor on land zoned Agriculture / Natural Reserve to only 12 events a year. Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Elena Ramanauskas

20800 Hermway Heights PL

Mount Vernon, WA 98274

**6. Kristine Beck <[kristinebeck2@gmail.com](mailto:kristinebeck2@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Agritourism is an important reason why I chose to live here. I love opportunities for connection with the people who grow our food and provide important industry for our community. I love attending farm to table dinners, frequenting farm stands, enjoying tea at Willowbrook Manor, and the beautiful gardens during the Tulip Festival. We live in such a special place and agritourism helps teach others about the importance of understanding our food chain. This protects farmers and farm lands and creates opportunities for public engagement and education.

Thank you for considering!

Kristine Beck

Mount Vernon, Skagit Cty, Washington

**7. Amy Frye <[amy@boldlygrownfarm.com](mailto:amy@boldlygrownfarm.com)>**

Skagit County Planning Commission

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Aug 17, 2023

Dear Skagit County Planning Commission,

My name is Amy Frye. I own and operate Boldly Grown Farm in Bow, Washington, a family-owned organic vegetable farm in our 9<sup>th</sup> season of operation in Skagit. I'm a first-generation farmer with a mid-scale farm, growing approximately 30 acres of vegetables plus grains, seed crops, flowers and more. I spoke at the July 25<sup>th</sup> public hearing regarding the proposed agritourism code changes. I am writing to provide additional public comment to ask that you please create additional time and opportunity for more multi-stakeholder engagement in order to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

The volume of public comments from multiple affected stakeholder groups makes it clear that the current proposed amendments miss the mark. These proposed amendments do not reflect or address viewpoints identified in multiple community surveys conducted by Skagit County over a two-year period. Nor do they reflect the Agritourism Policy Options as presented and recommended to Skagit County in March 2022.

Specifically, I'm concerned that the voices and needs of beginning and small to mid-scale farms have been left out of the conversation. These farms do not necessarily have the benefit of inheriting land or a working farm operation, and the path to financial viability often looks different compared to the generational farms of the valley. These farmers need to have flexibility to innovate in their operations to achieve financial viability. I believe these small farms provide valuable diversity to the valley and are often the ambassadors that give an increasingly urban population positive associations with agriculture and keep it in the public mind. To be clear, this is not a debate between "big ag" vs "little ag", as I believe we are all in this together. But, I am concerned that small to mid-scale farms will end up being penalized or unnecessarily limited in order to regulate the more thorny issue of event venues in the Ag-NRL zone.

In addition, the proposed agritourism code amendments were released to the public during the start of the primary harvest window for farmers and is also the busiest time for farm venue operators. While this is likely coincidental and unintentional, the timing has the real impact of disenfranchising many farmers, landowners and citizens who participated in the County's agritourism process noted above. It is vital for key stakeholders to be able to participate and have their voices heard on this critically important issue.

Given we are now in the middle of harvest season in Skagit County, we urge Skagit County leadership, at all levels, to create additional time and legal pathways to allow for greater stakeholder engagement and participation from those most impacted by the current proposed code amendments. I am part of the Agritourism Stakeholder Working Group organized by Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland. This group is making some great progress through difficult discussions, and we believe we can find win-win solutions that will accommodate the needs of all stakeholders. But more time is needed to get this right.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,



Attachment 3 – More Time to Comment

Amy Frye

Owner, Boldly Grown Farm

8855 Ershig Rd., Bow WA 98232

CC: Skagit County Board of Commissioners

CC: Jack Moore, Planning Director

--

Amy Frye (she/her)

Owner

Boldly Grown Farm

8855 Ershig Rd., Bow, WA 98232

O: (360) 330-4516 ext 2

C: (206) 795-5715

**8. Diana Hoffman Photozones <[photozones01@gmail.com](mailto:photozones01@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Diana Hoffman

2505 Northwoods Loop Road

Mount Vernon wa 98273

**9. Terry Gifford**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Terry Gifford <teatime@teaandtour.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 4:19 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Terry Gifford  
Willowbrook Manor  
27420 Minkler Rd  
Sedro Woolley WA

Respected County Commissioners,

Please make a path for businesses like mine to continue to provide wholesome experiences to the public. It is a beautiful thing to share my home and farm, connecting people to each other and to the good that grows from our fertile Skagit Valley farmland. My guestbook is filled with notes of thanks for the peace and tranquility felt in the gardens, grounds and fields of Willowbrook. We live in a tumultuous world. Country venues provide space. In that space is nature's gift of calm. It is often a healing ground.

The readers of my newsletter were invited to submit requests for more time for public comment. I neglected to instruct them to include their address, thus I fear their voices will be lost.

From the many submitted, I chose one letter to include with my own. It is from our mayor Julia Johnson. And reads:

Honorable County Commissioners,

For several years businesses such as Willowbrook Manor and Eagle Haven Winery have cultivated crops while responsibly hosting events that have increased much needed economic growth and development here in Sedro-Woolley.

For several years Sedro-Woolley struggled, and just when we were beginning to hit our stride, the pandemic hit and set us back, as it did so many smaller towns and businesses.

As the pandemic passed, it was a struggle for towns such as ours to create growth once again. Willowbrook Manor and Eagle Haven worked diligently to get there businesses up to speed, and in so doing, have been instrumental in pulling tourists, as well as the county locals, into our town.

Their businesses are breathing a sense of economic revival into our community.

My point is this:

There is so much more to consider regarding the decision before you.

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Sedro-Woolley, as well as Skagit County, for years to come.

**10. Julia Johnson**

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Johnson, MA,  
Citizen of Skagit County,  
and Mayor of Sedro-Woolley  
360.708.2178

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
-t

Terry Gifford  
Owner  
Willowbrook Manor  
[www.TeaandTour.com](http://www.TeaandTour.com)  
360-218-4585  
Executive Director  
Serving Women Across Nations (SWAN Foundation)  
[www.swanfoundation.org](http://www.swanfoundation.org)

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Audrey Matheson <audrey@bowhillblueberries.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 4:15 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Cc:** Planning & Development Services; Commissioners  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes  
**Attachments:** image001.png; image002.png; image003.png; image004.png

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Aug 17, 2023

Dear Skagit County Planning Commission,

My name is Audrey Matheson. Myself and my brother and our spouses own and operate Bow Hill Blueberries in Bow, Washington, a family-owned (& majority woman-owned) organic blueberry farm in our 3<sup>rd</sup> season of operation in the Skagit Valley. We are first-generation farmers with a small-scale farm, growing approximately 7.5 acres of organic heirloom blueberries but carry on the legacy of the historic Anderson blueberry farm founded in 1947. I attended (in-person) both the July 25<sup>th</sup> public hearing regarding the proposed agritourism code changes and the March 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 meeting (via zoom) this year where the Agritourism Committee was introduced. We have also provided written comment whenever allowed on this topic as well as participating in the survey. I am writing to provide additional public comment to ask that you please create additional time and opportunity for more multi-stakeholder engagement in order to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

I listened with an open mind to the public comment from all sides at the July meeting. The “right to farm” was invoked by those in favor of adopting the proposed amendments to the code. While I believe that this is an important aspect of preserving farmland in the Skagit, as organic farmers, we have to make compromises all of the time based on conventional farms (eg. Buffer zones, making sure that spraying of harmful pesticides are not done on windy days etc.). Involving all stakeholders in the discussion going forward can only lead to a better outcome for all.

The volume of public comments from multiple affected stakeholder groups makes it clear that the current proposed amendments miss the mark. The Agritourism committee was comprised of only one stakeholder group which silences other important voices. These proposed amendments do not reflect or address viewpoints identified in multiple community surveys conducted by Skagit County over a two-year period. Nor do they reflect the Agritourism Policy Options as presented and recommended to Skagit County in March 2022.

Specifically, I’m concerned that the voices and needs of beginning and small to mid-scale farms have been left out of the conversation. These farms do not necessarily have the benefit of inheriting land or a working farm operation, and the path to financial viability often looks different compared to the generational farms of the valley. These farmers need to have flexibility to

innovate in their operations to achieve financial viability. I believe these small farms provide valuable diversity to the valley and are often the ambassadors that give an increasingly urban population positive associations with agriculture and keep it in the public mind. To be clear, this is not a debate between “big ag” vs “little ag”, as I believe we are all in this together. I am concerned that small to mid-scale farms will end up being penalized or unnecessarily limited in order to regulate the more thorny issue of event venues in the Ag-NRL zone.

In addition, the proposed agritourism code amendments were released to the public during the start of the primary harvest window for farmers and is also the busiest time for farm venue operators. While this is likely coincidental and unintentional, the timing has the real impact of disenfranchising many farmers, landowners and citizens who participated in the County’s agritourism process noted above. It is vital for key stakeholders to be able to participate and have their voices heard on this critically important issue.

Given we are now in the middle of harvest season in Skagit County, we urge Skagit County leadership, at all levels, to create additional time and legal pathways to allow for greater stakeholder engagement and participation from those most impacted by the current proposed code amendments. We support the current work of the Agritourism Stakeholder Working Group organized by Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland. This group is making some great progress through difficult discussions, and we believe we can find win-win solutions that will accommodate the needs of all stakeholders. But more time is needed to get this right.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Audrey Matheson  
Co-Owner, Bow Hill Blueberries  
15628 Bow Hill Rd., Bow WA 98232

CC: Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
CC: Jack Moore, Planning Director



**AUDREY MATHESON** (she/her)  
Co-Owner & Director of Marketing  
c: 831-206-9110 e: 360-399-1006  
15628 Bow Hill Road, Bow, WA 98232  
[bowhillblueberries.com](http://bowhillblueberries.com)



## 12. Suzanne and Roger Wechsler (Samish Bay Cheese)

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**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Samish Bay Cheese <cheese@samishbay.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 3:32 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Cc:** Planning & Development Services; Commissioners  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Having operated Samish Bay Cheese for 25 years, we have benefitted greatly from Agritourism. People come to our dairy farm every week from the city, from around the country and around the world. They love to see the cows, calves, and other animals, peek in the observation window to see our cheese and yogurt being made and taste the products we make here. It has enabled us to get retail pricing on a major portion of the products we make - basically double the amount we get from wholesale sales. Agritourism is a boon to small and medium size farms.

We attended the overflow crowd public hearing and heard many opinions and lots of food for thought. Let's not rush the process. Many good ideas came out of the public comments and the proposal you are considering does not, in our opinion, best serve the interests of the broader agricultural community in the county. Please, let's take more time to come up with a consensus that is more widely accepted.

Sincerely,

Suzanne and Roger Wechsler  
Samish Bay Cheese  
15115 Bow Hill Road  
PO Box 202  
Bow, WA 98232

### 13. Erika Queen

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Erika Queen <erika.queen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 1:44 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** AGRITOURISM AMMENDMENTS TO SKAGIT COUNTY CODE

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you,

Erika Queen

2008 Margaret Pl

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

## 14. Jake Buganski

**Thursday, August 17, 2023**

Skagit County Planning Commission  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
*(Delivered via email to pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)*

**RE: Proposed Agritourism Code Changes**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Since the Planning Commission's July 25, 2023 public meeting the Skagit Tourism Bureau has been working with a group of stakeholders to address concerns with proposed agritourism code changes. These changes would negatively impact agritourism businesses, and thereby, our organization's ability to move forward with plans to feature our vibrant agricultural community and heritage as a central theme in our efforts.

STB's position regarding agritourism policy is as follows:

- No policy decisions should, either immediately or in the long term, jeopardize the character or integrity of the Skagit Valley's identity as a bucolic and authentic, agriculturally vibrant landscape
- All policy decisions should apply best practices from communities where agritourism has been a natural evolution that complements traditional farming activity
- All policy decisions should be made based upon research that supports their efficacy
- No policy decisions should impose upon, hinder, or otherwise negatively impact the ability of land owners and entrepreneurs to provide or develop experiences for visitors that align with the goal of celebrating and enhancing Skagit Valley's established identity, so long as those experiences comply with existing code applying to business within the Ag-NRL zone, and are in line with established code governing like businesses in non-agricultural zones
- No policy decisions should provide for an unfair advantage for any particular individual or group over another

On behalf of STB I strongly urge the Planning Commission and Skagit County Leadership to consider the stakeholder working group's recommendations — primarily to create additional time and legal pathways to allow for greater stakeholder engagement and participation from those most impacted by the current proposed code amendments. It is vital for key stakeholders to be able to participate and have their voices heard on this critically important issue.

Please know that STB is here to serve as a resource in any discussions involving tourism and its impact on the county. I am personally available to lend my perspective as a 20-year veteran of the tourism industry — having served communities across the country in various roles in the public and private sector.

We appreciate your careful consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully,



Jake Buganski, CEO  
Skagit Tourism Bureau



## 15. Chris and Margy (La Conner Gardens)

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** La Conner Gardens <laconnergardens@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:40 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Cc:** Commissioners; Chris Dariotis  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed agritourism code changes

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*Dear Skagit County,  
In addition to our email below (sent to the commissioners), we ask that you please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue.*

*The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.*

*We appreciate your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.*

*Sincerely,  
Chris & Margy Dariotis  
La Conner Gardens  
17389 Hulbert Road  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273*

On Wed, Aug 9, 2023 at 3:32 PM Chris Dariotis <captzeno@gmail.com> wrote:  
Skagit County Planning Commission: August 9, 2023

I, together with 200-250 other citizens of Skagit County, attended the Planning Commission meeting of July 25, 2023 to hear about proposed code changes relating to Agritourism. I, along with many other tax paying citizens, were not in agreement with many of the proposed changes and feel that they will significantly diminish the value of my property and my ability to obtain the income required to maintain my property and to continue to live on it. Accordingly, I am submitting this testimony as a public comment and pray that it be considered in the formation of any code changes.

The proposed definition of Agritourism is very limited and excludes many potential activities that traditionally encompass Agritourism in other parts of the world. I take my examples of Agritourism from the examples of world famous Agriturismo from the Tuscany region of Italy. Please follow this link for examples: <https://www.travelmag.com/articles/agriturismo-tuscany/>. The Skagit Valley has no less beauty nor fewer nearby attractions than Tuscany. With the enlightened development of Agritourism our region could obtain such world wide acclaim.

My farm operation maintains a roadside stand where we sell agricultural products grown on site. We have many loyal customers, both local residents and visitors from out of town. I delight in trying to identify the languages spoken by foreign visitors. We invite our customers to view our crops where they are grown to learn about them and our cultural

## 16. Linda Versage

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Linda Versage <linda@blanchardmountainfarm.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:42 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Skagit County:

My husband and I have been small farmers in Skagit County since 2013.

**Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. It is the height of harvest and this is no time to be finalizing code on this important topic! How can you support agriculture and then ask farmers to make final comments right now.**

The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

I was quite involved in the earlier stakeholders meetings when BERK was doing their research, then their public survey. I am extremely disappointed that much of the public feedback during those years of commenting and researching seems to have been dismissed in the final proposed code changes. I am particularly upset by the final language mentioning that humans are not to be allowed in farm outbuildings. My goodness. Seriously? What if a group of students (elementary all the way up to college-level or votech or WSU farmer-training students) wants to visit a farm to learn about agriculture, or we want to educate urban dwellers about how their food is grown, or a team of farmers wants to hold a meeting or the Puget Sound Food Hub wants to meet on a farm? Not to mention Farm Stands! One of the main things that neighbors around Skagit love is access to Farm Stands. Small to medium size farms are nearly eliminated by the language in the proposed Agritourism code. For farming to continue in Skagit, there needs to be a new face to what agriculture means.

We must be able to have the continuation of the long standing large-scale farms adjacent to smaller farms like mine. Our farm is surrounded by large scale farms owned by Nelson, Wallace and Skagit Valley Farms. When something is going on around our farm that could be impacted, I check in with our neighboring farms so we can adjust and work together.

## 17. Christine McKellar

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**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Christine McKellar <scrubs\_teeth@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:37 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you

Christine McKellar  
520 Columbine Ct  
Mount Vernon WA  
98273

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

## 18. Patricia Krause

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Ms patricia krause <pinkribbon@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 1:16 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time for multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

We have engaged in events that cause no harm only embrace, acknowledge, and offer awareness of all that Skagit Valley offers. Please listen to the voices that wish only to share their value.

Patricia Krause  
Mount Vernon

## 19. Jacqueline Sloan

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**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Jackie Sloan <nos4aw2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:42 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

Dear Skagit County Representatives,

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

As a newcomer to Mount Vernon, my family has enjoyed many farm businesses. They are, indeed, what Skagit Vally represents. They are such a delight to visit and do employ local people. One of our family favorites is Willowbrook. We have gone for tea, for the bike rides and look forward to participating in some of the other events that are more farm oriented.

These businesses keep some of these farms operating and it would be a sad thing for our community to lose them. I would hate to see this area begin to look like every other area. Keeping our farmland keeps the sprawl in check. These businesses bring the warm, welcoming feel that draws people to stop here and eat, shop and spend the night.

If there was an extension, perhaps a middle ground could be had. It would be unjust to rush this move that could, most likely, push these businesses out of Skagit Valley and it would be a detrimental , overall decision for our community.

Thank you for your time,  
Jacqueline Sloan  
Mount Vernon

## 20. Anna MacKinnon

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Anna MacKinnon <anna@kooshoo.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:12 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Possible Spam: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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To Whom It May Concern at Skagit County,

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Anna MacKinnon  
Resident of Sedro-Woolley  
415-244-4064  
kooshoo.net <[https://us01.z.antigena.com/l/UQSfpNnkg44TfnY8wot5ey-co3qHGEnANZ33v6n5k14k~WetVRt36SDq7EZIYQWYWXUXsy~sZJwJZtJ8hK5JXpAN8BsLd8qJrqXo2\\_y4Hf6Q7gEPnk4TreWRailFf1ZE4L91YC8PgRFuwI7HvKRX1](https://us01.z.antigena.com/l/UQSfpNnkg44TfnY8wot5ey-co3qHGEnANZ33v6n5k14k~WetVRt36SDq7EZIYQWYWXUXsy~sZJwJZtJ8hK5JXpAN8BsLd8qJrqXo2_y4Hf6Q7gEPnk4TreWRailFf1ZE4L91YC8PgRFuwI7HvKRX1)>

## 21. Marci Plank

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Marci Plank <marciplank@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:38 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come. The ruling as it stands would dramatically affect many thriving businesses on agricultural land, such as Willowbrook Manor in Sedro-Woolley, and many other venues that host private/public events.

Thank you,  
Marci J Plank  
Mount Vernon, WA

**22. Erica Healy <[ericahealy38@gmail.com](mailto:ericahealy38@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Erica Healy

45034 cedar street, concrete WA 98237

**23. Caylie Sciglibaglio <[caylie425@gmail.com](mailto:caylie425@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County,

I am writing to you as a Skagit resident, Skagit bride, wedding photographer, and an attendee of the recent public meeting. I'm asking that you provide further time for the involved parties to come together and find a solution.

I attended the recent meeting in the interest of protecting my job in this county, and left with an even deeper appreciation that these farm venue owners provide to all of Skagit. Every venue owner that I heard speak was also a farmer, working hard to find financial methods to support their families, and using some of that additional event income to invest into renovating and preserving these barns. Barns like the ones at Christianson's Nursery, where we got married back in 2018. I hadn't heard of their farm and nursery until researching for our wedding, and it was the perfect place to celebrate with our closest loved ones. Most of them had only visited Skagit for the tulip festivals, and they shared that it was the most beautiful wedding they'd been a part of. It brings me so much joy to return to the Christianson's each year to buy flowers and reminisce about our special day, saying hello to John and Emma as they run their family business. Driving to attractions like theirs brought us further into the county where we discovered other businesses to support each year, like Gordon Skagit Farm's and Snow Goose Produce. The ability to connect with local farms, eat local produce, purchase local flowers, and observe the beauty of these lands is exactly what made me want to settle down in Skagit as a young adult. Farm venues and farm stands are the key piece that allow our Skagit community to connect with and experience this important farming industry.

My fellow wedding small business owners and I attended this meeting hoping to hear examples of what might have caused this proposal. We heard generalized comments about being asked not to spray farms on wedding days, and yet the venue owners shared they have never asked of this, and have couples sign contracts stating they understand the operations that surround the



venue. I believe if this is a true issue, it should be handled between the specific farms and their neighbors, and not shut down an entire county's industry of wedding small business owners.

More now than ever, I see couples wanting to hire local vendors that will provide locally grown food and flowers for their event. If couples are forced to move their weddings to Whatcom or Snohomish counties, they will book vendors in those counties instead, causing Skagit farms to lose their business. We are all in favor of protecting Skagit farms, and it's being severely overlooked the negative impact this proposal will have on the farms themselves.

If events like the tulip festival and fall corn mazes can continue, and I do believe they should, we can find ways to continue hosting weddings, events, and farm stands. Please understand that the current proposed change would have drastic impacts on local couples, families, business owners, and farmers. We need more time to find new solutions.

Thank you,

Caylie Scigliabaglio

Count	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Anderson	Jessie	Maplehurst Farm 18495 Dike Rd Mount Vernon WA 98273		Email	7/27/2023

**1. Jessie Anderson <[info@maplehurstweddings.com](mailto:info@maplehurstweddings.com)>**

Ms. Sarah Ruether

Long Range Planning Manager

Skagit County Planning and Dev. Services

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: Written Comment on Proposed Amendment to Skagit County Code 14.16.900(2)

Dear Ms. Ruether,

My name is Jessie Anderson, and I am a lifelong Skagit County resident and multigenerational farmer. Respectfully, from the perspective of its stated purpose—and SEPA—the proposed action noted above has not been insufficiently studied.

According to guidance from the Department of Ecology, a nonproject action must be considered just as closely as a project action:

SEPA review for nonproject actions requires agencies to consider the “big picture” by:

- Conducting comprehensive analysis
- Addressing cumulative impacts
- Considering possible alternatives
- Outlining successful mitigation measures

It is not apparent that any of this occurred before concluding that environmental impacts will be non-significant. Indeed, such a claim would be belied by the overwhelming public comment from various Skagit County citizens—many of whom spoke eloquently about how they would not be able to make ends meet to retain their family farms and continue soil-based agriculture absent a venue-related revenue stream. The net result of such a legislative divestment would be, as

several explained, dilapidation, or wholesale closure, of smaller family farms. Secondly, there would be an undisputed loss of millions of dollars to the surrounding economy and tax base (much of which is women-owned), attendant to choking off agricultural venues.

While our family has no doubt that the County is proceeding with good intentions, these are significant changes that warrant further study. And under SEPA, they must be studied. It is not enough to defer consideration because this is a “non-project action,” especially when the proposed legislation will have such an immediate impact across the County, on so many. And because the new definitions will likely be dispositive of future projects, the failure to consider impacts now is tantamount to *never* considering those impacts. See generally <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/Guide-for-lead-agencies/Non-project-proposals> (last visited July 27, 2023) (“Nonproject reviews have become increasingly important because they provide the basis for future project decisions [and] expedite project analysis and decisions”). This analysis is too crucial to skirt.

The one safety valve we can see is clearer language confirming that existing venues in operation on agricultural lands are nonconforming uses, and thus not subject to the pending legislation. Uses of property, like mine, that exist prior to enactment of a zoning ordinance may be maintained after the effective date of the ordinance—so long as they are not “changed, altered or enlarged” thereafter. See *Rhod-A-Zalea & 35th, Inc. v. Snohomish County*, 136 Wash.2d 1, 16, 959 P.2d 1024 (1998); *Seven Hills, LLC v. Chelan Cnty.*, 198 Wash. 2d 371, 398, 495 P.3d 778 (2021). As it pertains to us, we have invested our whole livelihood and tens of thousands of dollars in our decade-old venue. It supports the soil-based agriculture, and vice-versa. Upending my family’s livelihood overnight, along with that of numerous others, would cause sweeping impacts on agriculture across the County. On the other hand, regulating prospective impacts of *would-be*venues, and preventing existing ones from *growing*, might have more limited impacts. Compare *King Cnty. v. Friends of Sammamish Valley*, 530 P.3d 1023 (Wash. Ct. App. 2023) (affirming SEPA determination based on nonconforming use as a limiting principle).

We therefore ask that the County, consistent with its responsibilities under SEPA, the GMA and as a responsible steward of government authority, reconsider its threshold determination—or alternatively, confirm that the proposed legislation will not impact existing uses.

I have submitted these written comments to [pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us) and to the Skagit County Planning Commissioners as well. Thank you for your consideration of our input.

Sincerely,

Jessie Anderson

Maplehurst Farm

18495 Dike Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

[info@maplehurstweddings.com](mailto:info@maplehurstweddings.com)

Attachment 4 – SEPA

(360) 708-0718

Count	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Lisser	Bruce	Lisser & Associates 320 Milwaukee Street PO Box 1109 Mount Vernon WA 98273		Email	7/20/2023
2	Eagleston	Jean	804 Ferry St Sedro Woolley WA 98284	Wants new/better survey	Email	8/17/2023

**1. Bruce Lisser**



July 20, 2023

Agritourism Amendment to Skagit County Code

**Via e-mail**                      **PDScomments@co.skagit.wa.us**

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed addition to Chapter 14.16 Zoning, specifically 14.04.020 Definitions and 14.16.900 Special Use Requirements.

I applaud your vision with respect to embracing agritourism but want to insure that the usage is equitably applied with an emphasis on supporting ongoing commercial agriculture.

I find the definition of agritourism a bit unclear, it is very specific as to what it is not i.e. celebratory events, weddings, etc, but it is not very clear as to what it is. Based upon a broad interpretation as well as your further proposed definition within agricultural accessory use the Tulip Festival as well as existing events like Gordon's Pumpkins and many event venues use of the old barns may not fall within the definitions without an administrative special use.

Is the intent of the new agritourism to require special use permits for all existing operations? If so, to be compatible to the new code, the existing operations will be impacted. I cannot see how they will not be as the code is written. Each of the existing operations will need to apply for and be granted a special use permit which will be limited to the 12 days, with specific attention given to the limitations.

Since the wedding and event venues are specifically excluded and there is no reference to there being a permitted use in the AG-zoning code for the venues, is the intent to close them all down?

If you were to compare the new definitions to actual practice, for instance with Tulip Festival, it would seem that many activities on the farms during the festival are not "incidental and subordinate" to the primary farming operation of the farm site. For example food sales, kettle corn, calf petting, pony rides, light shows, tents, permanent parking areas, etc., based upon a literal interpretation these activities which are not incidental or subordinate to farming, although profitable, would no longer be permitted.

I am not picking on the Tulip Festival, simply trying to show the impact if literal interpretation of the revisions to the code are applied. I would think that the new code requirements must be applied to each individual farm, and as written, these are difficult to interpret with respect to intent and specificity. Since there are no exceptions shown with the change it would seem to be the intent.

As mentioned, I support the concept of agritourism and based upon the proposed language changes to the code I simple ask that you apply the changes equitably and uniformly across all events in the AG-NRL zone. By definition these changes will include and impact the Tulip Festival which I believe will now fall under an agritourism special event.

If applying these major unintended consequences is not the intent of the code change, then maybe these changes should be re-looked at and put on hold until more specific language is written.

Finally, the way I read these changes, it seems to clarify that "celebrity gatherings, weddings, parties and similar uses that cause the property act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism".

As a land-use consultant I will read the code that if you want to turn an existing barn that is on AG-NRL land into a wedding venue it is not allowed, but if you want to take your flower farm and have folks to come by for a special event, you can have up to 12 a year.

There are currently many event and wedding venues scattered throughout the AG-NRL zoned land. There is even a new one being planned on Burkland Road, it has an amazing website [www.briarwood-estate.com](http://www.briarwood-estate.com) and it seems to be all ready for weddings, camping, lodging and specific events. How can this be?

This is an example of potential unintended consequences for letting usages simply take place while ignoring the zoning and permitting process, I am hopeful that the planning department will start implementing the code and putting an end to the uses that do not meet the agricultural definition. I am all for weddings and parties, simply want them to fit within and meet the requirements in the zone where they are permitted.

If the proposed changes are to be meaningful then they must be applied to all owners within the zone and all the owners must be compelled to meet the code, especially when there are no exceptions for existing operations.

Good luck, we will all be watching and I for one will be excited to see the new agritourism constraints with respect to special events put in place within the AG-NRL zone.

Sincerely,



Bruce G. Lisser, P.L.S.

**2. Jean Eagleston <[drjeaneagleston@gmail.com](mailto:drjeaneagleston@gmail.com)>**

Comments from:

Jean R. Eagleston, Ph.D.

804 Ferry Street

Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

360-466-0135

**Limitations of Berk Consulting Agritourism Surveys**

When Berk Consulting presented the results from their first survey regarding agritourism, I wrote to Hal Hart (the Director of the

Planning and Development Services at the time) and expressed a variety of concerns about the methodology used in the design

of the survey questionnaire, the data collection, and the presentation of results. That email is dated June 10, 2022 and may be

available in the PDS email archives.

Unfortunately, many of the same problems remained in the second survey that Berk Consulting conducted. Their results were

presented in a paper titled "Fall 2022 Agritourism Survey--Highlights". A thorough critique of the methodology used would be

long and tedious. The two most troubling issues are described below.

**Bias of Questions**

When a survey is designed, in order to gather reliable and valid data, a number of principles must be followed. One such principle

is that the questions must be free of bias--the respondent is not supposed to know the "right answer" or be able to guess what the

researcher hopes to find in the data that is collected.

An amusing example used in the field of survey research is to ask the question: "How many times did you beat your wife last month?"

This question assumes that the wife has been beaten and the respondent just needs to say how many times this happened. A more

appropriate format would be a two-part series of questions: (1) Have you ever beaten your wife? Answer "yes" or no", followed by



(2) If yes, how many times in the past month?

The second Berk Consulting questionnaire focused on four options for agritourism use. The first option was to retain the current code.

However, the current code language was not provided. (How many respondents could possibly have been aware of the sections of the

County code that applied to agritourism?). **The other three options (A-C) had a positive confirmation bias and assumed that respondents**

**would want to have agritourism activities on land zoned as agricultural.**

It is my understanding that at the time the questionnaires were written, there were 13 wedding venues and other entertainment venues

none of which had a special use permit to operate and run a business of that type on agricultural land. What might the responses have

been if a question like the following had been asked:

"Currently there are a number of businesses operating in the County on agricultural-zoned land **without a permit. That means**

**these businesses are illegal. Should such illegal businesses be allowed to continue operating?"**

Also, data was not adequately collected or highlighted about the ways in which farmers may have been harmed by agritourism activities.

### **Sample Size**

The method used by Berk Consulting failed to be a representative sample of Skagit County residents. An acceptable survey for a

Skagit County regarding opinions about agritourism would have a group of respondents (the "sample") that mirrors the total population

in terms of demographic variables such as gender, age, ethnicity/race, and farmer/non-farmer status.

The survey questionnaire was available only online. Thus, a potential respondent needed to have access to a computer, moderate

comfort with computer usage, Internet service, and English-language fluency.

The sample size is woefully inadequate.

As of 2021, the population of Skagit County was 130,696. (Undoubtedly, the current population size is greater.)

The second survey conducted by Berk Consulting was based on mailing 17,000 postcards to "rural areas of Skagit County".

My two-member household received three postcards.

Any given individual could have completed the survey multiple times.

Using the 2021 population data and the 17,000 postcard mailing, **the target response group represents only 0.13% of the County residents.**

A total of 651 responses were analyzed.

As mentioned above, one does not know if there were 651 different respondents.

Even if there were 651 different people who completed the online survey, **the response rate is 0.038%.**

A much quoted highlight in Berk Consulting's report is: "About two-thirds felt weddings should not be prohibited (68%)".

68% of 651 responses equals 443 responses (rounding up).

**Policy must not be made on the basis of 443 responses**--especially when the demographics of those responses are not known or

even if the 443 responses were made by 443 different people. Further, because of the sampling methodology, we can be certain that

those who responded are not a representative sample of the Skagit County population.

My professional background includes work experience and graduate school coursework (at the doctoral level) that includes several

years of survey research. It is always painful to offer the opinion that the work of another person or organization is fraught with

problems of methodology, data collection, and data analysis. However, my professional opinion is that the surveys conducted by

Berk Consulting are of insufficient quality and rigor to be used for decision-making.

**Therefore, I respectfully ask the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners to set aside the results of the two**

**surveys and to not allow those results to influence the policy decisions regarding agritourism.**

A few final thoughts (from under my retired psychologist's hat):

**Is it just human nature to take advantage of ambiguity?**

**Is it better to go ahead and take an action and later ask for forgiveness rather than to ask for permission?**

**If you give me an inch, I will take a mile.**

According to newspaper articles in the *Skagit Valley Herald* and in conversations on platforms such as Next Door,

there have been statements (these are not direct quotes) that reflect such human behavior:

*I didn't know I needed a permit.*

*I was told I would not qualify for a permit but I went ahead and opened my (event) business anyway.*

*It would be fine for an old barn to be restored and for "a few events a year" to happen there.*

(How many events is "a few"? 12, 24, 48, 52, or as rumored, 98 in a year?)

The County code language will be strengthened by definitions and boundaries (e.g., number of events allowed per year).

If the County Code language is ambiguous or allows "wiggle room", then it seems most likely that someone in the future

will take advantage of that wiggle room and turn a field on a farm into something we can barely imagine today--a carnival,

an amusement park, a permanent set of craft booths, a shopping mall...

Thank you for your kind consideration of my comments,

Jean R. Eagleston, Ph.D.

Licensed Psychologist (retired), Washington

Count	Last Name	First Name	Org. or City/Address	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Stephens	Jean	14151 Hillwood Drive Bow, WA 98232	Let Farm Stands Exist	Email	8/1/2023
2	Klippel	Patricia	14152 Hillwood Drive Bow	Let Farm Stands Exist	Email	8/2/2023
3	Bunkley	Jacqueline	10515 Samish Island Rd Bow, WA 98232	Let Farm Stands Exist	Email	8/16/2023

**1. Jean Stephens <[jschoof-it@wavecable.com](mailto:jschoof-it@wavecable.com)>**

Please leave the road side farm stands alone they are much better then going into town for produce and very fresh food and produce. You are looking to places you do not need to go. Jean Stephens, 14151 Hillwood Drive Bow

**2. Patricia Klippel [pdkrdh43@gmail.com](mailto:pdkrdh43@gmail.com)**

Name : Patricia Klippel  
 Address : 14151 Hillwood Drive  
 City : Bow  
 State : Washington  
 Zip : 98232  
 email : [pdkrdh43@gmail.com](mailto:pdkrdh43@gmail.com)

PermitProposal : I do not know. It has to do with farm land/building use.  
 Comments : Please do not restrict an individual farms use of selling their products! Farm stands are away of life for all of us. The buyers and the sellers! It is called using what you have and making it available for others. Farm stands are much fresher than the grocery store? I would really like to know whos idea it is? Thanks, Patricia Klippel

**3. Jacqueline Bunkley**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** One Greyhound <onegreyhound@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 6:52 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Per the automated response that I received, I am resubmitting my comments and including the requested information:

Jacqueline Bunkley  
10515 Samish Island Rd  
Bow WA 98232

---

**From:** One Greyhound  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 3:49 PM  
**To:** pdsccomments@co.skagit.wa.us <pdsccomments@co.skagit.wa.us>  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

Please don't change our access to small roadside produce stands. They offer a valuable service to the public that wants freshly picked vegetables. How on earth can these small farms be harming agribusiness? Could I go to one of these corporate farms and buy 1 zucchini? I can at the local farm stand!

Thank you

Jacqueline

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Attachment 7 – Economics

Count	Last Name	First Name	Org. or City/Addresses	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Rohrs	Jill	Skagit's Best Salsa Company 12375 Reservation Road Suite B Anacortes WA 98221	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
2	Napoliello-Ivory	Angela	910 Alpine View Dr. Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/12/2023
3	Winkles	Anne and Ken	PO Box 586 Conway, WA	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/16/2023
4	Wudtke	Erika	16924 Nilson Rd. Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/9/2023
5	Garner	Floyd	23404 Prairie Rd Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/8/2023
6	Jones	Gifford	1600 5th St Anacortes WA, 98221	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/29/2023
7	McFarland	Jacob	3836 Summersun St Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/8/2023
8	Gordon	Jan	16544 Colony Rd Bow WA	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/24/2023

## Attachment 7 – Economics

9	Lisenby	Joseph	711 Maple Avenue La Conner, WA 98257	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/9/2023
10	Chilcote	Judith	22303 Little Mountain Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/16/2023
11	Hillard	Larry	Maddox Creek, Mount Vernon	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/4/2023
12	Cecotti	Nick	15195 State Route 536 Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Mail	8/17/2023
13	Katapodis Lee	Nancy	Double Barrel BBQ Sedro Woolley WA	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/28/2023
14	Shanin	Norman and Peter	13140 Josh Wilson Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/6/2023
15	Haglund	Robin	11430 Walker Rd Mount Vernon WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/17/2023
16	Hass	Ron	9100 Marshal Rd Bow, WA 98232	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Mail	8/8/2023
17	Hughes-Hayton	Susan	Skagit County	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/30/2023
18	Stewart/Hurta do	Kayalan/Vicotor	1087 Digby Rd Mount Vernon WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/10/2023

## Attachment 7 – Economics

19	Sandstrom	Brett	Sedro Woolley, WA	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/28/2023
20	Extract	Ron	Co-Owner Garden Path Fermentation	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/27/2023
21	Self	Scott	915 S 19 St Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
22	Phou	Sunchea	22723 Grip Rd Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
23	Farrar	Judy	13033 Sunrise Dr Mount Vernon WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/16/2023
24	Kmet	Mike	12596 C St Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/17/2023
25	Axthelm	Shannon	17000 Dike Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	8/2/2023
26	Anderson	Jessie	Maplehurst Farm 18495 Dike Rd Mount Vernon WA 98273		Email	7/27/2023
27	Sapp	Terry	804 Ferry St Sedro Woolley WA 98284	Supports/Economic	Email	8/17/2023
28	Michael	Hughes		Supports/Economic	Email	8/17/2023



1. **Jill Rohrs** <[jillrohrs@live.com](mailto:jillrohrs@live.com)>

Dear Planning Commission and Commissioners,

I hope this email finds you all well. I am writing to express my wholehearted support for allowing farm venues to host weddings, celebrations of life, and other events that showcase our local valley's beauty and productivity. These businesses play a vital role in our community, and it is crucial that we provide them with the support they need to thrive.

Farming and events go hand in hand, complementing each other in a way that benefits both our agricultural sector and our local economy. By permitting weddings and events at venues like Willowbrook Manor and the Saltbox in Conway, we can create a win-win situation for landowners, farmers, and the community at large. It will help preserve our agricultural heritage while also allowing these venues to diversify their income streams and contribute to the economic growth of our region.

It is essential to find a balanced solution that addresses any concerns while embracing the benefits of farm venues for events. A compromise that respects the interests of all parties involved will pave the way for a thriving and harmonious community.

Here are some reasons why supporting farm venues for events is crucial:

1. **Economic Resilience:** Allowing weddings and events on farms will provide an additional revenue stream for farmers and landowners, helping them weather economic challenges and sustain their livelihoods.

**Preservation of Agricultural Heritage:** By encouraging agritourism through events, we can promote the preservation of our agricultural heritage and educate people about the importance of sustainable farming practices.

**Local Business Support:** Embracing farm events will boost the local economy by driving tourism, supporting event-related businesses, and increasing overall spending in the area.

**Community Pride:** These farm venues have become an integral part of our community's fabric, providing unique and memorable experiences for residents and visitors alike.

As a small business owner and concerned member of this community, I urge the Planning Commission and Commissioners to work collaboratively with farm venue owners to find a compromise that allows these events to take place while addressing any valid concerns. By doing so, we can continue to foster economic growth, preserve our agricultural roots, and celebrate the beauty of our valley. Our Magic Skagit!

Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter. I trust that you will make a decision that benefits our community as a whole.

Sincerely,

**Jill Rohrs**

**Skagit's Best Salsa Company**

COO, Owner

12375 Reservation Road Suite B

Anacortes, WA 98221

[jillrohrs@live.com](mailto:jillrohrs@live.com)

[fresh@skagitsbestsalsa.com](mailto:fresh@skagitsbestsalsa.com)

360-610-9818

**2. Angela Napoliello-Ivory <[anapolielloivory@gmail.com](mailto:anapolielloivory@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

I moved to Skagit County with my husband three years ago this month. I had previously lived all my life in southern New Jersey. I have been a member of the Zoning Board in Clayton Borough, N.J. and a member of the Planning Board of Winslow Township, N.J. While serving on both of those boards I participated in several hearings for commercial enterprises and voted on the decisions of same. We considered the economic impact and the environmental impact of all applications that came before our boards.

I listened, via Zoom, to all the testimony on the Proposed Agritourism Code Changes and I have several questions.

My first question relates to the economy of the county. What will be the economic fallout of outlawing or limiting commercial enterprises? I understand that the Tulip Festival would be exempt from any new Agritourism restrictions, I assume Agritourism's economic impact on the county is a major consideration. Multiple people spoke about the impact such a decision would have on small farms that host these events and on those that provide auxiliary services. Have the immediate and secondary economic impacts of smaller events been considered? If so, what are they?

Secondly, are the proposed Agritourism rules changes an attempt to address a zoning issue? Do farms that derive a given portion of their income from events rather than generating their total income from agriculture endanger their agricultural or open space zoning? If so, what portion of their income would that be?

My third question has to do with the reported story of someone laying down in front of a tractor to stop it from "disrupting" a wedding. If the goal of these new proposed rules is to eliminate such things from happening again, how would that goal be accomplished by limiting the number of events from 24 to 12 per year? Is there a guarantee that with 12 events, the people attending these events will not behave badly?

There are other questions of course, like are you going to use the results of the completed survey to guide your decision on rules changes. Are farmers who grow flowers or tea also at risk of having their farms outlawed? Is this in fact an issue of big farms versus small farms?

The issue of Agritourism seems to come down to the issue of big and small. In our agricultural county where the portion of farmland owned by large operations increases every year, smaller farms are being squeezed out. So, what effect will curtailing the number of events held on small farm venues have on this trend? Is that the future the county wishes? A future of exclusive corporate ownership?

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your deliberations. I hope my questions support your efforts to clarify what is in the best interests of our community.

I do hope your decision on the Proposed Agritourism Code Changes will be on the side of enabling the growth of small business to ensure that our economy will prosper at every level.

Angela Napoliello-Ivory

910 Alpine View Drive

Mount Vernon, WA. 98274

**3. Anne Winkes <[annewinkes@gmail.com](mailto:annewinkes@gmail.com)>**

Dear Skagit County Planning Department,

We are writing to express our concerns about the code changes regarding agritourism proposed by the Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) that are currently under consideration by the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners.

We have lived in Conway for almost 40 years, witness to the changes in farming practices and crops and the rise of agritourism around Conway over the years. We believe that because agriculture is a vital part of Skagit County's economy, Skagit County's farmland and farms must be preserved, but we have also come to understand and appreciate the growing role agritourism, including the use of farms as event venues, has in that economy.

As noted in the PDS staff report the code changes were developed exclusively by the AAB and then modified by the Planning Commission. The staff report states that the "intent of these proposed code changes are for clarification and to ensure that any event businesses that go forward in Ag-NRL are intermittent and cannot operate as full-time event centers."

The proposed code limits event venue owners to only holding temporary events requiring an administrative special use permit, limiting the number of events held to no more than 12 a year. It defines agritourism as "A common, farm-based, commercial activity serving the public that promotes agriculture, is directly related to onsite agricultural production, is incidental and subordinate to the working farm operation, and is operated by the owner or operator of the farm or family members. Celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism."

Such a limited definition of agritourism is short-sighted. It turns a blind eye to the fact that event venues and farmers can coexist amicably and to mutual benefit without either causing

the other loss of livelihood, without farmers losing prime farmland to event venues and without event venues limiting farm work.

Removing event venues from the definition of agritourism ignores the reality that many family farms are sustainable only because those families supplement their farm income by working other jobs off the farm. Other farm families have come to supplement their farm income by hosting events.

The proposed code, if adopted, will cause event venues, many on small family farms, to close their doors, eliminating families' livelihood, and negatively impacting secondary support businesses—motels, bed and breakfast inns, caterers, beauticians, and florists, among many others. It fails to recognize how event venues help preserve agriculture in Skagit County, providing places for locals and tourists alike to celebrate memorable events close to our County's extraordinarily productive and beautiful farmland. In both their economic impact and the image they project to visitors, event venues are farm friendly.

In short, instead of protecting existing farms, the proposed code changes may put some out of business. Family farms exist precariously. The county, in its effort to protect Skagit Valley's farming community, should not make it harder for them to survive`.

We urge PDS, the planning commission and the county commissioners to take a step back from the current code proposal and acknowledge the importance of involving not just AAB but all the stakeholders involved--local farmers, farm venues, business owners and community members-- in writing reasonable code that helps protect and preserve the county's agricultural and agritourism economy and the families that make it possible. Take a deep breath and collaboratively write code that works for everyone.

Thank you for considering our thoughts.

Anne and Ken Winkes

PO Box 586

Conway, WA, 98238-0586

#### **4. Erika L Wudtke**

Name : Erika L Wudtke

Address : 16924 Nilson Road

City : Mt. Vernon

State : WA

Zip : 98273

email : [ladycabella@gmail.com](mailto:ladycabella@gmail.com)

PermitProposal : [ladycabella@gmail.com](mailto:ladycabella@gmail.com)

Comments : Viva farms reported earlier this year that in the next ten years, 70% of farmers in Skagit County will be of retirement age and their families do not plan on continuing their farming legacy. There is a push for large corporations taking over small farms in the US to put

the small farms out of business. Skagit County relies on local farming as it's main revenue source. This County enjoys some of the most fertile land on earth and local farmers produce much needed food that is becoming in short supply. Pushing this agenda in the name of preserving farmland is absurd. Why are you making a difficult job that farmers already have to deal with worse for them by limiting their income resources that only serve to facilitate farmers in keeping their farms viable? Seems like you have bought and paid for into the world woke agenda of socialism to control everyone into submission. Let the farmers do what they have always done best instead of dictating how they can use their land. They are not currently using their land as venues as a replacement to farming. They are trying to supplement their incomes to keep their farms going. Not only farmers stand to suffer. Look at all the satellite businesses you will harm or completely put out of business is if this is allowed to pass. Look at how many migrant workers farmers employ. How many will families stand to lose by limiting what farmers can do on their land? Please rethink this control you are trying to assert. Without the farms of Skagit County, what are we? Farms drying up and going out of business will lead to more and more local poverty. Your plan seems short-sighted, ridiculous and self-serving. Please do not allow this to pass.

Respectfully,  
Erika Wudtke

**5. Floyd Garner <[blackhartleather@yahoo.com](mailto:blackhartleather@yahoo.com)>**

The specificity of the proposal's wording speaks to "events". It can be argued that small booths or sales promotions associated with agricultural events such as "Tulip Festival" would also need to be stopped. In reality the entire ecotourism set of events in Skagit County the should be discontinued. If farmland is only for growing, then allowing horses of tourists to wander through the fields is circumspect.

Events such as weddings, funerals, anniversary dinners cause a number of support businesses to share in the revenue. As of yet, I have been unable to find instances where an event (other than tulip festival traffic snarls) has impeded or caused a hardship beyond the event farm's physical space.

Floyd Garner

23404 Prairie RD

Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**6. Gifford T Jones <[giffjones@gmail.com](mailto:giffjones@gmail.com)>**

Dear Skagit County:

I am a both a Skagit County commercial property owner and an appreciative customer of Willowbrook Manor English Teahouse and Farm Stay.

I understand that Willowbrook is facing a potential 50% reduction in the number of farm venue events they are able to offer. I am writing, therefore, in full support of this contributing

member of our Skagit County property ownership. I suspect that Willowbrook Manor offers their fair share of property and/or business tax revenues.

Willowbrook Manor offers a pleasant and healthy business and recreational environment while engaging in nothing of obvious detraction. I am aware of no reason that the offerings of this quaint and affable Skagit County farm/teahouse should be abridged in any way.

I strongly urge the removal of this threat to the future of Willowbrook Manor from our Skagit County code revision.

Sincerely,

Gifford T Jones

1600 5th Street

Anacortes, WA. 98221

[GiffJones@gmail.com](mailto:GiffJones@gmail.com)

**7. Jacob McFarland <[jacob.mcfarland84@gmail.com](mailto:jacob.mcfarland84@gmail.com)>**

Absolutely, it's vital to recognize that while we're rooted in farming, our offerings have a unique allure for people. Our local farm owners not only provide distinctive event options within the county but also infuse our valley with much-needed funds and attention. The risk of losing these opportunities could redirect attention and resources to neighboring counties, potentially dealing a severe blow to our economy, especially given the uncertain times we face.

What's even more worrisome is the potential outcome of forcing our beloved small farms to sell, leaving the door open for large corporations to take over and set the agenda for their interests, harming our way of life. That's far from the county I want to call home.

We must seek a middle ground that fosters the success of both parties. People need to witness the origins of their food, stand by our small farms, and relish the land we all hold dear.

Remember, when people leave, they take their money, attention, and external support with them, endangering the thriving farming community that Skagit is known for.

68% of the Skagit public supports these events, to go against this majority would weaken the trust in our local government at a time when governments cannot afford to lose an ounce of trust.

Jacob McFarland

3836 Summersun St

Mount Vernon Wa 98273

**8. Jan Gordon <[janimals1@yahoo.com](mailto:janimals1@yahoo.com)>**

I don't have the # of the issue so I hope this goes to the right place.

i am concerned about the loss of venues and local incomes with the proposed limitation/changes to agritourism. This proposal is over the top restrictive and should not pass. this subject needs more time to sort out.

Due to weather we have a short season for outdoor events and farming takes place at the same time.

If there are bad actors causing problems there should be penalties in place, like fines, for disrupting farming. And for famers deliberately making weddings unbearable by spraying pesticides or manure. Hopefully people can be mature enough to work out schedules. perhaps the venues should have some security requirements to keep unruly guests from interfering.

I have heard complaints in non ag areas about late night noise, parking problems and public drunken urination on private property. I don't know if this happens on farmland as well but it is not ok and there should be routes to stop bad behavior. but not having agritourism is not the answer. Tho i dont attend such events generally i do enjoy driving by places like Maplewood. for their beauty.

I believe the proposal as it stands is harmful and a bad idea.

I am a homeowner in Skagit of 33 years.

Thank you

Jan Gordon

16544 Colony Rd

Bow

#### **9. Joseph Lisenby <[jlisenby@ejmjets.com](mailto:jlisenby@ejmjets.com)>**

I've lived in Skagit County since November of 2020. My residence lot in La Conner shares a land border with a family owned farm in Skagit County. Our town has enjoyed a robust return of visitors since the end of COVID and our tourists are the main source of commerce. Our locally owned and operated bed and breakfasts, and hotels rely heavily on tourism of visitors both local and distant. The use of Skagit Valley farms as venues for farm themed weddings and farm to table dinners is an important part of supporting our local Skagit County businesses from guest accommodations to catering and florists. Additionally, having visitors who attend these events stay in our local hotels and bed and breakfasts helps support all the other businesses the visitors frequent, including our local Skagit County restaurants and shops.

The venue rental of local farms for weddings and other events is really no different than the tourism produced as a function of the Tulip Festival, except that these farm venue events spread the season across many months rather than a two to three week period in the spring.

As a Skagit County resident and tax payer, I fully support the continued allowed use of farms for wedding and dinner/party venues. As the son of 3rd generation farmers, I know how hard it can be to keep a farm profitable and I fully support allowing county farms to be used as destination venues. It's a great way to share the beauty of our county with visitors while helping support our local economy.

Very Respectfully,

Joseph W. (Jay) Lisenby

711 Maple Avenue

La Conner, WA 98257

Cell 206-580-5094

**10. Judith Chilcote [judithchilcote@gmail.com](mailto:judithchilcote@gmail.com)**

Name : Judith Chilcote

Address : 22303 Little Mountain Rd

City : Mount Vernon

State : WA

Zip : 98274

email : [judithchilcote@gmail.com](mailto:judithchilcote@gmail.com)

PermitProposal :

Comments : I am writing about the proposed Agritourism Code changes. I oppose the changes that would outlaw celebratory venues. Small farmers are important to our future. Their incomes may be dependent on needing to bring in other income to support the farm.

I am hopeful the farmers of all types can come to compromises to meet each other's needs.

Judith C.

**11. Larry Hilliard <[lj\\_hilliard@juno.com](mailto:lj_hilliard@juno.com)>**

I fully support allowing agritourism in the Skagit Valley, to include weddings, AirBnBs, U-Pick, the annual October Farms Festival, produce stands, ice cream and pie stands such as Schuh's Farms and other commercially related activities. I would draw the line at large events such as concerts (but not Tulip Festival activities.)

Restricting agritourism will, in my opinion, have very damaging impacts on the local economy. This is not incompatible with my very strong stance against FCC's which is a completely different matter.

Thank you for considering my input.

Larry Hilliard

Maddox Creek



Mount Vernon

## 12. Nick Cecotti

August 16, 2023

Planning & Development Services

Comments on Proposed Agritourism Changes

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Skagit County Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the vote to save Skagit Farm Venues and hope you will read and consider my position on this matter.

Reflecting on the discussion during the recent meeting, I took it upon myself to review the specific venues mentioned. My findings regarding these locations are as follows:

The development and operation of these venues have not encroached upon our cherished farmland. Rather, they stand as testimony to the remarkable custodianship exercised by the owners of these Skagit Valley properties. These owners are exceptional stewards of their Skagit Valley land. They continue to make improvements to both the land and structures under their care. This, in turn, has served as an inspiration to fellow landowners and homeowners, prompting enhancements to their own properties.

The addition of farm venues has also contributed significantly to the economy here in the valley. Every event brings money (with an average of \$30,000 per event) into the Skagit Valley economy. When guests attend these events, they also experience the beauty of our Valley, inspiring them to return during other times of the year, further contributing to the prosperity of our beloved county.

Without the additional income from these events (weddings, funerals, family reunions, parties, meeting spaces, fundraisers, etc.) many of these barns would not be standing. These structures, which stand today as symbols of local history, owe their safeguarding to the income derived from these occasions. As taxes continue to rise at an extreme rate, many landowners have needed to find supplemental income to offset these costs. Event income has become vital to many local families and businesses. Maintaining historical buildings is expensive, and it is undeniable that these funds are pivotal in ensuring their continued existence for future generations.

This decision is not simply about venue owners and farmers battling for rights and land ownership but preserving the beauty and history of our valley for current and future generations, while maintaining critical income for local families and business owners.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Nick Cecotti

15195 State Route 536

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RECEIVED

AUG 17 2023

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

**13. Nancy Katapodis Lee <[Nancy@doublebarrelbbq.com](mailto:Nancy@doublebarrelbbq.com)>**

I am writing to you to express my concern over the proposed changes and how they will affect the hospitality industry. My husband and I own Double Barrel BBQ in Sedro-Woolley and we have catered hundreds of weddings in our 21 years in Skagit County, many of them at venues located on or adjacent to a farm. We value these venues tremendously as they not only highlight local farms but also educate folks about the farming in our valley.

I had not lived in or near a farming community before moving to Woolley from Houston. This city-slicker is thoroughly impressed by and grateful for the farms and venues in this lovely land. Whether catering at a large venue, shopping the local farmers' markets or simply purchasing eggs and flowers from neighborhood farm stands, I benefit from the surrounding agriculture.

Like everyone in the hospitality industry, I have suffered tremendously from the pandemic and the state and local governments' reactions and restrictions. The proposed changes to the agritourism code will further devastate our industry and will discourage small business owners. Most of the venues we work with for weddings are family-owned and family-run by hardworking folks who are your neighbors in the greater community. These families and their businesses are the lifeblood of the valley. Your proposal will do more harm than good to upstanding community members who have already suffered devastating and life-altering financial crisis. Your proposal will further limit and threaten this livelihood.

Your proposal will bring immense and far-reaching devastation to myriad small, local businesses way beyond the venues themselves. Your proposal will negatively impact the caterers, event planners, florists, bakers, DJs, bands/singers/musicians, hair stylists, makeup artists and tailors. Small businesses have huge impacts on the communities they serve and in fact are often more valuable than corporations. Small businesses punch above their weight and do a lot for their communities, such as:

Bring local people together

Build the local community's character

Help regional economies thrive

Contribute unique and diverse elements while sharing common values

Sponsor youth sports and support local foodbanks and charities

Increase city revenue from multiple streams

Create more self-sustaining communities

Build strong local relationships, both with customers and other small businesses

Innovate in ways specifically helpful to our community

Inject jobs and revenue locally

Foster financial stability, particularly in moderate-income areas like ours

Create more jobs that are impactful to our community

Reinvest money and resources into our local community

Your proposal makes it harder, if not impossible, for so many small businesses to survive. It's policies like yours that discourage businesses like mine from expanding in Washington. Please reconsider your proposal and let small businesses like mine continue to shine.

*Nancy Katapodis Lee, owner*

(713) 213-5145

<https://us01.z.antigena.com/l/UQPzocnio33JMfaH3VFFG8pgLmAM18Mso58yzahQ6ozBeo9qJNgW9mvt8LU2qmN~B5shzDwHBG4RWM4QfdwcOhNzM7sEw4ti73GSA4B9xSlo-o3R-dvUlpoAJTeHhQcXDV7sfVEnMZpwby1UMp>

**14. Norma Shainin <[nabys@mac.com](mailto:nabys@mac.com)>**

Hopefully, everyone is on board about keeping the Valley a beautiful place to live. (If not, we might as well just go ahead and let big businesses determine the quality of our lives.) Tourists come here to experience what they cannot in other places. And we locals enjoy what is on offer as well, picking our own produce or shopping at farm stands. If you destroy the agritourism, people will not come. So many other income-bringing businesses have flourished because of the influx of visitors. But, more importantly, you will force out those smaller farms that struggle to stay alive. These have been here for generations and we all know the family names. They rely on these activities to maintain their properties. What will encourage new generations to choose farming as a way to make a living?

If you must, set limits on the non-agricultural improvements that can be added to farmland. But don't squeeze out the smaller places that make the Valley the unique and beautiful place that it is. And don't bow down to the pressures of the big guys.

Respectfully,

Norma and Peter Shainin

13140 Josh Wilson Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**15. Robin Haglund <[robin@gardenmentors.com](mailto:robin@gardenmentors.com)>**

I am writing regarding Agritourism Proposed code changes. My name is Robin Haglund. My address is 11430 Walker Road, Mount Vernon, WA 98273.

I'm concerned about some of the wording in these proposals.

1. I actively shop farm stands in our community, and the wording of the proposal indicates that the public will not be able to access farm buildings by stating: "agricultural support buildings shall not be a place of human habitation or place or be a place used by the public; This permits use of farm buildings for farming. Other uses of buildings would not be permitted and may be permitted only through administrative special use permits." If the public cannot use ag support buildings, how is the public going to be able to access farm stands to shop legally?

2. I also attend events, farm dinners, art shows, and give classes on Skagit farms, and participate in other non-farm events that support our community but do not limit farming activities. Some of these farms may or may not be active. All of these locations have preserved the history and character of our farming community. In many cases they have restored old barns rather than tearing them down. And they have brought in tourism funds that help support our community and our small farmers. I'm concerned that farmland not being farmed (for any reason) may come into terrible dis-use if agritourism is made prohibitively restricted through this code change via statements such as "Any agritourism accessory use must be part of an active farming operation."

While I do agree that some may be making poor use of farm land for (say) parking more polluting cars on farmland, this code change needs more work before being put into place.

I appreciate your consideration of my input. And I hope you will revisit this set of changes to make it better for all in Skagit.

Sincerely,  
Robin Haglund

11430 Walker Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**16. Ron Hass**



August 8, 2023

Commissioner Ron Wesen  
Commissioner Lisa Janicki  
Commissioner Peter Browning

Dear Commissioners,

After reading the recent front-page article in the Seattle Times, I feel compelled to register my concern.

As a native Northwesterner and long time Skagit resident, I have great appreciation for the agricultural community and its importance to our identity and its contribution to our way of life.

But the GLARING REALITY is the agri industry is incapable of providing the necessary horsepower to generate an economy capable of meeting the basic needs of our county residents as a whole. With both automation and consolidation of small farms into large operations, the County must look beyond farming if it is sincere in its obligation to serve the needs of our entire community.

For generations Skagit County has allowed the farming community excessive influence on the political processes that influence the balance of our local economy. Changing that dynamic to recognize changes within the regional economy must be considered if we are ever going to move beyond the no growth mentality currently paralyzing our local job market.

This is the burden being offered our political leaders. Do we finally recognize the value of our location in the middle of the growing tech corridor between Seattle and Vancouver. Or do we hang on to the economy of the past and try to stave off the detrimental effects of automation and consolidation. Do we make changes to encourage job growth, or continue to let neighboring counties create jobs and opportunities at our expense.

Agriculture will always play heavily in the identity of our beautiful county. But the future well being of the families here will not be provided for by the agricultural industry alone. As our political leaders, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to lead Skagit County as it appropriately redirects the economy to diversify and better meet the needs of the families who hope to live here. The opportunity for growth is certainly obvious. With your collective leadership, great things can be accomplished on behalf of all of us who recognize that growth is essential to the survival of any local community.

Thank you for your service.

Respectfully,

Ron Hass

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Ron Hass".

9100 MARSHAL RD  
BOW, WA 98232

**17. Susan Hughes-Hayton <[hugheshayton@gmail.com](mailto:hugheshayton@gmail.com)>**

As someone who has been involved in a multi-generation centennial Skagit Valley farm for many years and has a daughter with a venue and another with a farmstand, it was both thrilling and shocking to attend the Agritourism Code Changes Public Hearing during the Skagit County Planning Commission Meeting on July 26th.

It was thrilling to be part of a crowd of over 200 people passionate about preserving farmland and making a life for themselves and their families working here in Skagit Valley.

It was shocking to read proposed code that threatens the livelihood of many of them - multigenerational neighbors and relatives, as well as 1<sup>st</sup> generation and returning community members involved in agriculture and agritourism.

The idea that event venues co-opt farm buildings and farmland was dispelled time and time again through testimony.

It was convincingly put forth that event venues and small farms play an essential role in promoting agriculture through the opportunities memorable events provide for interfacing with the public regarding the importance, rich history, and current challenges of farming.

As for concerns regarding “flies in the honey’ incidences between big ag and ag tourism, they’ve been far and few between, and in one instance, untrue. Every relationship involves some flies with the honey, better to work through a concern as a good neighbor, rather than work to close down your neighbor’s business.

And as for permitting. There was a very compelling incident involving several local multigenerational farmers that elected to pursue a project without getting the proper permits, so this feels a bit like the pot calling the kettle black.

It is time for new code; it’s an opportunity to create code that supports preservation of community as well as preservation of farmland. Agriculture and agritourism are mutually beneficial activities.

Commitment to our farmland *and* community is a legacy worth taking great care and sufficient time to consider.

Susan Hughes-Hayton

**18. VictorAndKayalyn HurtadoStewart <[victorandkayalyn@gmail.com](mailto:victorandkayalyn@gmail.com)>**

Our mailing address is

1087 Digby Rd, Mt Vernon, WA 98274

On Thu, Aug 10, 2023, 6:41 AM VictorAndKayalyn HurtadoStewart <[victorandkayalyn@gmail.com](mailto:victorandkayalyn@gmail.com)> wrote:

To Whom It May Concern:

As a long time Skagit County resident, parent, local educator, and lover of our Skagit agriculture and land, I am writing to urge you to continue allowing farm venue events.

I am not completely sure what tge reasoning is for trying to greatly reduce/outlaw the events on smaller Skagit farms, but I know that many local businesses and thus families benefit from such venue use.

Have there been studies showing grand negative effects on our economy or ecology? Have these studies been shared with the public in open forums?

I only became aware of the issue by reading an article written by King 5 news.

In the absence of any overwhelming scientific studies and data illustrating the negativity of small farm venue use, I urge the County to keep venue use for such events as weddings, memorials, fundraising events, etc as allowed.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Kayalyn Stewart and Victor Hurtado

Mount Vernon homeowners

**19. Brett Sandstrom <[xbrettiex@gmail.com](mailto:xbrettiex@gmail.com)>**

We have rare and beautiful lands here in our Skagit wonderland community, but being mostly rural, businesses of all kinds depend on tourism of all kinds to thrive. Agritourism is an important facet to this economy, especially for communities east of HWY 9, where a lot of economic security is based on agritourism. There are many, but to list a few, heart-held assets like Eagle Haven Winery, Cascadian Farms, and Big Lake Tree need our support. These farms also bring people into our community to stop and shop in our cities and towns. Tourism of all kinds is a great need for us in Skagit County and these new rules and guidelines are what is needed to help support and keep our community thriving. Thank you ~ Brett Sandström Sedro-Woolley

**20. Ron Extract <[ron@gardenpathwa.com](mailto:ron@gardenpathwa.com)>**

Hello, my name is Ron Extract. I'm a Skagit County resident and co-owner of Garden Path Fermentation, located at the Port of Skagit.

My partner, Amber Watts, and I settled in Skagit County in 2016 after doing a global search for potential sites for our business. We chose Skagit because we wanted to be closer to our ingredients, with the goal of making hyperlocal products, and the hope that we might one day be able to grow some of our ingredients ourselves and offer visitors a true seed-to-glass experience.

We were initially under contract to purchase Eagle Haven Winery, but during a pre-development meeting with County Planning, were told that we would not be allowed to operate the type of business that we'd envisioned, which included the future possibility of a very small farm-to-table restaurant, within the Ag-NRL zone. As a result, we ended up starting our business at the Port of Skagit, within the Light Industrial zone, which does not give us the opportunity to grow our own ingredients or offer visitors the type of immersive experience that

we'd hoped to create, but which we thought could be a good first step toward our longer-term vision.

In the meantime, we've worked closely with the County and other interested parties to try to make that long-term vision a possibility. We were given hope by the County's Agritourism Initiative and seeming commitment to finding paths forward for businesses like ours.

The current proposal not only fails to offer any semblance of such a path, it risks forcing existing businesses to cease operations and puts small farmers that are unable to survive on commercial agriculture alone at serious risk of losing their land and their livelihoods.

It's unclear how the Tulip Festival, which has long been a huge economic engine for the County, could even continue under the current proposal, unless special allowances were made, which would be highly discriminatory against small non-generational farmers and aspiring farmers who may not have had the opportunity for generational wealth.

The message that's been sent by the current proposal is that the Agritourism Initiative has been a huge waste of County resources and of everyone's time and that, contrary to the ongoing assurances we've received over the course of the last seven years, Skagit County does not, in fact, have any interest in supporting businesses like ours.

If that's truly the case, it would have been good to have known that seven years ago, before we built our business and invested our lives' savings here, but it isn't, if Skagit County does indeed want businesses like ours to be here, we would strongly encourage you to reject the current proposal, which makes that all but impossible, and to work with us to develop an alternative that leaves room for large farmers, small farmers, and agricultural businesses, alike.

Regards,

Ron Extract

**21. Scott Self <[scottaself@outlook.com](mailto:scottaself@outlook.com)>**

Scott Self

915 S. 19 ST

Mount Vernon, WA 98274

360-540-5613

**Regarding Proposed Rule Changes to Agri-Tourism Codes.**

To whom it may concern,

Greeting and thank you for hearing my opinion on this matter.



I believe the proposed code changes do far more harm than good. Instead of trying to restrict small farm venues from additional sources of income in the hopes that it will curb outside influence of large companies, I believe it will have the opposite effect. Instead of growing their business and ultimately making their own farming business stronger it will make it weaker and force some to close. What happens then? Will another farm buyout the property? Unlikely! Too many farms, with dilapidated buildings, rusting machinery and acres of land that sits idle have become the norm, because there are fewer and fewer generational family farms willing to take on the risk or the children are no longer interested in grueling life of a farmer for little financial reward. Let's change that! We've seen it in the dairy industry where the small farm with 75-100 milking cows can't compete and is taken over by the mega corporation with 400+ milk cows. The land was saved, but at what cost? To line the pockets of outside investors I'll bet.

To think this is helpful is shortsighted. I bet if Janicki Industries wanted to take bankrupt farm of 50 acres and convert it into an industrial complex then county officials would make every effort and exception to accommodate them. How would that protect farmland and agriculture? I've heard a few negatives about these venues, but very little in the way of backing up those stories or negatives with concrete facts. Anecdotal Stories, opinions and hearsay are not facts!

**Here are some positives to these venues from my point of view:**

Fosters a culture of community: Old friendships are renewed; new ones are formed. Neighbors are actually neighbors and not just the one next door. If we make it personal it's going to be relevant and if it is relevant it will be important to all involved. Friends and neighbors will look out for one another. The community as a whole will be proud to call Skagit County home and will do everything they can to protect it and help businesses and farmers there thrive.

Examples of absolute positives from these Agritourism Business

**Family Reunions** (I have been to one)

**Class Reunions** (SWHS Class of 1983 had it's 40<sup>th</sup> High School Reunion at Eagle Haven Winery and invited the Classes of 1980 through 1986. This was a smashing success and we raised over \$700 for the SWHS Alumni and Friends)

**Music Concerts:** Local and Northwest bands and recording artist performing for large paying crowds.

**Fund Raisers** in support of local organizations. Each time raising tens of thousands of dollars (with the owners of these agritourism business contributing out of pocket each time)

Toys for Tots

Boys and Girls Clubs

SWHS Alumni and Friends (This August)

Who knows what we can accomplish next.

**Weddings:** Locals and out of towners enjoying and getting exposed to Skagit County and all it has to offer.

**Funerals, Remembrances and Celebrations of life:** Connecting family and friends and remembering loved ones in a beautiful setting for hours instead of minutes. (more smiles and laughter than tears and sorrow)

**Markets:** Sharing the vegetables and fruits of one's labor

**Wine Making and bottling** (who would have thought that 40 years ago Skagit County would become famous for wines). These wineries aren't selling thousands of cases to a distributor and you won't find their wines in most stores. They make their money from tasting room sales, wine club members and especially events like these. The money goes to fund farming activities and reinvesting in the farm, not some corporation. No one is doing this to get rich, but rather to earn a living and promote Skagit County as a tourism destination, stop and to foster goodwill and community to Skagitonians.

Local **artists, craft makers and entrepreneurs** given a forum to promote and sell their goods

**Tax Revenue** for the City and County

Additional **Revenue** for locally owned and operated businesses

The Agritourism Business itself

Restaurants (Even most chain restaurants have a local or northwest owner through franchising)

Flower Shops & Photographers

Hair Stylists and Makeup Artist (private business with local ties)

Mom & Pop convenience stores (Franchise Owners)

Gas Stations (Franchise Owners)

Coffee Shops (most are locally owned and operated)

Clothing stores like Oliver & Hammer (I see their logo all over the state)

A great addition to other **Community** Events

Tulip Festival (Think if they were restricted to 12 events a year or tulips and daffodils could only be sold wholesale)

Berry Dairy Days (how fun would that be if you couldn't buy local berries at a roadside farm stand)

Loggerodeo

Anacortes Arts Festival

Festival of Family Farms

Any number of other Events and Festivals

Maybe it is time to think outside the box:

**Fewer Restrictions** that make it easier for smaller farms to compete (they won't be willing to give it up so easily)

Limit Indoor/Outdoor events during the months of April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> to no more than 30 Events and No event can Start before 10am and must end by 10pm each day. Not every event makes money, in fact some lose money, so having some flexibility will be important for the venue owners to learn, make improvements and recoup lost revenue. This will help limit the impact to other farms during the planting/growing/harvesting season.

Unlimited exclusively indoor events November 1 through March 31 (minimal impact to farming as a whole)

Require any new Farm/Venue business to obtain special permit and review every 3 Years. All existing Farm/Event Venues to be grandfathered in and review only every 6 years. Just to make sure they aren't getting too far out of scope.

Establish a review board to review new and existing Agritourism Businesses for approval with both Advocate and Non-Advocate members. Would also hear grievances and offer arbitration/mediation to resolve conflicts before litigation. All those impacted should have a voice.

A County Commissioner

Traditional Farm Owner or Owners

Agritourism Farm/Venue Owner or Owners

Non-Farm Business owners or executives

City Mayors

In Summary, please reconsider the proposal and really consider alternative solutions that meet the needs of all. Do we want to live in a world where fear dictates what we do? Do we continually want more restrictions or do we want everyone to do the right thing for the right reasons? I think with proper language and oversight we can both encourage the preservation of farmland and foster a strong community where we (Farmer and Non-Farmer) can get along in a community that is mutually beneficial and promotes Skagit County as a great place to live, work, raise a family, farm and visit as a tourist.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely, Scott Self

**22. Sunchea Phou** <[sunchea@yaywallet.com](mailto:sunchea@yaywallet.com)>

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to express my support for farm venues, like Willowbrook, Eagle Heaven Winery, wedding venues, farm stands, etc... These venues not only provide a charming escape for city dwellers

but also showcase the essence of the countryside. They attract tourists, bolster local businesses, and preserve the quaint atmosphere of small towns. Moreover, given the current economic challenges, especially for small enterprises, it is unnecessary for the government to exacerbate the situation further.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Sunchea Phou

206-852-8589

Address: 22723 Grip Rd Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**23. Judy Farr [JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM)**

Name : JUDY FARRAR

Address : 13033 SUNRISE DR

City : MOUNT VERNON

State : WA

Zip : 98273

email : [JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JUDY.FARRAR@GMAIL.COM)

PermitProposal : Proposed Agrotourism code changes

Comments : I am writing to state my opposition to code changes that would outlaw celebratory gatherings at farm venues. These events can be an important source of income for small farmers, who struggle in the face of corporate takeovers. I am in favor of doing what we can to encourage and support small farmers. They are an important part of the beauty and uniqueness of our valley.

**24. Mike Kmet**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Mike Kmet <kmet@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 8:39 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

\* Spam \*

#####

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#####

Hello,

I am against the proposed changes to Agritourism code. These changes will slowly strangle Skagit counties small farms, these farms through small are vital to the county. The concept of the large corporate farm is fairly new, traditionally farms have had multiple income sources to survive.

I have tried hard to see and find where the large corp. farms are being harmed by Agritourism. That they do not like them isn't a good enough reason, exactly what is their fear?

Agritourism contributes greatly to the local economy and surrounding quality of life.

Much was made in an article in The Seattle Times about wedding venues, including The Salt Box on Fir island. I drive by there several times a day, including when events are put on, it has never been a bother. Ever. This location refurbished an old barn, I understand the cost and time of doing this, I have been doing the same over the past 7 years on a 123 year old building. I'm sure it would of been easier to just replace it but they maintained it, not letting it fall to ruin and they didnt replace it with a metal shed.

Next to the Salt Box is a church, its on former farm land, by the thought process of the rule changes shouldn't the church fall under the same restrictions? Rhetorical question, no it shouldn't and these rules should be shelved.

I am a 20 year volunteer firefighter with Skagit District 12, I care deeply about this county and I have no affiliation with any Agritourism, I have been self employed since 1976 and know what it takes to make a business survive, I do consulting to firms just in this, these rule changes will choke off the small farm activities and their owners. These small farms hire local and pay living wages.

If there are concerns and issues, there are other avenues to address them and there are rules and codes in place, we do not need these sweeping changes. I live across the street from the Bay View Community Hall, it is an historic piece of our community, the only way it will survive is with community events, will these changes stifle those?

Thank you,

Mike Kmet  
12596 C St.  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

360-770-0663

Hello, I am in support of allowing food service on farms, wedding venues, temporary event spaces, etc. I feel we need to adjust with the times and diversify the economy in our county. We need to allow people to be entrepreneurs.

Skagit County is a weekend destination so we need to have activities for the tourists. i.e. Tulip Festival, Snow Goose Ice Cream, etc. If this passes will the wineries who have food and music have to close? Would the Tulip festival have to be cancelled? I think it is taking it too far to limit food service on farms, wedding venues, temporary event spaces, etc. It sounds like those who have venues need to communicate with the farmers and perhaps compensate them a bit if they have to delay doing something to their crop as the farmer may need to pay overtime to catch up. Also, some that have Venues do not need to use all the farmland that might be part of their property. This land might already be rented out to a farmer. Perhaps it can be rented at a reduced rate to compensate the farmer. Just trying to come up with ideas to help everyone coexist.

The farmers and the venues need to co exist so Skagit County can thrive.

Thank you,

Shannon Axthelm

17000 Dike Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

tel: 206-910-2915

**26. Jessie Anderson <[info@maplehurstweddings.com](mailto:info@maplehurstweddings.com)>**

Ms. Sarah Ruether

Long Range Planning Manager

Skagit County Planning and Dev. Services

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: Written Comment on Proposed Amendment to Skagit County Code 14.16.900(2)

Dear Ms. Ruether,

My name is Jessie Anderson, and I am a lifelong Skagit County resident and multigenerational farmer. Respectfully, from the perspective of its stated purpose—and SEPA—the proposed action noted above has not been insufficiently studied.

According to guidance from the Department of Ecology, a nonproject action must be considered just as closely as a project action:

SEPA review for nonproject actions requires agencies to consider the “big picture” by:

- Conducting comprehensive analysis
- Addressing cumulative impacts
- Considering possible alternatives
- Outlining successful mitigation measures

It is not apparent that any of this occurred before concluding that environmental impacts will be non-significant. Indeed, such a claim would be belied by the overwhelming public comment from various Skagit County citizens—many of whom spoke eloquently about how they would not be able to make ends meet to retain their family farms and continue soil-based agriculture absent a venue-related revenue stream. The net result of such a legislative divestment would be, as several explained, dilapidation, or wholesale closure, of smaller family farms. Secondly, there would be an undisputed loss of millions of dollars to the surrounding economy and tax base (much of which is women-owned), attendant to choking off agricultural venues.

While our family has no doubt that the County is proceeding with good intentions, these are significant changes that warrant further study. And under SEPA, they must be studied. It is not enough to defer consideration because this is a “non-project action,” especially when the proposed legislation will have such an immediate impact across the County, on so many. And because the new definitions will likely be dispositive of future projects, the failure to consider impacts now is tantamount to *never* considering those impacts. *See generally* <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/Guide-for-lead-agencies/Non-project-proposals> (last visited July 27, 2023) (“Nonproject reviews have become increasingly important because they provide the basis for future project decisions [and] expedite project analysis and decisions”). This analysis is too crucial to skirt.

The one safety valve we can see is clearer language confirming that existing venues in operation on agricultural lands are nonconforming uses, and thus not subject to the pending legislation. Uses of property, like mine, that exist prior to enactment of a zoning ordinance may be maintained after the effective date of the ordinance—so long as they are not “changed, altered or enlarged” thereafter. *See Rhod-A-Zalea & 35th, Inc. v. Snohomish County*, 136 Wash.2d 1, 16, 959 P.2d 1024 (1998); *Seven Hills, LLC v. Chelan Cnty.*, 198 Wash. 2d 371, 398, 495 P.3d 778 (2021). As it pertains to us, we have invested our whole livelihood and tens of thousands of dollars in our decade-old venue. It supports the soil-based agriculture, and vice-versa. Upending my family’s livelihood overnight, along with that of numerous others, would cause sweeping impacts on agriculture across the County. On the other hand, regulating prospective impacts of *would-be*venues, and preventing existing ones from *growing*, might have more limited impacts. *Compare King Cnty. v. Friends of Sammamish Valley*, 530 P.3d 1023 (Wash. Ct. App. 2023) (affirming SEPA determination based on nonconforming use as a limiting principle).

We therefore ask that the County, consistent with its responsibilities under SEPA, the GMA and as a responsible steward of government authority, reconsider its threshold determination—or alternatively, confirm that the proposed legislation will not impact existing uses.

I have submitted these written comments to [pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us) and to the Skagit County Planning Commissioners as well. Thank you for your consideration of our input.

Sincerely,

Jessie Anderson

Maplehurst Farm

18495 Dike Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

[info@maplehurstweddings.com](mailto:info@maplehurstweddings.com)

(360) 708-0718

**27. Terry Sapp**



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**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Terry Sapp <tfsapp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:55 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Topic: Agritourism  
Name: Terry Fender Sapp  
Mailing Address: 804 Ferry St, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

While I am a member of the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board, I am writing for myself and do not herein represent the AAB.

I support the proposal currently before the Planning Commission as presented by the Planning and Development Services Department.

**Essential Features**

1. The definition of agritourism would establish that commercial, non-agricultural uses of Ag-NRL lands for public gatherings and celebrations (tourism on ag land) be incidental and subordinate to actual farming on the site or by the owner/farmer. This notion is consistent with existing code which establishes that accessory uses connect to soil-based agriculture.
2. Buildings and facilities should be used in support of agriculture. This notion is present in existing code, as well.
3. Where non-agricultural activities and events do not satisfy the obvious uses as accessory to agriculture, a special use permit would be required, allowing for a further evaluation of a proposed activity and testing it against the code and policies of the county. Thus, parking, lighting, traffic, noise, water quality, sanitary services, food services and food safety, environmental conditions, public safety in buildings and on the grounds, and other conditions appropriate to public activity would be observed through a permit "contract" with the county.

I support these essential, common-sense features of the proposal that are intended to give agriculture primacy in the ag lands, in line with a long and treasured history embedded in existing code.

**Good Actors, Bad Actors, and Responsible Vendors**

Much has been said in oral public comments on this topic, mostly suggesting that current vendors of agritourism activities (wedding vendors, largely) are "responsible" and do not and would not violate common standards for neighborly behavior and rights to farm, in particular. Accepted. However, vendors do not control the actions of the public, even if the operator is on site. Further, general pledges of good citizenship do not control the choices of future or unnamed actors. Disputes over proper civic behavior likely involve parties each of which believes they are "good." Judicially, most accused persons claim innocence.

My wife and I operate a farm next to a property owner who decided to create a wedding venue in old farm buildings. While the vendors certainly believed they were "good actors," we did not, and neither did another neighbor who called the sheriff. All did not end well. Most certainly, the buildings could not have met codified standards for

public assembly, and parking and noise were a major neighborhood conflict. A regulatory framework must apply to such large public gatherings.

"Good actors" may be good in some observable ways but act badly in other ways. As an example, we attended a lovely in-barn celebration in this county where a dinner was served to a large gathering and alcoholic beverages were prominently available. On our way out of the event we observed young people spraying off used dinner service wares onto the ground with a garden hose. This could not be "responsible." A regulatory framework does apply to food handling, food safety, and alcoholic beverage services. Locating activities out in the countryside, and out of sight, does not exempt them from responsible choices. Not in town, not out of town. .

#### **Grandfathering**

It would alter the general understanding, if not legal meaning, of grandfathering to allow that something that is illegal could somehow be made legal by a tangential code change. Grandfathering is for uses, once legal, that become non-conforming through code changes that would otherwise make them illegal. Venues and non-agricultural activities that are not legal cannot be grandfathered into legitimacy. Such intentions require a direct, affirmative legislative action that creates new law for them or names them in a "carve-out" within the law, I believe.

#### **"Big A, little t" and Creep**

While the current policy discussion surrounding the proposal before the Planning Commission revolves around a primary set of identified activities -- weddings, concerts, restaurants -- because those activities and their associated economic product are existent and known, policy and code must consider other activities on the cusp or not now, or yet, in existence. The greater impact on the county and ag-zoned lands that a more lenient standard for non-agricultural, accessory uses will have involves those activities not foreseen or not in the discussion. Several types have recently come into visibility that create regulatory concern. It is important, also, to consider the kinds of activities that could take place where the current intention and value is in, say, weddings, but could become something far different when driven by economic benefit and where venues are available for rent.

Non-agricultural accessory activities will become an increasingly difficult realm to administer as the window is opened wider and pressure from the local population and a far larger and far-flung metropolitan tourist sector seeks entertainment in the precious ag lands. The possibilities are endless and all of them could likely be girded by an economic rationale, ironically, supporting ancillary income to a farmer. Agriculture may not be the most profitable use of low-lying, flat, accessible ag lands, but a wedding is not a carrot, nor is a Ferris wheel.

**28. Michael Hughes**

Skagit County Planning Commission

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

August 17, 2023

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Skagit County has made the tough decision to protect agricultural lands many times in its history. The adoption of the Growth Management Act and the following code adoption set strict rules on Agricultural Natural Resource Lands to protect soil-based production of food, seed, flowers, and other products that require the productive soils of our County. Over the years, there have been many attempts to place non-conforming uses in the agricultural areas, and the County has repeatedly chosen to protect agriculture. The only thing that keeps Skagit County different from the other now urban valleys of Western Washington is our firm belief and resolve to protect agricultural areas.

The proposal from the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board will help clarify existing code language and continue our long and strong history of protecting soil-based agricultural activities. Continuing to turn a blind eye to activities not allowed in the Ag-NRL will weaken the agricultural economy, and like nearly every other once productive area, lead to land conversion into an urban landscape.

I urge you, our Planning Commissioners, to continue their strong leadership in protecting soil-based agriculture. This leadership is recognized across the nation and has been emulated by counties nationally. Let's keep Skagit County a leader in Agricultural Protections and the envy of counties nationally who have already lost their agricultural economies.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Michael Hughes

Count	Last Name	First Name	Org. or City/Address	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Ferguson	James	417 2nd St Anacortes WA	Wants unlimited agrictourism so long as farming takes precedence and primary use	Email	8/16/2023

**1. Jamie Ferguson**

Conservation easement agreements in Skagit County should explicitly be created or amended to allow unlimited agritourism uses of conserved farmland so long as farming always takes precedence as the primary and unimpeded land use. The condition of many Skagit barns, farm outbuildings, farm access roads, and culverts is deteriorating rapidly. In contrast, farms that support agritourism uses such as Tulip Festival events, weddings, farm-to-table food experiences, public sector or nonprofit fund-raising events, all maintain the farmland, barns, etc., in superior condition with thriving businesses that enhance the agricultural sector of the County. Put simply, expanded agritourism enhances the preservation of farming land use and enhances the economic viability of farming, especially for smaller Skagit farms. For these reasons the Conservation Futures Advisory Board should create and amend farmland conservation easement agreements to explicitly allow an expanded array of agritourism land uses. Thank you.

Sincerely,

James Ferguson

417, 2nd St., Anacortes WA

Count	Last Name	First Name	Organization Or City/Addresses	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Smith	Jenn	S & B Farms, Inc 18154 W. Stackpole Rd Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Multiple Viewpoints/concerned about potential unintended consequences (field tour of Tulip Festival)	Email	7/27/2023
2	Bade	Michael	La Conner WA	Multiple Viewpoints/Wants to find compromise?	Email	8/15/2023
3	Railton	Scott	Mount Vernon WA	Multiple Viewpoints	Email	8/2/2023
4	Thornton	Chelsea	Skagit County	Multiple Viewpoints	Email	8/6/2023

**1. Jenn Smith <[jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Smith. My husband Brad and I own and operate S & B Farms, Northwest Lime Company and Skagit Valley’s Best Produce. I own and operate Fir Island FloralSmith. He has lived in the valley his entire life and I moved here after college in 2001. Please find my comments on the proposed agritourism code changes below:

Agriculture is what makes Skagit magic. Without farms we lose what makes Skagit unique. We also lose one of the counties largest employers, revenue creators and one of the last remaining food production centers in Western Washington. This is important because the majority of the states population is on this side of the Cascades. We need local food to feed the masses. My work with Skagit Counties Food Insecurity Work Group has been eye opening to the disconnect between Agency folks who work to solve food insecurity and local farms that produce food. We need to work together to close this gap and we cant do that without local farmers at the table. If the County works to support farms of varied size and type and to connect farms with the food distribution centers in the county we can make great strides in ending hunger in Skagit County. This cant happen if farms cant survive here.

Recently Ive heard “there is no code path” or “there isn’t a legal way to do what I want” The county code is this way by design. Event venues and large groups of people dont belong in the Ag-NRL zone. Zoning regulations are created with safety in mind. They are not arbitrary and serve an important purpose. There are good reasons why its illegal to operate an event venue in the ag zone. These businesses put unnecessary liability on the shoulders of neighboring farms and impede our ability to operate properly. In farming, timing is everything. While an event planner can have several backup plans for their event, should the weather not cooperate, we cannot. Our crops and livelihood are at the mercy of the weather, not their schedule. The County and neighborhood shouldn’t be held hostage because venue owners didnt do their homework before they invested in property or improvements or because they think they are above the law. Their neighbors did their research and chose to live and work in the AG-NRL zone because it is peaceful, it is beautiful, there isn’t much traffic and there are birds and wildlife to enjoy. This peace is stolen every time there is an event. For farmers its not just the peace, but peace of mind that’s stolen. If one event attendee wanders into my field and gets sick or creates a visible disturbance we have the potential to be in the midst of a food safety recall that could cost millions. Im sure no one would do that on purpose, but the potential is there every single time. The man hours, additional audits, and damage to customer relationships from a single recall can translate to total devastation. If one person wanders into my field and twists their ankle in the row and decides to sue me it could mean the end of my farm. The venue next to me might carry liability insurance that they think is above and beyond. Im positive that its barely a drop in the bucket of what would be needed to deal with a lawsuit or food safety event. Cultivation, irrigation, and pest control all happen on schedule. These schedules need to be flexible to account for weather events. They cant always be flexible to account for human events. This is why we farm in the AG-NRL. Thats what it was designed for.

Most farmers by nature are decent people and good neighbors. They do their best to get along and dont complain. Some venue operators either dont know or dont care about the sacrifice that occurs regularly on their behalf. Continued pressure to do more and bring more people out into the Ag zone has pushed farmers to the edge. **We cannot give any more.** We have to stand up for ourselves, our families, and our employees by demanding that Skagit County does better. Enforce the code you have until reasonable, effective new code can be drafted. Thank you for leaving the comment period open so that those of us who wish to find compromise can work together to draft new code that will protect agriculture by not shutting down every farmstand and you pick in the county and allow some venues to operate if they meet specific criteria for permits. The proposed code would shut down the field tour part of the Tulip Festival. I believe this to be an unintended consequence, but my legal advisor assures me that if challenged in a court of law the proposal would stop all public interface with farm operations. Skagit County should be encouraging and supporting all farm operations, large, small and everything in between. Im circling back around to food security. Farms need to be able to thrive here if we are going to ask them to help solve the hunger problem. Regulations from State and Federal agencies continue to increase. We need at least one regulatory body to have our back. Please let that be Skagit County.

I heard many comments during the Public comment meeting about "woman owned small business". As a woman who owns a small flower farm and floral event company, that I built and maintain on my own, I am offended by these comments. If you as female entrepreneur are not bright enough to figure out for yourself or seek business advice from a professional that good business needs diversity then you probably deserve to fail. Yes, its a hard lesson, but one we all must learn. Yes, I would lose business if the illegal venues all went out but my business is flexible and diversified. Hosting a pity party and pointing fingers at the County for personal poor choices is embarrassing to resilient, intelligent women everywhere.

Farmers settled this valley and made it what it is today. We all need to do our best to protect this vital resource that is our most valuable and irreplaceable asset.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Jennifer J. Smith  
S & B Farms, Inc  
18154 W. Stackpole Rd  
Mount Vernon, Wa 98273  
[jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.sbfarms@gmail.com)  
360\*941\*7503

**2. Michael Bade <[michaelb@michaelbade.com](mailto:michaelb@michaelbade.com)>**

I'm hoping a compromise can be reached to keep the smaller farms that rely on agro tourism to stay in business. Large farming is economical but we need diversity. As corporate farming buys up the smaller farms the emphasis can be on shareholder profits and not the local land, people and economy.

Thank you for your consideration of this difficult issue.

Michael Bade

Resident of La Conner

**3. Scott Railton <[scottrailton@gmail.com](mailto:scottrailton@gmail.com)>**

Dear Planning and Development Services:

I write to offer comment on the proposed agritoursim code changes.

My wife and I live in Mount Vernon, and a few years back, we were so happy that one of the kids and her fiancée opted to have their wedding in the valley, at one of the local farmland venues. It was a terrific location for them, as some of the guests lived in Whatcom County, others in King County, some were from out of state, and then there was us here in Skagit. We can confirm that the wedding benefited many in the local economy. We picked up the flowers from another farm, which were beautiful. The caterer was local. Some guests stayed nearby,

overnight. We rented linens locally. There was a DJ and music system, and I recall running out to get more champagne and other drinks. And of course, there was the cost of the venue itself. These purchases of services and goods kept our dollars here in the community, which I think is a good thing. On a more personal note, the wedding was a great memory for everyone—with no exaggeration, a favorite moment for us and the kids. And now there are grandchildren. When those grandkids visit, we sometimes like to take them out to the farmlands too, and maybe someday they'd like to have a wedding in the valley. We love the farmland, and make no mistake--we want the farmers to do well and keep being able to do what they do. It seems like some regulation and enforcement may be called for. However, it worries me to hear the proposed regulations may crush some of these venues and other agritourism uses - especially those smaller farm-venues that are just trying to get by. Too much regulation can do that. It seems like there ought to be a way for the venues and the farms to coexist, to benefit the greater community.

Sincerely,

Scott Railton

Mount Vernon, WA

**4. Chelsea Thornton <chelsea.thornton261@gmail.com>**

Good morning, I have lived in skagit county most of my life and I have worked here since I was 14.

This conversation and debate anout events and farms is understandable. I see both sides and I believe there can be a compromise.

What if farm land that is harvestable isnt touched and any land on the property that isn't harvestable can be used for weddings and events. This way all parties involved get what they need. The people who host events can still do that and make the money they need to survive and the farmers get what they need and the harvest able land is only used for harvesting.

I hope this helps.

Chelsea Thornton



## Attachment 10 – Comment not from Skagit County

Count	Last Name	First Name	Org. or City/ Address	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Sellick	Jenny	Queensland Australia	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
2	Snider	Sarah	Toronto Ohio	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
3	Backstrom	Bonnie	Bellingham WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
4	Richardson	Catherine	Gilbert Arizona	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
5	Pagendarm	Angela	Lynnwood WA	Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
6	Cordon	Peter	Kentucky	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
7	Cambell	Margaret	Seattle WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
8	Schuweiler	Rob and Ginny	Everett WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
9	Schuweiler	Ginny	Everett WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
10	Gillette	Leah	Everett WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
11	Coursen	Carolyn	Leachville AR	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
12	Schuweiler	Mary Beth	Everett WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
13	Atkins	Barbara	Bellingham WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
14	Bopp	Kayla	Bellingham WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
15	Anderson	Debbie	Bellingham WA	Opposed	Email	7/31/2023
16	Potter	Mary	Everett WA	Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
17	Hancock	Mary	Ferndale WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
18	Grap	Denie	Simi Valley CA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
19	Call	Lisa	Kirkland WA	Opposed	Email	8/2/2023
20	Weber	Lisa	Everson WA	Opposed	Email	7/28/2023
21	Teresa	Stephenson	Olympia WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
22	Hutton	Ivan	Mountlake Terrace WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
23	Shepard	Rachel	Puyallup WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023

Attachment 10 – Comment not from Skagit County

24	Robber	Rhobley	Redmond WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
25	Frankum	Sarah	Redmond WA	More Time	Email	7/31/2023
26	Wisman	Mary Ann	Standwood	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
27	Wyatt	Sherrye	Whidbey Island WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
28	Boston	Amanda	Bothell WA	Opposed	Email	7/31/2023
29	Birtley	Lori	Shoreline WA	Opposed	Email	7/28/2023
30	Coursen	Carolyn	out of state	Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
31	Kelly	Adele	Clallam Bay WA	More Time	Email	8/16/2023
32	Munholand	Keri	Spokane WA	More Time/Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
33	Hopkins	Adrian	Rose and Sparrow Floral Design 12306 5th PI W Everett, WA 98204	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/26/2023
34	Holdan	Tiffany	Director of Marketing Cohen Group NW Muljat Group	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/27/2023
35	Kalla	Pat	1425 Woods Point Loop Ferndale WA	More Time	Email	8/17/2023
36	Gerwick	Madeline	PO Box 160 Arlington Wa, 98223	Opposed	Email	8/16/2023

**1. Jenny Sellick**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Jenny Sellick <Moonbootgal@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 6:34 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Possible Spam: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Jenny Sellick

Queensland Australia.

## 2. Sarah Snider

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** dakota4cs@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 11:43 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sarah Snider  
10891 State Route 152  
Toronto, OH 43964

### 3. Bonnie Backstrom

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Bonnie Backstrom <graygullsyag@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 11:04 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

\* Spam \*

#####

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Willowbrook Manor

Thank you for your consideration  
Bonnie Backstrom  
4765 Spring Vista Way  
Bellingham WA 98226  
360.296.3281

### 4. Catherine Richardson

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Cathy Richardson <catherine.woodruff@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 12:28 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cathy Richardson <catherine.woodruff@gmail.com <mailto:catherine.woodruff@gmail.com> >  
Date: Wed, Aug 16, 2023 at 11:52 AM  
Subject: Comments on proposed agritourism changes  
To: <pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us <mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us> >

This is an addendum to my initial email to include mailing address.

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

My husband and I live in Arizona, but participated in an e-bike tour of the area last summer. It was hands down the highlight of our week-long stay! The solitude of the area was fantastic, and the scenery and weather was a welcome respite from the taxing desert summer heat. Terry Gifford of Willowbrook Manor was the most gracious host, and accommodated our schedule when we requested a tour on a day she doesn't normally conduct them. I know that she hosts many events at her farm, and she uses her platform in a variety of volunteer activities as well. It would be a shame for her -- and others like her in the area -- to be barred or limited in boosting tourism in the area.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Richardson

533 S. Honeysuckle Lane  
Gilbert, AZ 85296

**5. Angela Pagendarm**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Angela Pagendarm <angelatang20@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 5:03 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on Proposed Agritourism Changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

To Whom it May concern,

I am writing to you as a frequent visitor to Skagit County to say NO to the newly proposed code to reduce the number of events that farm venues can host by 50%.

I reside in Lynnwood, WA and at least once a month, if not more, I make the drive up to visit some of my favorite farm venues and farm locations. I bring a happy heart and open wallet, visiting all of my favorite Skagit County locations and spending money on people who make Skagit County what it is: an amazing, beautiful, and community-oriented haven.

One of my favorite places, Willowbrook Manor, is in danger of closing and being eliminated as a whole should this code be put into place. Willowbrook Manor is run by the most amazing individual I have ever met, and it -- along with Skagit Valley as a whole -- is a place where I can find brief sanctuary in the crazy world we live in.

Should this code be enforced, it would be detrimental to many businesses in the valley, resulting in a great loss of revenue to the county itself. Is it not more feasible and financially sustainable to have small steady sources of revenue roll into the county throughout the year, instead of one large revenue for a few months of the year?

Please do not act on a short-term impulse and ignore the long-term problem it can have for those in the Skagit County community, and those of us beyond the county lines who visit and want to see it thrive.

In addition, please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed so there could be a win-win situation for everyone, where the county as a whole thrives instead of the monopoly of a select few.

Thank you for your time and consideration, for this issue will impact generations in Skagit County for many many years to come.

Sincerely,  
Angie P  
3116 164th St SW APT 502  
Lynnwood, WA 98087

**6. Peter Cordon**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** petecordon@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 8:00 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

I live in Kentucky and my sister lives in Santa Barbara. One of my great joys when visiting is to attend the farm activities in your area. Limiting venue dates could mean my missing an opportunity to visit these sites as it would mean I would have to schedule my visits specifically around the limited dates that these venues would be open under the proposed plan. Being from Kentucky, the thoroughbred horse capital of the world, I appreciate the value of agritourism. I think it is important for people to learn about where their food comes from and how it is produced. Please reconsider this proposed change to your zoning laws.

Sincerely,

Peter Cordon

## 7. Margaret Cambell

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Margaret Campbell <marg.kcamp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 7:32 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Re: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

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Sorry! I did not include my name and address in the original email.

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 9:24 AM Margaret Campbell <marg.kcamp@gmail.com <mailto:marg.kcamp@gmail.com> > wrote:

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Margaret Campbell  
1409 10th Ave. W  
Seattle Wa 98119

**8. Rob and Ginny Schuweiler**



**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Robert Schuweiler <schuweiler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:31 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Re: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

Just saw you wanted our mailing address: 3309 97th Pl SE, Everett, WA 98208

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 12:18 PM Robert Schuweiler <schuweiler@gmail.com <mailto:schuweiler@gmail.com> > wrote:

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

We loved this place. It was very rural in feel. Not out of place with farms etc. Lots of fun riding the trail and it should be a source of taxable income from their tea and tea parties. Very nice buildings and grounds.

Rob and Ginny Schuweiler  
703-303-0234

--

Rob Schuweiler

## 9. Ginny Schuweiler

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Ginny Schuweiler <turtle4girl@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:34 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

I omitted my address from my previous commit email. It is:  
Ginny Schuweiler  
3309 97th Pl SE  
Everett, WA. 98208

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Ginny Schuweiler <turtle4girl@gmail.com <mailto:turtle4girl@gmail.com> >  
Date: Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 12:27 PM  
Subject: Comments on proposed agritourism changes  
To: <pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us <mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us> >

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Being at Willowbrook Manor was a unique and beautiful time. We are amazed at how natural and varied the offerings of food, tea and accommodations are. The electric bikes we rented there gave us a chance to try them out for the first time, and we loved them. There are numerous little "alcoves" on the property where you can be alone or with family. We love Willowbrook Manor!!

Earnestly,  
Ginny Schuweiler

**10. Leah Gillette**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Leah Gillette <leahgillette@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 3:12 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Re: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

Adding my name and mailing address to my comment below Leah Gillette  
1121 Grand Ave, Everett, WA 98201

---

From: Leah Gillette  
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 3:06 PM  
To: pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us <pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us>  
Subject: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

To whom it may concern:

My family and I had a lovely visit to Willowbrook Manor; it was like a fairy tale there. We had amazing tea, rode e-bikes through the countryside, and had a tour of the grounds and house with Terry. Our family that went ranged in age from 10-80 years old, male and female, and we all enjoyed it equally.

It was a time to enjoy and appreciate nature, good food, exercise, and fellowship. I truly couldn't have asked for a better experience, and I think of it often when I'm having a hard day. It was a blessing both physically and mentally.

If Terry had to close Willowbrook down due county code changes, it would be devastating not only for her, but for countless people who have enjoyed her warm hospitality in so many ways.

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**11. Carolyn Gillette**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Carolyn Coursen <carolyncoursen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:56 PM  
**To:** PDS comments

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

From: **Carolyn Coursen** <[carolyncoursen@gmail.com](mailto:carolyncoursen@gmail.com)>  
Date: Wed, Aug 16, 2023, 12:18 PM  
Subject: Comments on proposed agritourism changes  
To: <[pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)>

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

It would be a shame to see businesses like Willowbrook Tea Manor have to close. Please reconsider this code that would restrict events at such businesses. It is a big draw to the county and a great reputation for the community!

I am a former resident of Skagit county who enjoyed the Tea Manor several times personally and in groups. Now just recently having moved out of state we would love to come back and visit it again! Please do not enact this code that would cause it to have to close. It is a jewel of a place, and a great place for folks to see the beauty of the county!

Sincerely  
Carolyn Coursen  
5394 AR-18, Leachville, AR 72438

**12. Mary Beth Schuweiler**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Mary Beth Schuweiler <schuweilermarybeth@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:36 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Re: Willowbrook Manor

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Mary Beth Schuweiler  
3309 97th PI SE  
Everett, WA 98208

Kindly see below-

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 10:58 AM Mary Beth Schuweiler <[schuweilermarybeth@gmail.com](mailto:schuweilermarybeth@gmail.com)> wrote:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Mary Beth Schuweiler and last year I went to Willowbrook and while I was there I went on a wonderful bike ride and partook in their tea. This place is absolutely relaxing and I would hate to see places like this go away.

Considerately,  
Mary Beth Schuweiler

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**13. Barbara Atkins <[barb839@comcast.net](mailto:barb839@comcast.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

We have visited many farm/agriculture businesses in Skagit County and appreciate the opportunity to visit and purchase services and home grown goods from these hard working people. Why would you even consider limiting their services to the public who otherwise wouldn't have the large variety of family friendly and healthy services and goods to participate in. You are attacking your own citizens and targeting your own local businesses and family owned enterprises because why? It makes no sense and your tax revenue will greatly diminish from these restrictions unfairly imposed.

Barbara Atkins  
1200 Lincoln St. Unit 262  
Bellingham WA 98229  
Former Alpaca Rancher on Grandview Ave., Ferndale, WA for 13 years  
Whatcom county resident for 25 years

**14. Bopp, Kayla G. <[Kayla.Bopp@lwrtc.org](mailto:Kayla.Bopp@lwrtc.org)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

***Kayla Bopp***

***(she/her/hers)***

**Kitchen Supervisor**

3600 Meridian St., Bellingham, WA 98225

(office) 360.676.6000x202MWF/323TTH | Text- (360)595-7157

**15. Debbie Anderson <[debbievida@gmail.com](mailto:debbievida@gmail.com)>**

Aloha, Skagit County Commissioners,

Please don't cut event numbers so drastically that you put out of business local farm venues. Already the weather puts a damper on seasonal opportunities.

Skagit County is currently creating a new code that proposes to reduce the number of events that farm venues can host by 50%. These changes could go into effect as early as 2025.

I want to support Willowbrook Manor teahouse and farm and other venues.

Please feel free to forward as appropriate, or contact me for further signatures.

Mahalo,

Debbie Braithwaite Anderson

1074 Sunset Avenue

Bellingham, WA 98226

**16. Mary Potter <[marypotter27@yahoo.com](mailto:marypotter27@yahoo.com)>**

Perhaps the income provided by agritourism should be defined as "accessory to farming" since many small farms need income from some type of agritourism in order to keep farming the land. Proposed changes to Skagit County's agritourism code would restrict activities like weddings and events on ag-zoned lands. Those events can save the history of the farming community and bring it closer to the general public's attention. An extension would allow the Agritourism Stakeholder Group to finish developing a suite of win-win policy recommendations for our county commissioners to consider.

I am writing because I believe this is important to Skagit County. I visit frequently because my sister lives up there. I was born in Sedro Woolley and lived in Anacortes earlier in my life. I love visiting and the venues available are amazing.

Thank you,

Mary Potter

4966 Vesper Drive

Everett, WA 98203

[marypotter27@yahoo.com](mailto:marypotter27@yahoo.com)

425-303-0230

**17. Mary Hancock <[hancock.m@comcast.net](mailto:hancock.m@comcast.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

--

Mary P. Hancock

2562 Norway Rd

Ferndale, WA 98248

360-380-4126

**18. Denise Grap <[denisegrapp@yahoo.com](mailto:denisegrapp@yahoo.com)>**

To whom it may concern, my name is Denise Grap. I am concerned about the proposed change in county code regarding area zoned as agricultural/natural reserve which will impact Willowbrook Manor, a well respected and beloved agritourism business, in Skagit County.

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration,

Denise Grap5755 Cochran StreetSimi Valley, CA 93063

**19. Lisa Call <[lisacall@microsoft.com](mailto:lisacall@microsoft.com)>**

Resending with Address

To whom it may concern. I have been looking at property/farm/homes in Mount Vernon and was quite upset to see some of the new proposed code changes. I am an artist/photographer/teacher/flower gardener and hoped to start a small business in barn to host classes etc and want to ensure if I buy property that these restrictions are not in place. The latest changes make me seriously question the locations and opportunities and hope further consideration is given to allowing such functions as classes and events. I am not talking on a large scale that would impact farming but provide opportunities for people.

I often come to Mount Vernon and La Conner for events at places like Christensen's Nursery and support local businesses and would hate to see these events limited.

Sincerely,

**Lisa Call (looking to be a Mount Vernon Resident)**

10030 NE 110<sup>th</sup> ST

Kirkland, WA 98033

**20. Lisa Weber <[tiger\\_fan\\_161@yahoo.com](mailto:tiger_fan_161@yahoo.com)>**

To Whom It May Concern,

Please reconsider the strict codes that would limit Skagit farm venues, farm stands, and agritourism businesses.

My family and friends spend money every year attending and supporting these types of endeavors. We recommend and bring friends and tourists to attend these every year, as well.

Do not restrict this type of private and company businesses to decrease the numbers or types of this opportunity to spend money and stay in the Skagit area.

Sincerely,

Lisa Weber



114 Aspen Dr.  
Everson, Wa 98247

**21. Teresa Stephenson <[stephenson.teresa@gmail.com](mailto:stephenson.teresa@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Teresa Stephenson  
Olympia,WA

**22. Ivan Hutton <[ivanhutton71@gmail.com](mailto:ivanhutton71@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Ivan L Hutton, PhD  
(Retired Associate Dean,  
School of Education, Seattle University)  
4217 216th Street SW  
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043  
[ivanhutton71@gmail.com](mailto:ivanhutton71@gmail.com)  
425 673 0799

**23. Rachel Shepard <[rachelshepard29@gmail.com](mailto:rachelshepard29@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Willowbrook Manor is at risk with the different purposed changes. Willowbrook Manor is a beautiful, peaceful place that I have been blessed to experience. Proposed changes will make it so less people will be able to experience the beauty and tranquility of your amazing area and community. And will force the close and possible sale of this farm! Terry, owner and caretaker, is an amazing asset to your community. If she is forced to close and sell, your community would absolutely feel the loss of her enthusiasm for the community.

Also at risk are the tulip fields! Please continue to allow those of us who live in different counties be able to visit your community in beautiful, meaningful ways.

My families visits to the Skagit county, Tulip Valley Farms, Willowbrook Manor, Tulip Town, and many visits to the towns in your community, has taught my children about agriculture. Please do not make that harder for us.

Please reconsider your proposed changes, and do not let them hurt your community.

Thank you,

Rachel Shepard

253-448-0296

6904 162nd Street Ct E

Puyallup, WA 98375

**24. Rhobley Roberr <[rhobleyrhobley@outlook.com](mailto:rhobleyrhobley@outlook.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Rhobley Roberr

Redmond, WA

**25. Sarah Frankum <[sfrankum@verizon.net](mailto:sfrankum@verizon.net)>**

Hello,

I am a long time visitor to Skagit County. I have friends who live here and so I come at all times of the year. I have been delighted with the many new offerings such as tea at Willowbrook Manor, wine and beer tastings, and farm-to-table dinners. I love stopping at the many fruit stands along the way. All of these events add to the charm of the magic Skagit valley. I was very surprised to hear that codes were being proposed to limit events. These codes would directly

affect the livelihood of many people as well as greatly reduce the appeal of coming to the valley.

I understand there may have been some bad actors who have caused problems. Any changes to code should be made to address these problems and not to shut down events and subsequently the businesses who depend upon them. Before any changes are made that affect so many people directly, a county vote of all of the residents should be held as part of standard democratic process. This is too big a decision for county council to make on their own. Let the people speak.

I am happy to discuss.

Thank you,

Sarah Frankum

8814 218<sup>th</sup> Ave NE

Redmond, WA 98053

425-269-9935

**26. Mary Ann Wisman JAY WISMAN <[jaymar@wavecable.com](mailto:jaymar@wavecable.com)>**

MY complete address is: Mary Ann Wisman, 19113 98th Avenue NW, Stanwood, WA 98292

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

I live in Snohomish County but spend a majority of my time and money in Skagit County. Farms, whether crops or livestock, provide much to many citizens and businesses. Restaurants who support those farms serve some of the best meals around and people drive miles to dine there. Farms, such as Willowbrook, and others, who hold gatherings on their grounds, are drawing tourists and locals to their properties. Some hold weddings and other events, some of which are fund raisers for entities within the County. Agritourism is important to the entire country. Now that China is buying up so much of the land nation-wide, it is more important than ever that WE LOCALS encourage and support OUR FARMERS. Limiting the farmers on what they can do on their land may force some to sell - and guess who the buyers will be? I see no logical reason whatsoever to place a burden on the farmers. Please give serious thought to this subject. In fact, it is my personal opinion that the PUBLIC should not only be allowed to express their opinions on this, but that no action should be taken by any facet of government without a VOTE BY THE PUBLIC. I don't live in Skagit, so likely could not vote. But this subject affects a LOT more people than just those that do live in Skagit. Thank you. Mary Ann Wisman

**27. Sherrye Wyatt [sherrye@whidbey.com](mailto:sherrye@whidbey.com)**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

Your decisions have a much wider impact than just the Skagit Valley, as other counties all across the state and throughout the country are watching. Many communities also seek to find a balance and secure a holistic, regenerative solution that supports all small business owners and property owners in order to celebrate, share and protect our sense of place. We want to grow the things that matter most, but never at the detriment to others. We need more time to have a larger conversation.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County, and beyond, for years to come.

Sherrye Wyatt

Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands

**28. Mandi Boston [<mandiboston15@gmail.com>](mailto:mandiboston15@gmail.com)**

Hi! I grew up in Skagit Valley and plan on moving back to raise my kids there. My family lives in Skagit Valley and it has been our home for generations.

For many years farmers have struggled to make a living in Skagit County. Agritourism connects not only those who live in Skagit County but also visitors to valuable farmland. I'm so many ways it is the heart of our community and culture. Agritourism bolsters the economy, promotes restoration of farm buildings that would otherwise fall apart, raises awareness about our connection to farmland and brings community together. I am looking forward to sharing my culture with my children as they grow. Please reject the proposed agritourism code changes and protect the culture of Skagit County.

Amanda Boston

703 184th St SW, Bothell, WA 98012

(I grew up at 816 Quinnat St Burlington WA 98233 and intend to move back to the Burlington/Bow area. I am a Skagit Valley native)

**29. Lori Birtley [<loribi@exchange.microsoft.com>](mailto:loribi@exchange.microsoft.com)**

I have such fond memories of high tea at Willowbrook Manor. Changing the regulations that would drastically impact this business would be so detrimental. It is a jewel of Skagit county.

Lori Birtley

Shoreline, WA

**30. Carolyn Coursen <[carolyncoursen@gmail.com](mailto:carolyncoursen@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

It would be a shame to see businesses like Willowbrook Tea Manor have to close. Please consider not enacting the code that would restrict events at such businesses. It is a big draw to the county and a great reputation for the community!

Sincerely

a former resident of Skagit county who enjoyed the Tea Manor several times personally and in groups. And living out of state now would love to come back and visit it again! Please do not enact this code that would cause it to close.

Carolyn Coursen

**31. Adele Kelly <[adelekelly@hotmail.com](mailto:adelekelly@hotmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Small businesses bring in lots of money. My husband and I have been lucky enough to attend one of Willowbrook Manor's teas. While there, we spent money in your area we wouldn't have spent otherwise.

Sincerely,

Adele Kelly

PO Box 581

Clallam Bay, Wa 98326

**32. Keri Munholand**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Keri Munholand <mklipstx@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 6:46 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

To Whom It Concerns:

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. PLEASE allow more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

It's incredulous that the County would create regressive regulations on small and ag business owners, especially after the last few years. So many businesses barely survived the shutdowns and it looks like you are piling on.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,  
Keri Munholand  
Small Business Owner  
Surge Coffee Co (Spokane)

**33. Adrian Hayden Hopkins <[adrian@roseandsparrowfloral.com](mailto:adrian@roseandsparrowfloral.com)>**

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Adrian Hopkins and I am the Owner and Lead Designer at [Rose and Sparrow Floral Design](https://www.roseandsparrowfloral.com). I am a home studio floral designer currently based in South Everett, servicing weddings and events statewide and beyond. I have resided in WA state for 11 years, living in Snoqualmie, Bellingham, Cle Elum and Everett, as I pursued a professional mountain bike race career and worked for Transition Bikes, an internationally well-known local Whatcom county company. I started my floral design business 5 yrs ago in Snoqualmie, after retiring from my race career and leaving the bike industry, and immediately moved to Cle Elum where I could afford a larger rental unit with more studio space to work & live out of, with the dream of buying a home I could afford to purchase in Washington State. (I was born in Tulsa, OK, raised near Boston, Massachusetts, and finished High School north of San Francisco, so after traveling abroad and continuing to move around and explore, I landed in WA state at 30 yrs of age and have grown a large community here, as well as a deep appreciation for the state's diverse micro climates, landscapes, flora & fauna.) My business has grown substantially by word of mouth, and I became a preferred vendor for Suncadia Resort and the Cattle Barn in Cle Elum, Brightside Vintage Farm in Ellensburg, and Stonehouse 101 in Roslyn. I've done work at different venues all over the westside including Santucci Farms in Mt Vernon, Trinity Tree Farm in Issaquah,

Tacoma Yacht Club, Salty's/SODO Park/Block 41 in Seattle, & Wellspring Spa near Mt Rainier. I recently married my husband who owns his condo in Everett and I had been trying to transfer my business primarily to the westside. We were looking at moving up to Skagit County to be closer to some of my favorite venues like Saltbox Barn, Christianson's Nursery and Santucci Farm, but with so many other florists in the greater Seattle area and a 'dip' in the wedding industry after last year's Covid wedding 'boom', my business has suffered severely moving in to such a saturated market and metropolitan area. Kittitas County venues want to support local vendors understandably, so when I left the eastside of the state my business slowed down from 64 events last year to 6 this year. I joined the Snohomish Wedding Guild and have met wonderful folks, but word of mouth doesn't move quickly enough here for us to be able to afford to stay. We decided to make the move together, instead of north to Skagit County, back east to buy a home in Upper Kittitas County, where it's more affordable for us to live comfortably, he has good job opportunities, and I know I'll have a thriving business to return to. That being said, I still desire to grow my business statewide to be able to showcase my art in multiple locales.

I specialize in long lasting outdoor event florals in all climates, and love using local and seasonal ingredients in my designs to compliment the event location. I love the diversity of this state, and traveling to different venues to decorate for life's biggest moments. I appreciate so much the beauty and abundance of Skagit lands. I purchase flowers per event through my three biggest Seattle wholesalers, including [Seattle Wholesale Growers Market](#), a "farmer-owned cooperative committed to providing the best the Pacific Northwest has to offer in cut flowers, foliage and plants". This includes some of my favorite growers such as [Jello Mold Farm](#) and [Choice Bulb Farms](#) in Mt Vernon. I generally purchase these fresh products weekly for all my events, spending upwards of \$300-400 per purchase. Many other floral designers shop here as well, to support local growers and feature seasonal local blooms in their designs. This is the elitist bunch of artists, if I may say so...the most creative and the most talented in my opinion, including also much of their own product they grow at home. I cut from my garden also, or hand forage on open spaces for a little extra foliage to create an aesthetic 'as though it grew there'. Limiting weddings and events at Skagit farms would not only hurt my own small woman-owned business, but hundreds of other floral designers who buy or grow flowers from Skagit lands to decorate Skagit farms and show off the 'bounty of the land.' If inviting the public onto the land to enjoy all it has to offer in a respectable and environmentally conscious way, allowing others to see first hand how rich, unique, special and deserving of preservation our farmlands are, and this is not considered Agri-tourism, I don't know what is.

I believe the definition of Agri-tourism in Skagit County needs to be revised & updated pertaining specifically to 'hospitality'. In this sense, inviting the public to visit the farm and celebrate a couple's union or a passing of a loved one in a beautiful, serene, open landscape, or to enjoy a farm to table reception or event showcasing local produce and meats, or to sip a glass of wine made from grapes directly harvested on the farm, must all be taken into consideration. The majority of Skagit farms are not large 'event centers', in fact, my favorite and most popular venues are only able to accommodate smaller groups of normally 60 guests or less, often micro-weddings. I see no conflict with a farm being able to continue normal daily farming activities while offering their space for rent for a wedding, event, or gathering. I

especially cannot fathom how a farm stand to use for direct sales to the public could in any way be negligent in terms of operation. Perhaps more time and effort would need to go into an initial reparation or restoration of a historical barn or outhouse building that could be made of use again, but for the most part these events are often hands off for the owners, where individual small businesses step in to take over for the 'heavy lifting'. We have Wedding & Event Planners/Stylists/Day of Coordinators (like [Evergreen Wedding Planning](#)), Caterers (often local businesses such as [The Skagit Table](#) in Mt Vernon), Floral Designers & farmers (like [Grailly Bird](#) in Anacortes, [Kylie Hale Designs](#) in her Mt Vernon home studio,.. the list goes on and on!!), Hair and Make up Artists (like [Golden West Salon](#) in Bow or [Anne Timss Makeup & Hair](#) in Everett), photographers (like one of my best friends Devin at [Backcountry Bohemians](#), a mom of two based in Bellingham as well as a wife and entrepreneur, capturing all the beauty of Skagit and sharing images world wide to help promote tourism), not to mention DJ's, sign makers & calligraphy/graphic artists creating invitations, rental companies like [Wander Event Rentals](#) in Bellingham offering furniture and decor to create intimate outdoor and indoor spaces for guests to enjoy, and more! These small businesses are often women-run, and they are their livelihoods. I am 43 and have only recently married and am looking to start a family. I have hustled to grow my business, have worked long & grueling hours alone, and have made a living doing what I love in a place I love. I may not even have been able to afford to stay living in WA State if it weren't for this business & community support. I often hire seasonal freelancers to assist with any larger events. I am a respected and appreciated business in the Kittitas community (and I am anywhere I go!) and I want your board of directors to understand how much your decision making not only affects your local community but has an enormous statewide impact as well. Indirectly I am bringing money back to my community too, and we all benefit. Many vendors do travel statewide for events, and the industry is employing thousands of small businesses. The wedding industry brings in so much money into Skagit County, it may be the only viable option for small farms, especially 1st generation farmers, to be able to afford to remain growing in Skagit. I want to see farmlands healthy, abundant and thriving. I want to look ahead to the future of who will be taking over farming. We've lost so much youth to farming today because of its hard labor and lack of sustainable income, especially when climate change is having such a devastating effect on seasonal weather and growing patterns and storms/drought/fire/floods are all increasing. Diversifying income is the only way I could imagine anyone could afford to live as a farmer in Skagit County. Cost of living is going up too fast, and I do not see how the next generations will be able to stay living here in a place where big tech companies and foreign investments are taking over. I personally watched Snoqualmie get clear cut, wildlife displaced so quickly, and huge housing developments swallow up the ridge in a 10 year time period, and am seeing it now in Kittitas County as well. Cost of living and property value is rising exponentially, and especially younger people are being pushed out of the state. We won't have anyone to take over our farmlands or continue practicing if we don't allow some leverage here. Just because there are codes that have been in effect since the early 90's (or whatever I heard at the community meeting I attended on July 25th) doesn't mean they shouldn't be changed and updated to reflect our current economic situation. It is tiresome to hear people preach about venues 'breaking laws' when clearly they weren't that important in the first place or they would have been enforced more diligently. I do not see any negative environmental impacts in terms of waste management or traffic conflicts. Most Skagit farmland



owners apparently didn't even know about these restrictive codes until now. Why not look at revising these to be more INCLUSIVE rather than EXCLUSIVE? I understand the need to keep working farmlands or they will die. I understand that this is a rich, unique microclimate in Skagit Valley that we may lose forever if we don't continue good land stewardship and active farming practices. But I believe most of the people these codes are even pertaining to already do a good job of working their lands, upkeeping historical structures, and finding creative ways to use and share their landscape. Those who are not should be fined. If healthy soil levels are not maintained for example, we could be enforcing better farming practice, not prohibiting additional activity. This seems completely non productive to me to put more restriction into place. Besides, people will pay good money to go to open spaces, especially this close to Seattle. This city is overpopulating and more open spaces are disappearing, so they're more valuable. Let's not lose sight of that. I believe we can preserve AND celebrate farmlands AND help communities statewide to thrive economically.



Adrian Hayden Hoffman

Owner, Lead Designer / 415-652-0346

[roseandsparrowfloral.com](http://roseandsparrowfloral.com)

Adrian Hayden Hopkins

12306 5th Pl W

Everett, WA 98204

**34. Tiffany Holden <[tiffany@cohengroupnw.com](mailto:tiffany@cohengroupnw.com)>**

To Skagit County leaders,

As someone who's been to weddings on properties in Skagit, and attended the most magical holiday tea at Willowbrook Manor, who roams acres of dahlias when a farm opens up for agritourism, and has been to a concert in the middle of a flower field, I strongly oppose changing the land usage code restricting these varied types of events at farm venues.

Skagit County is iconic not only in our region but state and nationwide as a cradle for agriculture and our connection to the land and the people that provide us with food and flowers. Restricting events at farms further inhibits the already-tenuous relationship many of us in modern society have with the agricultural world. Instead, ***continuing to activate these spaces for community use through weddings and other events is a way to honor our region's agricultural heritage, steward the land, and support local farmers who keep working to***

*provide us with hearty, delicious, locally-sourced food in an ever-more-difficult commercial landscape.*

Sincerely,  
Tiffany Holden

**35. Pat Kella**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Pat Kalla <patkalla@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:18 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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#####  
Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.  
Thank you.  
Pat Kalla  
1425 Woods Point Loop  
Ferndale, WA 98248

**36. Madeline Gerwick**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Madeline Gerwick <mgb@polarisbusinessguides.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 6:19 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** FW: Comments on Proposed Agritourism Changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

You are endangering some of our favorite agri-tourism businesses with your proposal. We would like to see this NOT adopted, and more time and consideration put into this, so that a fair resolution for whatever danger you perceive can be achieved, and these farms can still remain in business. This proposal is **not helpful** to the community you are theoretically protecting, but not actually accomplishing.

Madeline Gerwick  
PO Box 160  
Arlington WA 98223

Madeline Gerwick  
Polaris Business Guides, LLC  
Toll Free: **877-524-8300**  
International: **360-474-1149**  
[polarisbusinessguides.com](http://polarisbusinessguides.com)  
[mgb@polarisbusinessguides.com](mailto:mgb@polarisbusinessguides.com)



## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

Count	Last Name	First Name	Org. OR City/Address	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Puetz	Ashley		Opposed	Email	7/24/2023
2	Lanker	Jenny		Opposed	Email	7/25/2023
3	Bhullar	Amanda		Opposed	Email	7/26/2023
4	Liddil	Samantha		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
5	Chin	Andrea		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
6	Lobdell	Ariel		Opposed	Email	7/29/2023
7	Green	April		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
8	R	Lori		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
9	Conner	Debbie		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
10	Youngquist	Laurie		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
11	Kelling	Camille		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
12	Goodenough	Deborah		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
13	Wayne	Wayne		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
14	Moore	Melody		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
15	Campbell	Margaret		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
16	Maloney	Kate		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
17	Brownell	Rebecca		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
18	Arnesen	Brenna		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
19	Iuliano	Samantha		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
20	Adair	Elizabeth		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
21	Schuweiler	Robert		More Time	Email	08/17/2023
22	Schuweiler	Ginny		More Time	Emial	08/17/2023
23	Warthan	Kevin		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
24	Berry	Gayle		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
25	Piro	Valerie		More Time	Email	8/17/2023

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

26	Crane	Leslie		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
27	Day	Charlene		Opposed	Email	8/17/2023
28	Malone	Michael		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
29	Leighton	Elaine and John		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
30	Glenn	Lisa		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
31	<a href="mailto:loeslotze@gmail.com">loeslotze@gmail.com</a>			More Time	Email	8/16/2023
32	Shackley	Janet		More Time/Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
33	Hunt	Gayle		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
34	Fleming	Krista		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
35	Cross	Dawn		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
36	Pedulla	Kathleen		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
37		Sandra		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
38		Diane and Buzz		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
39	Olin	Carissa		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
40	Borchardt	CeCe		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
41	Sager	Adam		Support	Email	7/21/2023
42	Xaver	Andrea		Farm Stands/Ambiguous	Email/Word Doc	7/27/2023
43	Chabolt	Angela		Opposed	Email	7/28/2023
44	Ford	Angie	Pasco WA	Opposed	Email	7/27/2023
45	Janicki	Anna		Opposed	Email	8/11/2023
46	Puetz	Ashley		Opposed	Email	7/24/2023
47	Atkins	Barbara		Opposed	Email	7/29/2023
48	Cheyney	Barbara		Opposed	Email	7/22/2023

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

49	Weide	Barbara		Opposed	Email	8/10/2023
50	Hedahl	BJ		Support/Ambiguous	Email	7/27/2023
51	Johnson	Bonnie		Opposed/Ambiguous	Email	8/9/2023
52	Owen	Brianna		Opposed	Email	8/2/2023
53	Brown	Cara		Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
54	Bourasaw	Courtney		Opposed	Email	7/25/2023
55	Russo	Craig		Opposed	Email	8/10/2023
56	Williamson	Dianne		Opposed	Email	8/1/2023
57	Shepard	Rachel		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
58	Powell	Genora		Opposed	Email	7/18/2023
59	Derosier	Irene		Opposed	Email	8/3/2023
60	Koester	Jake and Gennie		Opposed	Email	7/25/2023
61	Shackley	Janet		Opposed	Email	7/28/2023
62	Mulac	Jeffrey		Opposed	Email	7/28/2023
63	Jenny	Larker		Opposed	Email	8/2/2023
64	Johnson	Joanna		Opposed	Email	8/10/2023
65	Schmidt	John and Evlyn		Opposed	Email	8/13/2023
66	Reed	Jordan		Opposed	Email	7/29/2023
67	Gamino	Kerry		Support	Email	8/10/2023
68	Daly	Kathleen		Opposed	Email	8/3/2023
69	Reyes	Laura		Opposed	Email	7/25/2023
70	Hovenden	Lindsay		Opposed	Email	8/9/2023
71	Jones	Mary and Giff		Opposed	Email	7/31/2023
72	Scott	Mary		Opposed/Ambiguous	Email	7/29/2023
73	Molly	DeCroes		Opposed	Email	8/10/2023

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

74	Monica	Corum		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
75	Winblad	Debra		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
76	A	Nick		Opposed	Email	8/3/2023
77	Vela	Nicole		Opposed	Email	8/2/2023
78	Hamlett	Gayle		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
79	Kalla	Pat		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
80	Erickson	Paul		Opposed	Email	7/30/2023
81	Wilson	Rebecca		Opposed	Email	8/9/2023
82	Novak	Sigrid		Opposed	Email	8/9/2023
83	Collicott	Susan		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
84	Voss	Karen		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
85	Hershaw	Ty		Opposed	Email	8/11/2023
86	Strong	Christy		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
87	Salamanca	Zherina		Opposed	Email	8/23/2023
88	Ward	Heather		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
89	Sybrandy	Michelle		Opposed	Email	7/25/2023
90	Gawron	G		More Time	Email	8/23/2023
91	Scott	Dan and Kristen		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
92	Edgley	David and Jane		Opposed	Email	7/24/2023
93	Hutton	Ivan		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
94	LaBounty	Debbie		Opposed	Email	8/16/2023
95	Reinshc	Diane		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
96	Hull	Eric		Opposed	Email	7/27/2023
97	Ward	Jean		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
98	D'Amico	Jenna		More Time	Email	08/16/2023
99	Lavine	Ruth		More Time	Email	08/16/2023

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

100		Linda		More Time	Email	08/16/2023
101	Nicole	Kaup		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
102		Jacqueline		Farm Stands	Email	8/16/2023
103	Nims	Kate		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
104	Clancy	Lisa		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
105	Aalhus	Andrea		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
106	Grap	Denise		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
107	Stone	Marilyn		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
108	Haddock	Maureen		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
109	Hancock	Mary		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
110	Lynch	Margaret		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
111	Cartwright	Adam		More Time	Email	08/16/2023
112	<a href="mailto:ftomidge@comcast.net">ftomidge@comcast.net</a>			More Time	Email	8/16/2023
113	Gardner	Pat		Ambigious	Email	7/23/2023
114	Potter	Mary		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
115		Ricardo		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
116	Orestad	Sharon		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
117	Hooepr	Stephanie		Opposed	Email	7/27/2023
118	Betz	Bob	Not provided	Opposed	Email	8/11/2023
119	Ferguson	Jamie	Not provided	Opposed/Focused on economic impact	Email	7/22/2023
120	Gillette	Leah		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
121	Williams	Roy and Valerie		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
122	Jenks	Pamela		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
123	Vance	Rene		More Time	Email	8/17/2023



## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

124	Davis	Marilyn		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
125	Top	David		Ambigious	Email	8/17/2023
126	Shuler	Nora		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
127	Stucks	Linda		More Time	Email	8/18/2023
128	Bishop	Sarah		Opposed	Email	8/17/2023
129	Croke	Breanna		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
130	Schamel	Gwen		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
131	Scott	Angela		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
132		Elizabeth		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
133	Schultz	Helen		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
134	Goure	Mary		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
135	Tonnesen	Christine		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
136	Fisher	Marni		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
137	Ferreria	Debbie		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
138	Sue Holly	Donna		More Time	Email	8/16/2023
139	Heuterman	Karl		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
140	Terrill	Candi		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
141	Copeland	Cynthia		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
142	Lawton	Lorissa		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
143	Bowers	Brian		Opposed	Email	8/17/2023
144	jt_remy	<a href="mailto:jt_remy@yahoo.com">jt_remy@yahoo.com</a>		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
145	Allen	Gail		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
146	Soliz	Stephanie		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
147	Bomham	Charline		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
148	Biemann	Alexander		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
149	Spandl	Eric		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
150	Lindholm	Kristi		More Time	Email	8/17/2023

151	VanZanden	Lucy		More Time	Email	8/17/2023
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**1. Ashley Puetz <AshleyPuetzPhotography@outlook.com>**

Hello all,

Thank you for taking the time to hear this message as a concerned WA state resident and previous Skagit County resident. I loved my time living in Skagit County and hope to return some day. While there I made life long friends- many of whom own small businesses. I have seen first hand how their businesses have increased with increased weddings locally. To limit the number of weddings allowed per year is concerning. It will have a huge impact on small businesses- potentially even pushing some out of businesses allowing larger farms and businesses to take over. This is anti- small business. This is anti- women own businesses seeing as how many of the businesses we are discussing are women-owned. This is economically an important decision for the whole county and if passed would be a horrendous turn in the wrong direction negatively impacting small businesses and the county as a whole.

Please do not make these amendments. It is anti-small business, anti-women owned business, and economically concerning its even being considered.

Thank you,

Ashley Puetz

**2. Jenny Lanker <jennylanker@gmail.com>**

To whom it may concern, I have been a patron of Willowbrook manor since it opened. The ability of their farm and others to provide unique cottage industries represent the entrepreneurial spirit our nation is known for. As the farm grew, so did the size of the community and with it came the need to provide entertainment and services. If you meet a farmer, you'll find a hard-working, reliable, problem-solving owner, ready to help support families and their community while cherishing their God-given right to turn a profit using the land they purchased for their needs. Your consideration to limit their potential is overstepping and shouldn't be the American way. Thank you for your reconsideration at the sake of our dear service-oriented farmers, Jenny Lanker 360-708-4298

**3. Amanda Bhullar <amandabhullar@gmail.com>**

Hello,

I am writing to express concern regarding a new code proposing to reduce the number of events a farm venue can host by 50%. I am a frequent visitor of Willowbrook Manor, which

Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

brings in much tourism for the Skagit Valley. It would be a shame and injustice if this code is passed. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

Thanks!

--

Amanda Bhullar, BSN, RN

(916) 705-0431

Certifications: BLS, ACLS, PALS, ENPC, TNCC, NIHSS

**4. Samantha Jane <[justsamanthajane@gmail.com](mailto:justsamanthajane@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Please consider that most people are not fortunate enough to have beautiful properties to enjoy. Most people don't get to spend time on farms and it would be devastating to lose those opportunities. For all of us stuck in apartments and small dwellings outside of farm land, these events allow us to reconnect with our surroundings and appreciate what our state has to offer. Not to mention the financial devastation it would cause to these businesses that we want to see thriving.

Sincerely,

Samantha Liddil

**5. Andrea Chin <[seamonstersknit@gmail.com](mailto:seamonstersknit@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Andrea Chin

**6. Ariel Lobdell <[ariel.lobdell@gmail.com](mailto:ariel.lobdell@gmail.com)>**

Hello!

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

I just wanted to drop my two cents that I truly believe that dragging down farm venues' events by 50% across the board would be a shame! We need farmers and we need farms and we need them to thrive, as long as their businesses don't distress the environment. I heard about it through Willowbrook - the fact that it will shut down a smaller operation like hers completely would be such a shame for the area. She provides truly enriching experiences for her customers - we traveled to her from Tacoma and still talk about our lovely time there. Her bike tour instilled more respect and appreciation for the history of the area as well.

Thanks for listening!

Ariel Lobdell

### 7. April Green

---

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** April Green <april Dawn rauch@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 12:51 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

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Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to read and care.

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Willowbrook Manor is a positive for the community and the land that is there.

Thank you for your time.

### 8. Lorie R.

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

### **Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Lori R <lraines78@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 1:32 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

## 9. Debbie Conner

### **Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Debbie Conner <debbieincl@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 2:17 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

## 10. Laurie Youngquist

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

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**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** lyoungquist@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 2:58 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. This would allow for the possibility of saving a much loved place of business. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Laurie Youngquist

## 11. Camille Kelling

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**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Camille kelling <cam24242@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 3:07 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Possible Spam: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Camille Kelling

## 12. Deborah Goodenough

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Deborah Goodenough <dgoodenuf@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 3:36 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

\* Spam \*

#####  
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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**13. Wayne**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** wayne <skutumpah2@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:52 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

\* Spam \*

#####  
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#####  
Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**14. Melody Moore**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Melody Moore <mmoorett@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 5:40 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

## 15. Margaret Cambell

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Margaret Campbell <marg.kcamp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 6:25 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

## 16. Kate Maloney



**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Kate Maloney <kathleenam@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 8:14 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

Spam

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I live in King County, but frequently travel to Skagit County where many of my friends, both farmers and agri-business farmers live. These proposed changes will deeply affect the lives of the agri-business farmers. Please don't put good people out of business, who went into their businesses legally!  
Kathleen A Maloney

**17. Rebecca Brownell**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** rebecca brownell <rmbrownell@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:48 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you,

Rebecca Brownell

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone Get Outlook for Android <<https://aka.ms/AAb9ysg>>

**18. Brenna Arnesen**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Brenna Arnesen <allthatjazz54@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:59 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Thank you,  
Brenna Arnesen

**19. Samantha Iuliano**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Samantha Iuliano <jadevalleyfarm@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:23 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

Spam

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Hi there. To whom it may concern:

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. Farmers and farmland make up a huge portion of our beautiful valley. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Samantha Iuliano  
Owner and operator,  
In Tended Fields

**20. Elizabeth Adair**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Elizabeth Adair <elizabeth.adair91@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 11:54 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Sent from my iPhone

**21. Robert Schuweiler**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Robert Schuweiler <schuweiler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:18 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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We loved this place. It was very rural in feel. Not out of place with farms etc. Lots of fun riding the trail and it should be a source of taxable income from their tea and tea parties. Very nice buildings and grounds.

Rob and Ginny Schuweiler  
703-303-0234

## 22. Ginny Schuweiler

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Ginny Schuweiler <turtle4girl@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:27 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Being at Willowbrook Manor was a unique and beautiful time. We are amazed at how natural and varied the offerings of food, tea and accommodations are. The electric bikes we rented there gave us a chance to try them out for the first time, and we loved them. There are numerous little "alcoves" on the property where you can be alone or with family. We love Willowbrook Manor!!

Earnestly,  
Ginny Schuweiler

## 23. Kevin Warthan

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Kevin Warthan <dkswar777@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 1:20 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Kevin Warthan

**24. Gayle Berry**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** gabber2@verizon.net  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 1:37 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Sincerely,  
Gayle Berry

**25. Valerie Piro**

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

### **Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Valerie Piro <pyro2ex@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 5:14 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Sincerely

Valerie Piro

## 26. Leslie Crane

---

### **Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Leslie Irene <2madcranes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 8:48 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Leslie Crane



## 27. Charlene Day

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Charlene Day <charday99@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:12 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

Spam

CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

We are writing to appeal to the Commissioners as residents of Skagit County, since 2009 when we settled here after 17 years living

abroad mostly in Eastern Europe and visiting Western Europe. In those countries agritourism is part of the rural scene. Since settling into a very congenial community it's been clear that one of the economic strengths of this county is providing opportunities to 'small farmers' and those who attract visitors educating about the amazing products and beauty of this fertile countryside. In Europe this is a common mindset to allow farm-to-table experiences and we've been hopeful this approach to agri-economic tourism would flourish here as well. In fact we recall the study we all participated in where the majority of responders agreed that agritourism contributes positively to tourism in our county.

In a quote from KIRO 7 tonight about the proposed changes, we agree completely with Peter Browning who stated: "Its pretty Draconian," said Browning.  
"It really is an absolute and it'll be somewhere in the middle."

Let's hope that you all can reach common ground with this topic and realize it is to our benefit to encourage and promote small farmers and those who offer creative ways to bring agricultural products and showcase the charm of old barns that would otherwise be left to disrepair.

Finally, we should support the entrepreneurial, younger generation wishing to enjoy the fine quality of life we are so privileged with here in Skagit County so that they may actualize their economic visions in order to raise their families here as well.

Thank you for considering our appeal.

Sincerely,

Charlene Day & Chuck Howell

## 28. Michael Malone

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Michael Malone <revmalone777@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:08 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Don't destroy good businesses by making poor decisions.

Rev. Michael W. Malone

## 29. Elaine and John Leighton

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** elaine leighton <lainieml@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:48 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Elaine and John Leighton

30. Lisa Glenn

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Lisa Glenn <lisashine@live.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:59 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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31. Loeslotze@gmail.com

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** loeslotze@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:03 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Possible Spam: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

\* Spam \*

#####  
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#####  
Skagit County,  
please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

32. Janet Shackley

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Janet Shackley <teatimegrandmas@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:04 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Please, fight for Willowbrook Manor to stay in Business! We love visiting this farm several times a year! This is a Family Tradition every December! This year we loved out Tulip Teaparty. This Business brings a lot of people to Skagit County! Support your Businesses and keep Skagit County flourishing!! Thank you!

### 33. Gayle Hunt

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Gayle Hunt <gmh507@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:06 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Please consider this simple task of extending the public engagement period which might have a gigantic impact on people's lives.

Thank you so much!!  
Gayle

**34. Krista Fleming**

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

### **Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Krista Fleming <kmoscarello@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:10 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Possible Spam: Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Krista Fleming

## 35. Dawn Cross

### **Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Dawn Cross <giraffesdvc@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:13 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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## 36. Kathleen Pedulla

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** K. Pedulla <ranchgirlbdr@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 10:30 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important!  
Kathleen Pedulla

37. Sandra

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Sandra <sandy009@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 11:15 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

Dear Skagit County Planning Commission

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County, including international stakeholders/agritourists.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sent from Mail <<https://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=550986>> for Windows

**38. Diane and Buzz**



**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Diane and Buzz <dlbrsb@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 11:22 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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These venues provide employment opportunities for many family members of our agricultural workers and for young people still going to school. They bring additional tax dollars for maintenance of infrastructure and introduce visitors to the wonderful locally grown products found here. Not every year has perfect weather and bumper crops so having other sources of income provides a cushion for the too wet, too dry and other too, too issues that farmers face. These business have been flourishing for years and should not be suddenly shut down. A reasonable accommodation needs to be reached and anyone holding or attending an event in farm country needs to expect farm noises, dust and smells.

The pendulum is being pushed to far and hard in a wrong direction.

**39. Carissa Olin**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Cari Olin <carissawahlgren@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 11:47 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Carissa Olin

**40. CeCe Borchardt <[cceborchardt@yahoo.com](mailto:cceborchardt@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

CeCe Borchardt

**41. Adam Sager <[adamsager77@gmail.com](mailto:adamsager77@gmail.com)>**

I read the article in the Skagit Valley Herald today and wanted to express my support for the current proposal. I am glad that agritourism is being defined as a business that is directly related to the working farm happening at the location and is subordinate to the farming operations happening there. Agritourism should be a secondary source of income for farmers, not their main or only source of income because then they aren't farmers. That makes sense to me. Also, if a venue just happens to be on a farm and is built specifically for other activities (like weddings) it makes sense that that isn't agritourism. These venues should NOT be able to exempt themselves from following stricter rules and laws simply by saying they operate on land that is farmed. I support the efforts to more strictly define the meaning of agritourism and encourage the county to pass the new rules.

Thank you for your time.

**42. Andrea Xaver**

To: Skagit County

July 27, 2023

From: Andrea Xaver

Re: Agritourism

This is a difficult situation given the Growth Management Act, various codes, lack of enforcement, assorted descriptions, permits, etc.

- However, let's not forget that Skagit County farms help to feed this nation and other parts of the world.

- Since 1940, this county has lost almost half of its precious farmland (whether considered "prime" or not) to others uses, such as development, re-zoning, and sometimes unproven fish habitat.

- In the 1980s, Mount Vernon wanted to take in all around Big Lake, including the farmland to the south of the lake. (Locals stopped that attempt.)

- Also, the development known as Nookachamp Hills used to be called Walking M Ranch, which comprised around 2,500 acres – after development, it is now down to around 250 acres.

- Skagit and U.S. farmland is constantly threatened and chipped away by all manner of things.

Plus, drought, fires, heavy rains, floods, other natural disasters, governmental interference (here and abroad), wars, fluctuating markets, or vanishing customers/broken contracts can greatly harm farmers/farming, along with the supportive infrastructure.

- An endeavor to establish a 280-acre theme park on farmland. (This attempt stopped by SPF.)

I never really thought about Agritourism – as I've mentioned along the way. I just felt that the current farm stands, Christianson's, Eagle Haven Winery, Roozengarde, and some others we presently have, helped the farms, their families, and the community. I still think supporting this is how it should be, if they are responsible and don't interfere with other farms.

Weddings, music, or other non-ag venues can be different. But, I feel that extremism with code language is not an answer - such as not allowing any venues for events, or any farm stands. However, we should ask, how many are necessary? We need a balance that does not interfere with farms trying to keep their land and helping the food supply.

It still boils down to "The Devil's in the Details" - for existing or permitting planned sites - such as:

What is it

Where is it

How big is it

What are the potential negative consequences, such as:

More traffic, more pollution, more noise, more lights at night, interference with farm neighbors

trying to feed us and the world, loss of farmland (even in bits and pieces), increased insurance,

possible need for guards for protection/interference/trespassing, adverse effects on wildlife.

It's good to have visitors here to see what farming looks like, to help the local economy, and possibly get educated in some acceptable manner. More education in schools, and regular information for various media might help inform non-farmers what agriculture means and how important it is.

Meanwhile.....

Any venues/sites **adversely** interfering with farming/farmland here should not be allowed.

**43. Angela Chabot <akchabot@gmail.com>**

To whom this may concern:

I am opposed to Skagit County's proposed new code that would reduce the number of events that farm venues can host by 50%. These changes could go into effect as early as 2025. If so, the Willowbrook Manor teahouse and farm stay, and others like it, would have to close. That would deprive them of an economic livelihood and take away benefits to the community.

Appreciating farms and farmland is essential to Skagit County.

Angela Chabot

**44. Chris and Angie Ford <rangerford@live.com>**

To whom it may concern,

In learning of the possibility that Skagit County is considering limiting the number of events that can be held by farm venues, I felt to make my voice heard. It would be counter productive of the county to do so, as it would reduce the number of visitors to the area thus reducing sales tax income. It would also be detrimental because many of the small businesses would be forced to close, due to lack of sufficient revenue. If the County really had the economy and residents of Skagit County at the forefront of priorities, they would not consider reducing the number of allowed events to be held by 50 percent, it would be wise and ethical to not enact the proposed regulation.

Angie Ford

Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

Pasco Washington

Former resident of Skagit County.

**45. Anna Janicki <[anna.marie.stanczyk@gmail.com](mailto:anna.marie.stanczyk@gmail.com)>**

Hi there,

As part of the proposed changes, I do not support reducing the number of special events allowed per year. I do not think we should reduce/shut down/add limitations to existing venues including wedding venues.

Thanks,

Anna

--

Anna Janicki

(720) 979-7362

**46. Ashley Puetz <[AshleyPuetzPhotography@outlook.com](mailto:AshleyPuetzPhotography@outlook.com)>**

Hello all,

Thank you for taking the time to hear this message as a concerned WA state resident and previous Skagit County resident. I loved my time living in Skagit County and hope to return some day. While there I made life long friends- many of whom own small businesses. I have seen first hand how their businesses have increased with increased weddings locally. To limit the number of weddings allowed per year is concerning. It will have a huge impact on small businesses- potentially even pushing some out of businesses allowing larger farms and businesses to take over. This is anti- small business. This is anti- women own businesses seeing as how many of the businesses we are discussing are women-owned. This is economically an important decision for the whole county and if passed would be a horrendous turn in the wrong direction negatively impacting small businesses and the county as a whole.

Please do not make these amendments. It is anti-small business, anti-women owned business, and economically concerning its even being considered.

Thank you,

Ashley Puetz

**47. Barbara Atkins <[barb839@comcast.net](mailto:barb839@comcast.net)>**

Why on earth would you put a limit on Skagit county farmers public events when their income is dependent on bringing their goods and services to the public? We have enjoyed many events that wouldn't otherwise be available that have enriched our lives and the farmers who provided them such as the Willow Brook Tea House, the tulip farms, the alpaca ranches, the many wineries, and the many farm stands selling fresh produce, fresh eggs, flowers etc.

For me and my family it would sour our taste to visit the many places we have enjoyed in the past and seek other locations to spend our hard earned money for products we seldom see where we live now. It is a terrible idea and would considerably downgrade the esteem that is now held for the whole of Skagit County and the many places we love to visit.

Barbara Atkins

**48. Barbara Cheyney <[bjcncbl@comcast.net](mailto:bjcncbl@comcast.net)>**

I am asking Skagit County to NOT close public comment on Agritourism on 7/27/2023 so a counter proposal involving the "tourist" part of "Agritourism" can have a seat at the table/ have their voices heard. The proposal was only made public on 7/6/23 and the public would like a longer comment period.

I strongly oppose the proposed amendments to the Skagit County Code.

Barbara Cheyney

**49. Barbara Weide <[weides4him@yahoo.com](mailto:weides4him@yahoo.com)>**

Hello Commissioners,

This proposed ordinance needs to be voted down. To lower the limit of gatherings will not only hurt the financial being of the small farms that use this to supplement their farming income but also the community businesses that are used for these gatherings in turn would hinder Skagit Counties tax revenue. Do you really think that is a good idea?

I believe it would also in the long run cause our farmlands to be sold to developers that will cover our farmlands with concrete. It's sickening looking out at our beautiful county seeing the farmlands disappearing because farmers are having to sell because they can no longer sustain the business. Stop this insanity and allow farmers to supplement their income with the celebratory gatherings to keep our farmlands intacted.

Sincerely,

Barbara Weide

**50. Bj Hedahl <[bjhedahl@hotmail.com](mailto:bjhedahl@hotmail.com)>**

Please keep Skagit Valley/County for AGRICULTURE ONLY.

Thank you

**51. Bonnie Johnson <[rhodiesrus@gmail.com](mailto:rhodiesrus@gmail.com)>**

Hi,

It's a struggle for smaller farms to exist. I feel that the people who own these farms who host gatherings is a legal and ethical use of their land. We are promised the right to assemble and if we are a free people we should be able to use our property as a gathering should not be infringed.

--

*Bonnie*

**52. Brianna Owen <[briannaowen22@gmail.com](mailto:briannaowen22@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

Here is my public comment on the proposed code change.

We are new property owners, and with our current situation, this new code would be heartbreaking. We are a family with 6 little kids, and 30 acres of agricultural farmland, and just trying to figure it all out. We have so many hopes, dreams, and goals. We still don't know the "big" plan, but every dream we have, includes people being here. Loving our farm, enjoying the fruits of our labor, and making it a beautiful place for people to visit. Our farm dreams are not just for us, but for others to benefit from all we do. One dream being small chapel for weddings, or a small market building we want to build for our farm stand and selling items we make. Everything we farm and do, we want it to be reaching others. And make farming beautiful. This new code is crushing dreams, when dreams are just beginning. And I hope for ALL of us who would be effected, that they realize the small business they are breaking. 😞

When they talk about farmers or protecting farm land, when we bought this property, we chose to keep it farmland, not even knowing the plan, never farming, being brand new to this all. We could have chose to put it residential, it can be 5- 1acre building lots. But we didn't. We are taking the risk to farm. Brand new 1st generational farms. And with a little help from supplement income, we can buy nicer equipment, fencing, figure out what grows best on our land... we have already had so much trial and error. It's a hard road to farm. So if they want to protect farmland, and push this new code so strictly. We might as well go back to residential land. And lose a bit more Skagit farmland. It's all so confusing and sad.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

**53. Cara Brown <[2cqbro@gmail.com](mailto:2cqbro@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agrotourism in Skagit County.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**54. Courtney Bourasaw <[contact@theskagitable.com](mailto:contact@theskagitable.com)>**

Hello,

My name is Courtney Bourasaw. I own The Skagit Table. I have owned my business for 8 years but recently opened my own brick and mortar in downtown Mount Vernon. We offer many food related services but all of them, at some point, use local produce, meats and other products in our food.

When I started my business, I was a student at Skagit Valley College. I grew up in LA and had never experienced or heard of “farm to table”. But I received my passion for small farmers and using what was in season, while I attended college. I don’t know that I would’ve had any interest in farming had I attended school anywhere else.

I love having access to produce the way that we do here. I love the small guys, the ones who have just started but have this beautiful dream. Every time I see a new one on social media, I do my best to reach out to them and see how I can best support them. Because I know how hard it is to start up, they Dream of making it, providing for their families, raising their kids, whatever they desire to do, on their own land, that they bought, that they work on, that they pay taxes on, that is theirs.

I visit every farm I buy produce from. I hear their stories, their love for providing food and making it. I also see how incredibly hard it is to farm and then am blown away at how little they charge for this produce. Lots of them want food to be affordable for everyone. And break their backs bringing their customers food that has value. But that alone it is not enough to financially support anyone in this economy. Times have changed and so needs to these rules.

I get “rules are rules”. And I do know most of us want to do this the right way and get permitted so their livelihoods are not at risk. But it needs to be obtainable. It needs to be worth it. The current proposal would hardly allow venues to cover their costs. Unless you’ve worked in the wedding industry, you don’t know the incredible amount of work it takes to maintain a property. And I’d say the same for farming. They are both extremely hard jobs.

Both they both care about agriculture. And so there needs to be a happy medium. Shutting down venues, or even limiting them as proposed, would impact this new adventure I’m on. It would trickle all the way down to my employees and my kids.

Thank you,



--

Ayvree Wegner  
Office Manager  
(907)320-6081

**55. Craig Russo <[crusso511@gmail.com](mailto:crusso511@gmail.com)>**

I think local government is over stepping its bounds when they tell small farms they can't have weddings or limit farm to table events. It has absolutely no bearing on saving farms from development. Anyone can see that. There's too much government interference in our lives as it is not to mention these events are good for the economy.

Sent from my iPad

**56. Dianne Williamson <[Dwilliamson\\_3@hotmail.com](mailto:Dwilliamson_3@hotmail.com)>**

Hello,

I attended the meeting that was held on July 25 and would like to send in my thoughts on the subject.

Richard Smith, who was a well-respected and honorable farmer in Skagit Valley, was my father. When his grandson and wife (Jeffrey and Jessie Anderson) bought my parent's home and discussed turning it into an event venue, my dad was THRILLED! The shop that hadn't been used by the farm in decades would be taken care of and not fall into disrepair. People would be able to come to the location that my parents had worked so hard to make beautiful. What was ESPECIALLY rewarding was that no farmland would be used to make this possible. The house lawn, the driveway, and the barn are all used at Maplehurst Farm. The parking is where an old house used to be and is no longer a buildable lot. My dad could envision this project and as a much beloved farmer in the valley, fully supported them.

I now own farmland next to Maplehurst. Jeffrey and Jessie have always worked with the farmers who use the land and I have never heard of a complaint. They are good stewards of what they own. Farmland is precious to Jeffrey and Jessie (Hayton) since both are from LONG TIME Skagit Valley farming families.

It seems that a lot of people are under the misconception that these locations are taking up farmland for the venues, but that is just not true. It was interesting to hear from such a wide variety of people that have a vested interest in the code changes. It impacts so many different people in multiple ways.

I hope that moving forward the committee will be able to review and really listen to the various points of view on Agritourism.

Thank you for your time,

Dianne L. Williamson

**57. Rachel Shepard <[rachelshpard29@gmail.com](mailto:rachelshpard29@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Willowbrook Manor is at risk with the different purposed changes. Willowbrook Manor is a beautiful, peaceful place that I have been blessed to experience. Proposed changes will make it so less people will be able to experience the beauty and tranquility of your amazing area and community. And will force the close and possible sale of this farm! Terry, owner and caretaker, is an amazing asset to your community. If she is forced to close and sell, your community would absolutely feel the loss of her enthusiasm for the community.

Please reconsider your proposed changes, and do not let them hurt your community.

Thank you,

Rachel Shepard

253-448-0296

**58. Genora Powell <[gigiwp@comcast.net](mailto:gigiwp@comcast.net)>**

> Please for goodness sake don't take the precious, beautiful and relaxing farm venues away.

> Who is the jealous villain of such?

> My gracious all these venues do in Skagit County is add quality and calm to our lives, which I say is a high priority!

> Please stop the Villains now and leave be.

> Genora W. Powell

> [gigiwp@comcast.net](mailto:gigiwp@comcast.net)

> I enjoy many of these events and so happy to have found an additional one for tea, just like the days of old my grandma told me about in upstate New York where she had her Antique store throughout her home on there family farm.

Sent from my iPhone

**59. Irene Derosier <[iween@me.com](mailto:iween@me.com)>**

Greetings,

This effort to restrict agritourism in Skagit County will do far more harm than good on so many levels. The benefits of agritourism are significant:

We are educating a wider audience of regional, national and even international visitors on the value of farming and their communities and culture.

We are helping small agricultural business owners carve out a sustainable living, and we all know that small business enterprises are the foundation of any and every community. I go out of my way to support small independent businesses. I know very well how they create a positive culture and true community.

In a county that is desperately seeking to stave off unchecked growth and suburban sprawl to the benefit of the preservation of farming, agritourism is an enterprise that is entirely consistent with and supportive of these objectives.

The trickle down economic and cultural effects of these businesses is direct and impactful. Many more businesses and communities will suffer with these new restrictions in place. I'm guessing that Sedro Wooley, Mt Vernon, La Conner, Edison, Anacortes and others are not too happy with these proposed restrictions.

Many of us are wondering as to how this one-sided proposal managed to get as far as it has. Where was the leadership of the Skagit County Planning Department and the Skagit County Commissioners in questioning the logic of this ill thought out process? How did the leadership come to the decision to ignore the Berk Consulting study that we paid for and participated in? How did anyone think it would be ok to NOT bring all stakeholders together to make decisions of this magnitude?

This is a learning opportunity about how not to attempt to unilaterally impose rules and regulations that impact so many of us without our timely participation and consent. Hopefully folks in Skagit County government can do better going forward. Starting with an effort to correct this particular mistake.

Respectfully yours,

Irene Derosier

**60. Jake & Genni Koester <[jagakoester@gmail.com](mailto:jagakoester@gmail.com)>**

Please truly think about the impact that this would have on the people, businesses, farms, and families of Skagit County.

We need and want the agritourism, we want the farm venues and events.

Thank you for ensuring you will take the time to hear the voices of the people at the meeting tonight.

We thank you in advance for doing the job that you have been elected to do, to represent the people of Skagit

**61. Janet Shackley <[teatimegrandmas@msn.com](mailto:teatimegrandmas@msn.com)>**

Save Skagit county Farms!!

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

I am voting yes! Save this very special farm/ tearoom, Willowbrook Manor! My two daughters and I love going to this Tearoom several times a year! People come from all around to visit Skagit county, this is one of them, please, do not close this very special place down!! This is a great place to visit! Please do not close Willowbrook Manor! She supports Skagit County and give back to the community! Help keep Willowbrook Manor in Buisness!! Thank you!

**62. Jeffrey Mulac <[jeffmulac@icloud.com](mailto:jeffmulac@icloud.com)>**

Do not follow through with this arbitrary regulation. Family farms are already struggling and need extra income to survive. Public events at farms keep farms alive, vibrant and functional in our history. These regulations will destroy the rural history of the county. Willow Brook Manor is a perfect example.

Jeff Mulac

Sent from my iPhone

**63. Jenny Lanker <[jennylanker@gmail.com](mailto:jennylanker@gmail.com)>**

To whom it may concern, I have been a patron of Willowbrook manor since it opened. The ability of their farm and others to provide unique cottage industries represent the entrepreneurial spirit our nation is known for. As the farm grew, so did the size of the community and with it came the need to provide entertainment and services. If you meet a farmer, you'll find a hard-working, reliable, problem-solving owner, ready to help support families and their community while cherishing their God-given right to turn a profit using the land they purchased for their needs. Your consideration to limit their potential is overstepping and shouldn't be the American way. Thank you for your reconsideration at the sake of our dear service-oriented farmers, Jenny Lanker 360-708-4298

**64. Johanna Johnson <[liljo4@hotmail.com](mailto:liljo4@hotmail.com)>**

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to give my opinion. I am all for the Farm Wedding Venues, or any other venues that bring people and families together. You should have no control over such a thing. This is a free country not a dictatorship. I have a daughter who is trying to turn her farm into a venue . If you pass this proposal would destroy her dreams and probably cost her everything. I lived most of my life in Skagit, and raised my children there.

Sincerely,

Johanna Johnson

Sent from Mail for Windows

**65. John Schmidt <[burningbushvineyards@outlook.com](mailto:burningbushvineyards@outlook.com)>**

Please consider the severe impact your proposed changes will have on local small farms who provide huge tourism benefit to Skagit County. One big reason we moved here was because of the agricultural presence in the county. We sincerely appreciate and support every agritourism business, small or large. Our neighbors, visitors, and friends from near and far frequent these roadside stands and attend events in farm buildings. The cost and upkeep while renovating old farm structures is immense. The events hosted in these venues attract tourists, visitors, and local residents unique opportunities to experience Skagit County agritourism.

Surveys show a large majority of Skagit County voters support Agritourism in all farm businesses, large or small. Agritourism encompasses all of the current farm enterprises in Skagit County. Any decision you make needs to respect the effort, expense, and labor necessary to provide Agritourism value in our county.

Please rethink your code proposal changes and consider the input from many, many county residents who respectfully disagree with eliminating these unique, beneficial agritourism businesses. You represent your County and we hope you will consider the importance of listening to your citizens before making drastic changes in Agritourism in Skagit County.

Thank you.

John and Evlyn Schmidt, concerned Skagit County residents

Sent from Mail for Windows

**66. Jordan Reed <[reed.jordan82017@gmail.com](mailto:reed.jordan82017@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

I am writing in response to the proposed Skagit County code changes that would affect the amount of events held at farm venues. I am friends with Brock Clements and Terry Gifford who are the owners of The Saltbox Barn and Willowbrook Manor, respectively. The proposed amendments would negatively affect their livelihood and deny hundreds of prospective clients an opportunity to experience the unique experiences that are offered at their venues. The barn

venues are not the only businesses that would be affected by these amendments. They would also eliminate the money that other local businesses receive because of the tourism brought to the county by the barn venues. The proposed changes would negatively affect the county as a whole if they get passed. For those reasons, I oppose the agritourism amendments to Skagit county code.

Thank you for your time,

Jordan Reed

**67. kareygamino <kareygamino@gmail.com>**

100% against having weddings at farms.

It's it not logical, with the dust, chemicals and smells from processing hay . I've witnessed myself of guests harassing farm animals after being drunk at a wedding on top of many people these days want candles at weddings and puts people's feilds endanger.

as a skagit county resident even myself am about to go up against how people from California (don't even live here ) bought a 5 arce residential house in rural skagit off 530, next to my farm with animals and they are putting airbnb camp grounds along the fence we are having to put up.

So we have to figure out ways to keep these seattle guests ,thier kids and pets off our property for liability

**68. Kathleen Daly <kmdaly@vom.com>**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing regarding the proposed code that would limit the number of events a farm can offer. It concerns me that the introduction of new codes, rules, laws can severely impact the ability for some to stay in business. I am a voter, community member and consumer.

Willowbrook Manor offers limited events a year already. The venue is a place I love to go with my family and friends; especially those who come from out of town. My 93-year-old mother and close friends attend tea twice a year at the Manor. We would miss the opportunity to meet and celebrate in such a unique way.

I would be particularly interested in seeing the code proposal. I would like to know who is presenting it, why and the expected benefits and outcome if implemented. I wrote earlier requesting additional information about the code and never heard back. I do not think it is reasonable to impose changes to existing small businesses without letting the public know the specifics.

Your attention to this email is appreciated.

Kathleen Daly

**69. Laura <[lreyes8517@gmail.com](mailto:lreyes8517@gmail.com)>**,

Hello,

Please don't create a new code that would reduce the number of events that farm venues can host. It would be drastic for small businesses like Willowbrook Manor. They would have to close their doors if this new code was to be enacted. Please think of your community.

Thank you.

Laura Reyes

**70. Lindsay Hovenden <[linhovenden@gmail.com](mailto:linhovenden@gmail.com)>**

After reading an article regarding proposed changes to agritourism codes, I was concerned about the large number of small farms that use a portion of their farms for events to supplement their incomes. It would be a disastrous loss to them, and by extension the local economy, if these changes are implemented. I oppose the proposed changes and encourage those involved to reevaluate their position and update the proposed changes accordingly.

Lindsay Hovenden

**71. Mary E. Jones <[206mej@gmail.com](mailto:206mej@gmail.com)>**

Hello,

We have had the superb experience at Willowbrook Manor for a few events of what Terry has to offer; High Tea, local bike explorations to name a few. She supports local women's organizations with her High Tea offerings.

Terry has a unique piece of property with an experience out of the gentile past; with her High Tea's.

She should have the ability to continue with her venue of serving a unique experience to so many without limitations.

Give her what she deserves and offers to so many.

Regards,

Mary & Giff Jones

**72. Mary Scott <[messcott@mac.com](mailto:messcott@mac.com)>**

To whom it may concern:

I believe we need to keep the so-called 'agritourism' (Agro-tourism) alive and well in Skagit County. It should work hand in hand with farming. I don't get why it is even a question of "should" it be allowed. Of course it should!

I understand that running one of these businesses requires a lot of paperwork, and permissions from the county. The ones that are operating with the proper paperwork, and who follow the rules, should be permitted with no extra rules, as long as they follow the ones they had to follow to get their permits in the first place.

If someone does not have a permit, and therefore have not done the required work on their sites that permits require of them - then go after THOSE PEOPLE, not the ones who are following all of the rules you previously set forth to them, AND HAVE A PERMIT. It's outrageous to think that you would contemplate taking away their ability to use their own land to live on and feed their families.

We desperately NEED wedding venues. We NEED venues for large events, like birthday parties with a large group, or wedding showers, or anniversary parties, or meetings, or auctions. Somewhere where people can find parking on the property of the venue. Parking is ALWAYS A PROBLEM in the cities & towns in Skagit County - so getting outside of the city eliminates that problem. As our county grows, we will need more of these events outside of the city, not fewer of them.

I dare say it helps showcase the need for the family farms to continue & grow. It's a great way to educate people on the importance of farming.

It is somewhere between stupid and outrageous to think that they will be all but eliminated because of a few bad apples. Go after the bad apples. Encourage the rest of them!!!

Mary Scott

**73. Molly DeCroes [mollydecroes@gmail.com](mailto:mollydecroes@gmail.com)**

To whom it may concern:

Early spring and summer bring blue skies, green grass and vibrant flowers to our beautiful valley. A jewel of Washington State - a place where many come to see the beauty of our fertile land and to celebrate or honor loved ones.

Lately, I've been distressed to be reading, hearing and seeing the news regarding the prohibition of weddings/events being held at farms within Skagit County. It is inexplicable to me why this is even a consideration.

Skagit County has many farms. Not all produce crops for harvest... some utilize their smaller farms to hold weddings, dinners or memorial services for local residents or out-of-towners looking to capture some of their own magic Skagit.



What will become of these farmers when they can no longer provide much needed venues for weddings or events?

What will become of the long list of vendors these farms use to create these events? The florists? The caterers? The decor? Tables? Linens? Cleaning companies? Transportation services? Hair stylists and makeup artists?

What about the lost income that Burlington, Anacortes, Mount Vernon and other towns will lose from the loss of weddings? The restaurants? Gas stations? Shops? Hotels? All the missing revenue from the non-influx of people we've now lost due to this proposed ordinance?

I'm perplexed as to the reasoning for this ordinance? To simply put all these smaller farms out of business? To cut the knees off of the farmers using events as a means to keep their farms operational and profitable? So big farm can swoop in and buy up all these smaller farms once they can't afford the mortgage anymore? I don't mean to be so sinister... but outlawing weddings from occurring at small farms in Skagit County doesn't make sense. Events like this take place in farms across the entire country (world) every single week. What is the reasoning for putting people out of business in Skagit?

Thanks for the clarity. I hope the folks in charge realize the error and stop this before the landscape of Skagit is changed forever. When suddenly all that's here is big farm only. With no room for the rest of us and no weddings/memorials/farm dinners allowed.

Sincerely,

Molly DeCroes

**74. Monica Corum <[MonicaJCorum@outlook.com](mailto:MonicaJCorum@outlook.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Monica

**75. Debra Winblad <[debrawinblad@yahoo.com](mailto:debrawinblad@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**76. Nick A <n.aquarius1111@gmail.com>**

Stay out of people's business. Leave the farmers alone. You don't need to be telling other people how to make a living.

**77. Nicole Vela <nicolevela@hotmail.com>**

Please do not cut events from our farms! It's difficult enough for them to stay in business. Please let them host their events and not cut it by 50%. Thank you!

Nicole Vela

Sent from my iPhone

**78. Gayle Hamlett <gdhamlett@gmail.com>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Agritourism Changes

I have taken tea numerous times at, Willowbrook Manor, enjoying their lovely surroundings, being served tasty pastries, tiny sandwiches, creamy soup, etc, all in the most gentle elegant atmosphere inside the manor itself.

Willowbrook Manor brings tourists local residents and is a great source of revenue for our Skagit County. A gracious lovely addition to our landscape

Please consider Willowbrook's contribution to economic stability, employment opportunities, and endurance as a desirous destination

Thank you,

Gayle Hamlett

971-400-5175

**79. Pat Kalla <patkalla@hotmail.com>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration

regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**80. Paul Erickson [paul@ericksonstudio.com](mailto:paul@ericksonstudio.com)**

Dear Skagit County,

Please allow farm venues, such as Willowbrook Manor, to continue hosting events as they see fit. There is absolutely no reason why such venues and events should be restricted. Farms and small businesses such as this are the backbone of the community and country. If anything, there should be LESS restrictions, not more.

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration,  
Paul Erickson

**81. Rebecca Wilson <[rewilson1987@gmail.com](mailto:rewilson1987@gmail.com)>**

Hello!

I just read an article about the potential law that would ban any celebration events on farmland in Skagit County and this email was provided to voice my opinion. I don't understand why this is an issue. If farmland owners want to allow these events to happen on their property, why bother them? Weddings, community barn dances and other big celebrations have occurred on farms for generations, they bring people together in a positive setting while supporting other local businesses. Local dress shops, florists, various food vendors/catering establishments, rental shops all benefit from such gatherings which, ultimately, strengthens our local economy.

My opinion is that it would be an unwise decision to ban celebratory gatherings on farmland. Those farmland owners should have the right to manage and promote their properties as they see fit, they rely on that income as do so many local businesses who provide food and services for large celebrations. Keeping events at farms helps strengthen our local economy.

-Rebecca

**82. Sigrid Novak <[sigridnovak7@gmail.com](mailto:sigridnovak7@gmail.com)>**

I want to register my protest to the proposed limitation on agricultural events in Skagit County.

Small farmers have a very hard time producing a profit at all, if any. Being able to provide special events is one way to mitigate that.

Our society is more aware than ever that our small farms bring value and healthy food to our lives and enjoy what we all offer.

It benefits no one to limit what our farms can do to provide services and products to the community.

Everything possible should be done to enable us to make the most of our farms- or small farms will not be here in the not so distant future.

Sigrid Novak

**83. Susan Collicott <[susancollicott@gmail.com](mailto:susancollicott@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**84. Karen Voss <[karenvoss143@gmail.com](mailto:karenvoss143@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**85. Ty Hershaw <[tyhershaw@gmail.com](mailto:tyhershaw@gmail.com)>**

I'm a resident of skagit county and we need these small farm venues!!!

Nobody cares about the smell of natural fertilizer it's part of living in the farmlands!

Thank you!!

**86. Christy Strong <[christyststrong@live.com](mailto:christyststrong@live.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**87. Zherina Salamanca <[zbsalamanca@yahoo.com](mailto:zbsalamanca@yahoo.com)>**

Department : County Commissioner's Office

Name : Zherina Salamanca

Email : [zbsalamanca@yahoo.com](mailto:zbsalamanca@yahoo.com)

Other : Dear Agricultural Advisory Board, Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners:

I just saw the article in the Seattle Times about a proposal to ban weddings and other celebratory events on farms and require special permits for activities, and I think that is a horrible idea and an example of government overreach. If I bought a piece of land, it's none of anyone's business what I do with it (unless I live in a homeowner's association). So, the people telling the other people not to fertilize because it will smell bad need to stop (visitors to the area should know that comes with the territory), and the people who are jealous (bitter?) because other people are supplementing their income through weddings and other fun activities also need to stop. I agree with the wedding operators that by prohibiting weddings and other agritourism activities that draw visitors to the area will kill people's livelihoods, the vibrancy of the area and awareness of the agriculture industry. Note that what you decide could have ripple effects on other rural and agricultural areas. Do what is right, and listen to your residents--according to the article, 68% of those surveyed do not think weddings should be prohibited.

Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks for your attention!

Sincerely,

Zherina Salamanca

**88. Heather Ward <[hward@roscoe.esc14.net](mailto:hward@roscoe.esc14.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Heather Ward

**89. Michelle Sybrandy <[meowsybrandy@gmail.com](mailto:meowsybrandy@gmail.com)>**

To whom it may concern:

As a resident and business owner in Skagit County, I appreciate the beauty of our valley. Agri-tourism is an important business as it not only brings in many dollars to the community, it also showcases the unique landscape and rural family history.

Part of the pride the farming community has is its ability to share the rich heritage the families have passed down to generations and also the opportunities to share that love and knowledge with people who come into our valley, whether it be tulip festival, berry harvest, fall/corn events, and also the opportunity to book a venue for a wedding or other celebration.

These venues that operate in the rural parts of the valley are not a threat to agriculture and we enjoy and celebrate the families who work hard to preserve their homesteads for future generations.

These venues/small family businesses should be protected and encouraged in our valley and not burdened with taxing restrictions and negative comments.

Sincerely, Michelle Sybrandy

**90. G Gawron <[nancikatz1@aol.com](mailto:nancikatz1@aol.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

G. Gawron

**91. Dan and Kristen Scott <[danandkristenscott@yahoo.com](mailto:danandkristenscott@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**92. David & Jane Edgley <[edgley@whidbey.com](mailto:edgley@whidbey.com)>**

Please do not develop new restrictions and regulations on farm venues. We the people should have the liberty and freedom to attend and use farms for weddings and festivals.

Sincerely, Jane Edgley, U.S. citizen and La Conner resident

Sent from my iPad

**93. Ivan Hutton <[ivanhutton71@gmail.com](mailto:ivanhutton71@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Ivan L. Hutton, PhD

Retired Associate Dean, School of Education, Seattle University

**94. Debbie LaBounty <[deblabounty@gmail.com](mailto:deblabounty@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please consider that rezoning as proposed will destroy the business of Willowbrook Manor. If passed, it should not take effect retroactively, but their business should be grandfathered in as a permitted use. Otherwise, the rezoning is an unlawful taking.

Willowbrook Manor's business includes farming, and the agritourism portion does not interfere with the overall nature of the area.

**95. Diane Reinsch <[direinsch@outlook.com](mailto:direinsch@outlook.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**96. Eric Hull <[ehulldesigns@gmail.com](mailto:ehulldesigns@gmail.com)>**

To whom it may concern,

The proposed rule regarding farm venues is not what Skagit county needs and will affect unique farm related venues like Willowbrook manner whose owner relies heavily upon the income from her venue to support her family and her livelihood.

I add my voice for the protection and continuation of small farming venues from being reduced in a farming community.

Sincerely,

Eric Hull

**97. Jean Ward <[jward201448@gmail.com](mailto:jward201448@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Jean Ward

Sent from my iPad

**98. Jenna D'Amico <[jenna.damico@gmail.com](mailto:jenna.damico@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**99. Ruth Ann Lavine <[rrlavine@yahoo.com](mailto:rrlavine@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**100. Linda <[lreilly3@comcast.net](mailto:lreilly3@comcast.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**101. Nicole Kaup <[nicole.kaup1@gmail.com](mailto:nicole.kaup1@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Nicole Kaup



**102. Jacqueline <[onegreyhound@msn.com](mailto:onegreyhound@msn.com)>**

Please don't change our access to small roadside produce stands. They offer a valuable service to the public that wants freshly picked vegetables. How on earth can these small farms be harming agribusiness? Could I go to one of these corporate farms and buy 1 zucchini? I can at the local farm stand!

Thank you

Jacqueline

**103. Kate Nims <[thebirdmam@gmail.com](mailto:thebirdmam@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**104. Lisa Clancy <[lisa.t.clancy@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.t.clancy@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you.

Lisa Clancy

**105. Andreas Aalhus <[a.aalhus.01@gmail.com](mailto:a.aalhus.01@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

I grew up on a working family farm, not in Skagit, but understand only too well how farms and farm businesses struggle. It would be a tragedy to implement changes that drive some of them out of business.

Regards,

Andreas Aalhus

**106. Denise Grap <[denisegrapp@yahoo.com](mailto:denisegrapp@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**107. Marilyn Puchaty <[marilynsdca@yahoo.com](mailto:marilynsdca@yahoo.com)>**

Hello Skagit County,

Please create additional time beyond August 17th for the opportunity for public engagement on the important issue of the proposed agritourism changes. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Marilyn Stone

**108. Maureen Haddock <[mimimomama@gmail.com](mailto:mimimomama@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Maureen E Haddock, Skagit County resident and registered voter

**109. Mary Hancock <[hancock.m@comcast.net](mailto:hancock.m@comcast.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

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Mary P. Hancock

360-380-4126

**110. Margaret Lynch <[malynch126@icloud.com](mailto:malynch126@icloud.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come!

Margaret Lynch

[Malynch126@icloud.com](mailto:Malynch126@icloud.com)

**111. Adam Cartwright <[borsteth@gmail.com](mailto:borsteth@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Adam Cartwright

**112. ftomidge <[ftomidge@comcast.net](mailto:ftomidge@comcast.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**113. Pat Gardner <[harborview@comcast.net](mailto:harborview@comcast.net)>**

In reading recent SVH articles. I am not a farmer but live in Skagit Valley and appreciate and respect all it offers. I'd like to make a suggestion in signage which could be posted around. "YOUR FOOD & FARMERS COME FIRST IN OUR VALLEY". This is mainly to advise non locals what is important to our community. Maybe vendors/venues would note this on top of their advertising as this is a working community year round. I think most venues respect this, but new pop-up ones would best be advised.

again 'YOUR FOOD & FARMERS COME FIRST IN OUR VALLEY' and of course surrounding communities. This is a mini "bread basket" and with nature reserves all around us.

Regards, Pat Gardner [harborview@comcast.net](mailto:harborview@comcast.net)

**114. Mary Potter <[marypotter27@yahoo.com](mailto:marypotter27@yahoo.com)>**

Perhaps the income provided by agritourism should be defined as "accessory to farming" since many small farms need income from some type of agritourism in order to keep farming the land. Proposed changes to Skagit County's agritourism code would restrict activities like weddings and events on ag-zoned lands. Those events can save the history of the farming community and bring it closer to the general public's attention. An extension would allow the Agritourism Stakeholder Group to finish developing a suite of win-win policy recommendations for our county commissioners to consider.

Thank you,

Mary

**115. Ricardo\_Ausrele Ramanauskas <[ra.ramanauskas@hotmail.com](mailto:ra.ramanauskas@hotmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**116. Sharon Orestad <[shrnjms385@icloud.com](mailto:shrnjms385@icloud.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you

Sharon Orestad

**117. Stephanie Hooper <[stephanie@baysidespecialties.com](mailto:stephanie@baysidespecialties.com)>**

Proposed Agritourism Code Changes Comments

It is a mystery to me why this code change needs to take place!

The businesses this will affect are responsible and ethical in their use of land. Why is the County even considering this code change that will destroy vital businesses that support the

community and families? These are County residents who are an asset to this community on so many levels and contribute to the success of Skagit County. This is not the direction we should be headed. You can't change the rules for current businesses after these owners have worked hard with their time, talent, and finances. They entered into this in compliance and moved forward based on the codes at the time. Pulling the rug out from under their livelihood after the fact is not a direction the County should go.

Stephanie Hooper

**118. Bob Betz**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Bob betz <bbetz1969@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 11, 2023 1:19 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Farm venues

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

I stand with the small cars that depend on these venues. There shouldn't ever be a cap on the amount of people. Maybe your position should be eliminated. We don't need you. You work for us. Don't forget that!!!

**119. Jamie Ferguson**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Jamie Ferguson <jamie94920@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 22, 2023 10:34 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Agritourism proposed rule change

#####  
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#####

This proposal is big farms putting small farms out of business, and I am against it. I think we all completely support and want to preserve the agricultural character of Skagit county, and a mix of big and small farms will make a more sustainable farming sector. Small farms like my friends need to host weddings and fundraisers and other events to survive and these proposed rules, that were drafted by the biggest families in the county and big corporate farms, would put a lot of small farms out of business. Please keep this debate open so that the voice of the little guys can be heard. We already know what the public thinks, from the recent survey results. The rules should closely support public preferences as per the survey results. Do not allow the big farms to contravene the public and put small farms out of business.

Thank you

James Ferguson

Sent from my remote location.

**120. Leah Gillette**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Leah Gillette <leahg79@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:27 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**121. Valarie Williams**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Valerie Williams <vlwilliams61@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:38 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####

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#####

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely  
Roy and Valerie Williams  
My. Vernon residents

Sent from my iPhone

**122. Pamela Jenks**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Pamela Jenks <phbluefeather@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:51 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**123. Paul and Rene Vance**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Paul & Rene Vance <vanceacortes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 1:28 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Farmers and venues should be able to find a way to work better together to create value for Skagit County. Limiting agritourism as proposed would severely disrupt and end cherished businesses.

Rene Vance

**124. Marilyn Davis**



**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** MARILYN DAVIS <davis1054@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 2:11 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

I support creating additional time for public comment. Skagit County needs to consider the business climate for small family owned business such as Willowbrook Manor. As a visitor to Skagit County, I appreciate the impressive array of agricultural based businesses and the unique experience they provide including the Tulip Festival, food vendors, etc. There needs to be a balanced approach between protecting agricultural land and small agri-related businesses.

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**125. David Top**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** david top <farm240sxboy@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 2:43 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comment for proposed tourism

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Hello my name is David Top. My wife Heather and I both spoke at the hearing recently. We own and operate Bloem Acres in Sedro-Woolley. It started as a florist business for my wife and we've been doing some events also. Like I said at the meeting I grew up a dairy farmer. So I believe my opinion should matter just as much as the opinions of the 12 men on the agriculture advisory board. I'm quite aware of the challenges of farming in Skagit county what it means to Steward the land as well. I'm asking that the rules for what can be done on agricultural land be changed. I think the people that have worked hard over the years to save farmland, maybe getting worked up over nothing about this. These venues and weddings on agricultural land, that they own do not harm saving the farmland they actually make a small farm more valuable. I am a little worried that some of the voices from agricultural advisory board, like being able to buy up cheap land that doesn't have any value. Like the dairy farm that my mom still owns. The only thing that makes it valuable is the land that can be rented out to the crop farmers. But if she could run a small wedding business on the property or something like that the land becomes more valuable. There's always ulterior motives at hand. The view may be that allowing venues to operate on farmland Hurts there farming. But what hurts their farming may also help a small business to survive. If farmers cannot operate a profitable business without getting all kinds of handouts from the government and other groups then they're not a viable business. By only allowing certain types of businesses to operate with the claim that it's the only thing that's good for Skagit county, it's truly unfair. And eventually what you have in those situations is whole local economies crash when that big business finally goes out. What is good for Skagit county is many small businesses. I would be happy to advise on some type of meeting where we would talk about how to make some type of rules. I'm suggesting that on my two acre plot there's not nearly enough room to be running a farm that can support much of anything. Unless I can use the land to provide gardens and a lush place for groups to come and celebrate or have meetings. And then my barns also don't have much of any use unless I can use them in this way. As you know it's very expensive to do much of any kind of renovation and preservation on old buildings. Wedding is one of the only type of activity that can make that sustainable. With the amount of taxes that I am I believe it's good and fair that I be able to use my land as I see it and I asked that remember that they serve at our request request. We are happy to support them but please remember that your job is not to take our rights away just to make someone else happy. I'm happy to work with anyone. I even tried to email a couple of The advisory board members. But the email address provided on the schedule county website does not work for them. So it looks as if they don't want to talk to me. Again I'm happy to offer my time to advise the Skagit county commissioners if they need my help. Also we worked with Jack, back when he was working in sedro Woolley and like an appreciate him, so if he needs anything he can let us know as well.

Thank you so much

David Top

126. Nora Shuler

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Nora Shuler <wnshuler@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 2:59 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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#####  
Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sent from my iPhone

**127. Linda Stucks**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Linda Stucks <lindastucks@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 18, 2023 6:25 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**128. Sarah Bishop**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Sarah Bishop <sarahmailhot@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:50 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Small farms

#####  
CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.  
#####  
Shame on you!  
I cannot believe you are considering an ordinance that would limit the growth of small agricultural businesses in the skagit valley!  
How much revenue from Seattle and Canada comes pouring into skagit county because of the agricultural commerce we have perfected?! Don't be the tool of big business/ag we can find a common ground where we can all coexist

Sarah Bishop

**129. Breanna Cole**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Breanna Croke <bcroke516@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:49 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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#####  
Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sent from my iPhone

**130. Gwen S**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Gwen S <gwens1@xmission.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:45 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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#####  
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Gwen Schamel

**131. Angela Scott**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Angela Scott <james.angela@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 7:26 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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Sent from my iPhone

**132. Elizabeth**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** ELIZABETH <elizabeth531@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 5:50 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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#####

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Sent from my iPhone

**133. Helen Schultz**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Helen Schultz <HelenS@gohuey.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:33 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

We need these kind of things for the people and for county economy

**134. Mary Goure**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Mary Goure <mlgoure51@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:40 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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**135. Christine Tonnesen**

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**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Christine Tonnesen <christinetonnesen3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 4:57 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Christine Tonnesen

**136. Mani Fisher**

Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Marni Fisher <marnifisher@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 5:01 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Marni Fisher

**137. Debbie Ferreria**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Debbie Ferreria <imav8@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 5:34 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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Sent from my iPhone

**138. Donna Sue Holly**



**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Donna Sue Holly <donnasuehl@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023 9:18 PM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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**139. Karl Heuterman**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Karl Heuterman <karldowheuterman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 6:07 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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**140. Candi Terrill**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** candi terrill <canditerrill@ymail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 5:04 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Thank you,  
Candi Terrill

**141. Cynthia Copeland**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** cynthia copeland <cyncopelanddds@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 3:34 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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Sent from my iPad

**142. Lorissa Lawton**

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** Lorissa Lawton <lorissalawton@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 12:27 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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#####  
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Sent from my iPad

**143. Brian Bowers**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Brian Bowers <bowers1959@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 7:37 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

#####  
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#####  
Regarding the county's consideration of agritourism code changes: in my opinion the issue must and can be resolved to both protect farm land as well as preserve the rights of land owners to host agritourism events. Special emphasis should be given to assisting small farmers trying to retain ownership of their farms.

By applying current Ag-land zoning, any proposed construction or paving not directly related to agriculture could be curbed. Structures would at least have to be capable of multi-use to include agriculture. Rules around existing structures could be more lenient to allow modification to host events.

Concerns about increased traffic do not seem to be well-founded. After all, how many weddings, wine tastings or farm-to-table dinners would be held in a single day and come anywhere near the traffic we tolerate in a single day of the tulip festival?

There is already farming-first laws in place that prioritize farming activity. So no event host could ever pressure a neighboring farmer to hold off on fertilizing, kicking up dust during harvest or running an irrigation pump all day.

From my interpretation of the surveys taken on this issue, the majority of respondents want a solution that preserves agritourism. The proposals being put forth by the county do not appear to honor the wishes of the people.

I am concerned about the origin of the strict position proposed by the county. It appears the committees involved are well-represented by large or corporate farmers and not small farmers. Let's be honest, the main beneficiaries of strict agritourism regulations is the large or corporate farms which would stand to acquire more land when some smaller farmers are prohibited from using agritourism to make ends meet.

Let's not forget the small to average family farms made this valley. Everything should be considered to maintain this legacy.

Brian Bowers

Sent from my iPhone

144. Jt\_remy

**Sarah Ruether**

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**From:** jt\_remy <jt\_remy@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 7:47 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Agritourism is good for the County!

Sent from my Galaxy

**145. Gail Allen**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** gail allen <gapwa3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 8:56 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

#####  
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Sent from my iPhone

**146. Stephanie Soliz**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Stephanie Soliz <soliz.stephanie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:24 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

**CAUTION: This email originated from an external email address. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, you are expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.**

Dear Skagit County,

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Best,  
Stephanie Soliz

**147. Charline Bonham**

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Charline Bonham <cpbonham@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:26 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Maybe you will want to 'grandfather' in those already in business.

Charline Bonham

**148. Alexander Biemann**

## Attachment 11 – Incomplete Comment Name or Address Missing

### Sarah Ruether

---

**From:** Alexander Biemann <abiemann@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:28 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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I'm surprised you're making it harder for farmers to exist. I don't want Bill Gates to own all the farms - support individual farmers!

Regards,  
Alexander

## 149. Eric Spandl

### Sarah Ruether

---

**From:** Eric Spandl <espondl@protonmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:32 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Eric Spandl  
206-910-8307

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

## 150. Kristi Lindholm

**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Kristi Lindholm <kristi@skagittrans.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:35 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed agritourism changes

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Thanks

Kristi Lindholm

**151. Lucy Mae VanZanden**



**Sarah Ruether**

---

**From:** Lucy Mae VanZanden <lucymae@toddsmonuments.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 10:00 AM  
**To:** PDS comments  
**Subject:** Asking for more time!

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Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Sincerely,

Lucy Mae VanZanden  
[\(360\)708-0403](tel:(360)708-0403)  
[www.toddsmonuments.com](http://www.toddsmonuments.com)

## Attachment 12 – Comments Received After the Deadline

Count	Last Name	First Name	Org. OR City/Address	Type of Comment	Method	Received Date
1	Cinkoske	Bernadette		More Time	Email	8/21/2023
2	Moore	Christine		More Time	Email	8/21/2023
3		Heidi		More Time	Email	8/21/2023
4	Saracino	Adria		More Time	Email	8/20/2023
5	Johnson	Julia	Mayor of Sedro	More Time	Email	8/21/2023
6	Hall	Andriette		More Time	Email	8/21/2023
7	Sarvis	Paddy		More Time	Email	8/18/2023
8	Broome	Kelly		More Time	Email	8/21/2023
9	Taylor	Arthur	Canada	More Time	Email	8/21/2023
10	<a href="mailto:pecaswell@comcast.net">pecaswell@comcast.net</a>			More Time	Email	8/18/2023
11	Jerman	Judy		Farm Stands	Email	8/20/2023
12	Shannon	Shea		More Time	Email	8/18/2023
13	Fralick	Aaron		More Time	Email	8/18/2023
14	Stucks	Linda		More Time	Email	8/18/2023
15	Barlow	Joan	11237 Sahalie Road La Conner, WA 98257	Opposed	Email	8/18/2023
16	English	Jillian		More Time	Email	8/19/2023
17	Fleenor	Joy	43951 Eagle View Ct. Concrete, WA 98237	More Time	Email	8/19/2023
18	Wesen	Chad	4614 Chuckanut Dr Bow WA 98232	Greate Flexibility in Zoning	Email	8/28/2023
19	Voss	Karen		More Time	Email	8/29/2023

20	Bynum	Ellen	Friends of Skagit County 419 S Main St #207 Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Clarity	Email	8/21/2023
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**1. Bernadette Cinkoske <[bcinkosk@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bcinkosk@sbcglobal.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

There are some popular venues that offer more than 12 events per year that would be adversely affected by the proposed change. I am not sure that you want these venues to disappear. More comment and research are urgently needed. In fact I would suggest that the proposal be tabled for a year to allow for an in-depth study. I firmly believe that this proposal affects more sites than you realize.

Thank you for your attention to this important request.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Cinkoske

**2. Christine Moore <[cmoore1581@yahoo.com](mailto:cmoore1581@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you for your time,

Christine Moore

**3. Heidi <[hrhockeygurl@gmail.com](mailto:hrhockeygurl@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**4. Adria Saracino <[adriasaracino@yahoo.com](mailto:adriasaracino@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - As someone who frequents events at farms like Willowbrook Manor, I'm asking that you please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Thank you,

Adria

**5. Julia Johnson <[11phoenix@comcast.net](mailto:11phoenix@comcast.net)>**

Honorable County Commissioners,

For several years businesses such as Willowbrook Manor and Eagle Haven Winery have cultivated crops while responsibly hosting events that have increased much needed economic growth and development here in Sedro-Woolley.

For several years Sedro-Woolley struggled, and just when we were beginning to hit our stride, the pandemic hit and set us back, as it did so many smaller towns and businesses.

As the pandemic passed, it was a struggle for towns such as ours to create growth once again. Willowbrook Manor and Eagle Haven worked diligently to get their businesses up to speed, and in so doing, have been instrumental in pulling tourists, as well as the county locals, into our town.

Their businesses are breathing a sense of economic revival into our community.

My point is this:

There is so much more to consider regarding the decision before you.

Please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Sedro-Woolley, as well as Skagit County, for years to come.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Johnson, MA,

Citizen of Skagit County,

and Mayor of Sedro-Woolley

360.708.2178

**6. Andriette Hall <[andriette.hall@yahoo.com](mailto:andriette.hall@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Andriette Hall

**7. Paddy Sarvis <[sarvis4916@comcast.net](mailto:sarvis4916@comcast.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**8. Kelly Broome <[kellybroome@att.net](mailto:kellybroome@att.net)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**9. Arthur Taylor <[mawt101@gmail.com](mailto:mawt101@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come. I think this is so important. that you must give more time.

from a Canadian.Friend.

**10. [pecaswell@comcast.net](mailto:pecaswell@comcast.net)**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Please consider the important need to have additional time and opportunity to public engagement for everyone concerned with this issue. This is very important to all the farm families/individuals in Skagit County who depend on agritourism to augment their farming income.

Thank you for your consideration.

**11. Judy Jerman <[judyj1947@gmail.com](mailto:judyj1947@gmail.com)>**

Please leave our small farmers' ability to have farm stands, etc. alone!! We need the small farmers here and many of them need those farm stands to help with income. Small farming is difficult and are sadly disappearing as it is and it would be a shame if we let the commercial farms squeeze them out of Skagit County.

**12. Shea Shannon <[rnshea72@gmail.com](mailto:rnshea72@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

This is where my children grew up. Save the farms

**13. Aaron Fralick <[aaronfralick@yahoo.com](mailto:aaronfralick@yahoo.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**14. Linda Stucks <[lindastucks@gmail.com](mailto:lindastucks@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**15. Joan Barlow <[joanbarlow854@hotmail.com](mailto:joanbarlow854@hotmail.com)>**

Subject: Proposed Agritourism Code Changes

I want to comment about this ridiculous idea of very limiting/strangling farm rule upcoming in the planning and permitting department. Skagit County is such a wonderful free feeling area, what benefit can it have to reduce or remove the small farmer options to provide some events thru the year and supplement his income?

Agritourism is just one way of introducing the next generations to farming and including them in fun events like Fall Farm visits etc. Stay the heck out of the farmers business – literally. They have enough to deal with bureaucratic silliness.

Joan Barlow

11237 Sahalie Road

La Conner, WA 98257

**16. Jillian English <[jjenglish117@gmail.com](mailto:jjenglish117@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**17. Joy Fleenor <[joy.fleenor@gmail.com](mailto:joy.fleenor@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

Joy A. Fleenor

43951 Eagle View Ct, Concrete, WA 98237

**18. Chad Wesen <[cwesen@hotmail.com](mailto:cwesen@hotmail.com)>**

Greetings,

I know I missed the official public comment period, but I still wanted to share a few observations about the draft ordinance that would clarify what commercial activities are permissible on land zoned agriculture in Skagit County. I agree with the draft ordinance that limits commercial activity on agricultural land, but it seems to me that there should be a mutually beneficial solution for all parties by using the zoning code creatively. This would differ from existing conditional use permits, because those are of limited validity. Businesses are often hesitant to invest significant capital - in renovating an old barn for example - if they are unsure they can operate that business in perpetuity. Ensuring ag tourism has a home in the county is important for broader economic health and it's worth seeking a compromise.

Other jurisdictions provide more flexibility in tailoring zoning to meet property owner needs. For example, a number of jurisdictions in Colorado allow property owners to create special use zones, whereby they can (with the consent of the planning committee and elected officials) describe authorized uses and zoning conditions themselves. In this case, you could allow a property owner seeking to operate an ag tourism business to draft his/her own zoning regulations and convince the county to adopt them. To ensure adequate neighborhood input, you could require a 90 day notification period to all neighbors within 2 miles (for example) and mandate commissioners vote on each special use rezone application. In exchange for offering this level of flexibility, the county could set higher property tax rates on special use zones.

Another option would be to create an ag tourism zone, or create an "employment zone" or similar to capture that option. The key is to ensure that the rezoning process takes robust stock of neighborhood opinions, and mandates that elected officials weigh the rights of property owners to develop their property and operate businesses, against those of neighbors on a case by case basis.

Of course, none of this works if you don't robustly enforce code violations - which is tough to do with just two inspectors. Litigating violations is expensive and time consuming, but government typically wins these lawsuits.

Good luck with the final planning and deliberations.

Best Regards,  
Chad

Chad Wesen

Resident at 4614 Chuckanut Dr.  
Bow, WA 98232



**19. Karen Voss <[karenvoss143@gmail.com](mailto:karenvoss143@gmail.com)>**

Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. More time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

**20. Ellen Bynum (Friends of Skagit County)**

**Since 1990 Skagit County has protected farmland with good planning and county codes.**

The current Skagit County code prohibits non-agricultural uses on the 90,000 acres of farmland zoned Agriculture - Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRL).

**The proposed code changes strengthen farmland protection and do not affect farming and agricultural activities.** The code permits farmstands, CSAs, U-pick, farm stays, farmers markets, farm to table meals, processing and sales of value added products, nursery sales, farm tours, hayrides, public education programs, and other agriculturally related activities.

**The proposed code changes do not affect public festivals and tours on Skagit Valley farms.** The Tulip Festival was first described as "a 17 day flower festival with 30 fun family events". The Festival of Family Farms Tour has operated since the 1990s. Both are non-profit, civic celebrations of limited duration.

**Skagit County has never permitted weddings/events on farmland zoned Ag-NRL.** State and local laws require any accessory use on Ag-NRL must be soil-dependent and an agriculturally related activity.

**Special Use Permits (SUP) on Ag-NRLs are for accessory activities related to farm production.** A permit criteria states: "All proposed temporary event uses proposed shall adequately demonstrate how the event is related to agricultural production". Only 2 of the 21 venues on Ag-NRL farms hold an SUP. The others have no SUP. At least one venue hosted over 70 events last year. To comply with current codes venue operators can apply for special use permits or relocate to another less restrictive rural zone.

**Any citizen can propose new codes through the County's annual planning process.** Public notice, comments and hearings allow a full review of any proposed changes. New code changes must meet legal and policy criteria under national, state and local laws.

Ellen Bynum, Executive Director  
Friends of Skagit County  
419 S. Main Street #207  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
360-488-3244

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

Name	Address	Comment Category	Detailed Comment
<b>1. Annissa Christian</b>	1007 s 28th st, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>2. Mignon Bennett</b>	1014 S 21st St Mount Vernon, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Skagit County is a major part of Washington's tourist industry. This proposal would very much affect this, along with the many farmers and small business owners in Skagit County that handmake products right here in our county and the sales from their products go directly into Skagit County's economy. These small business owners depend on all of these venues to sell their products
<b>3. Linda Walde-Wood</b>	1018 Warren St, Mt Vernon		
<b>4. Brandy Moe</b>	10505 FARM TO MARKET RD, mount vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.

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<p><b>5. Janet Hickox</b></p>	<p>10529B Samish Island Rd</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Why the rush to make this happen? That feels kind of underhanded. Please give more time for the public to weigh in on this important issue. Thank you.</p>
<p><b>6. Brooke Ungersma</b></p>	<p>10756 Gardner rd, Burlington, Washington 98233, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>7. Kara Janicki</b></p>	<p>10907 Samish beach lane Bow ,wa 98232</p>		
<p><b>8. Julie MacKenzie</b></p>	<p>11046 2nd Street. Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>9. Margaret Gardner</b></p>	<p>1109 D AVE, Anacortes</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Take a good long look at the history of this very similar issue, and its outcome in the Napa Valley . Please change your proposal to allow more diverse venues in the Skagit Valley plan for the future. We will all benefit.</p>
<p><b>10. Morghan Milagrosa</b></p>	<p>111 S 12TH ST, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>There is not a reason to take these venues out</p>

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

			of operation or restrict them.
<b>11. Meg Frost</b>	1116 17th St. Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>12. Yadyra Cervantes</b>	1120 s 25th st trlr 5 Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please don't close our venues! We need them for our gathering
<b>13. Cherree Abbott</b>	11359 whistle lake road Anacortes, wa 98221		
<b>14. Jill cofer</b>	11453 Bayview Edison Road trlr 36	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I'm concerned that Skagit county is making decisions without including the voices of Skagit county. This is not democratic, nor in the best interest of our future in this country.
<b>15. Kari Barlow</b>	11688 McCorkle Pl, Anacortes WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	One of the most important lifelines of our small communities in Skagit county is the money that comes from tourism. One of the only ways we are able to have small towns, with small, locally owned business, is because we invite the rest of Washington to come enjoy the splendor of Skagit county. Events like the tulip farms may seem like a revenue stream, but they are mostly just a brief stop for a few hours and only for a few weekends in the spring. Events like weddings bring tourists from near and far and provide multi-day opportunities for local lodging and businesses to thrive. We need to keep events and weddings in Skagit valley on Skagit farms and grow our potential for year round revenue streams for all local business.
<b>16. Natalie Clark</b>	11697 McCorkle Pl, Anacortes, WA 98221		I support Skagit county farm venues and urge the county not to restrict this vital industry! Our valley

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

			<p>needs the revenue brought in by these businesses and the jobs they provide!          Without these venues, people will have to drive elsewhere for their celebrations and events. There simply aren't alternatives. And without these events, the local farms and vendors supported by them will face economic devastation.</p>
<p><b>17. Karen Franklin</b></p>	<p>1200 LINCOLN ST</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Please don't take away these "back to the farm" opportunities for weddings and events. The events held at Skagit farming area gives us all a feeling of nostalgia and reconnection with the slower, more innocent life. Don't impose these strangling codes on these farming communities.</p>
<p><b>18. Amanda Bean</b></p>	<p>12016 Hilynn Dr,          Burlington, WA 98233,          United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important</p>	

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

		issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.  Amanda	
<b>19. Erin Long</b>	12071 Bayhill Dr Burlington, WA 98233	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please keep Agri tourism alive in Skagit County and allow current and future farm venues to be utilized for public and private events.
<b>20. Howard Fox</b>	1211 14th St, Anacortes, WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>21. Beverly Bernhardt</b>	1214 Fidalgo Pl, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>22. Bethany Halpin</b>	1218 Hemlock Pl Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please support small businesses in Skagit County. This code will hurt tourism, business, and farmers in our county. Farmers especially already need our support. Do not

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			consider passing this code.
<b>23. Julie Harris</b>	1219 E. Hickox Road, Mount Vernon WA 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>24. Nicole Enter</b>	12214 state route 9 mount Vernon, wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Skagit county needs to remember that they work for the people and not the other way around.
<b>25. Lauren Pavish</b>	1226 Denny Pl Mount Vernon, WA 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Farm Venues and the vendors who are often contracted for events are often small, independent, women owned or family run businesses. Hurting these businesses and these people for the benefit of a few more established and often wealthier land owners is despicable. Ruining livelihoods to mildly improve the lives of a few is despicable. Skagit County has some of the most beautiful land and views in our state. These farm venues attract business/customers from out of the area who spend their money at our restaurants and in our county in other ways. This proposal is deeply unpopular and shameful. Please do not go through with it.
<b>26. Eric Stalcup</b>	1226 Denny Place, Mount vernon, Wa 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you	



		<p>continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>27. Sabryna Holt</b></p>	<p>1231 E State St, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>28. Tim Baker</b></p>	<p>1231 E State St, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the</p>

		March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>29. Kathryn Chambers</b>	12454 Gwen Drive Unit 12 Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Having these venues are a great opportunity to showcase our beautiful Skagit Valley!
<b>30. Julia Henkin</b>	12668 markwood road burlington wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>31. Elizabeth Kuehn</b>	1306 L Ave, ANACORTES	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>32. Georgina Scanlan</b>	13107 Admiralty Way, Seattle	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>33. Jennifer Bueno</b>	1321 Shuler Ave, Burlington, WA 98233, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed	

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

		to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>34. Victoria Last</b>	13222 Rector Road, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>35. Debbie Boffey</b>	13530 Bisquet Ridge Lane, Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	See you Tuesday.
<b>36. Rebecca Darland</b>	13799 Avon Allen Road	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>37. Becky Dutton</b>	13964 Trumpeter Ln, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>38. Constance Funk</b>	13973 Dodge Valley Rd, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please support all farm and related venues to continue the important events that bind our community in unity-- farmer's markets that bring local produce to tables at home and in restaurants, celebrations that bring people to this valley. How could the county allow the wonderful Tulip Festival for many years to help put Skagit County on the map and increase revenues by astonishing numbers and then seek to shut down farmers? This is a complete contradiction and valley residents love these family friendly people and places for what is wholesome and real-- the people want to support farmers and venues any way that we can to keep this community an agricultural base! Thank you.

<p><b>39. Gary Funk</b></p>	<p>13973 Dodge Valley Rd, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Please support all farm and related venues to keep our county as an agricultural hub for events that bring families together!</p>
<p><b>40. Cecelia Bennett</b></p>	<p>1400 Alpine View Pl, Mount Vernon, Washington 98274, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>41. Cecelia Bennett</b></p>	<p>1400 ALPINE VIEW PLACE, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>The negative impacts stated in the paper regarding wedding venues were isolated situations and do not reflect the majority of the venues. These venues draw people into our amazing community and the families that run them are extremely supportive of Skagit farmers and maintaining our protected farmland is a priority for them. The impact to several small, local businesses would</p>

			be devastating with the changes that are being proposed.
<b>42. Hannah Miles</b>	1404 Heather Lane, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We need rational and supportive discourse to help all parties come to a proposal that supports the livelihoods of everyone.
<b>43. Mark Wade</b>	1406 9th Street, Anacortes, WA 98221, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>44. Jody Byers</b>	1406 9th Street, Anacortes, WA 98221, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you	

		continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>45. Jessica Bajema</b>	14073 Gilmore Avenue Bow, WA 98232	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>46. Hayley Femling</b>	1414 Railroad Ave, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>47. Larry Hilliard</b>	1416 Lindsay Loop, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>48. Kelsey Lott</b>	14452 Josh Wilson Rd., Burlington, WA 98233, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue.	

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

		<p>The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>49. Laura Hartner</b></p>	<p>14557 River Bend Road, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Hello, I am writing to share my support for Skagit farm venues. Skagit County has long attracted visitors to our farmlands to connect with the land in various ways. Special events like this can help small farm operations stay viable. That can keep more of our land in agriculture, while using a small portion of the land as gathering places for people. Thank you</p>
<p><b>50. Brandy MacFarland</b></p>	<p>1483 West Gateway Heights Loop, Sedro Woolley</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>51. Frances Santiago</b></p>	<p>14835 Valley View Dr MV</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>Keep government bureaucrats out of our lives.</p>
<p><b>52. Patricia Jorgensen</b></p>	<p>14844 McLean Rd, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>53. Angela Speer</b></p>	<p>14977 Bradshaw Road, MOUNT VERNON,</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for</p>

	Washington 98273, United States	public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>54. Kelsey Sanders</b>	1500 East College Way	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>55. Gail Culver</b>	15024 Benson Rd., Bow, WA 98232, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for	



		your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>56. James Gunter</b>	1514 S 12 th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>57. Katie Gunter</b>	1514 S 12th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence	

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		<p>that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>58. Anissa Smith</b></p>	<p>15146 State Route 530</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>The interest generated by these venues in Skagit county serve to highlight the beauty that farmlands preserve, allow vendors and farmers to capitalize on our local resources, and potentially inspire others from other areas to set aside farmlands in order to gain the richness of beauty and culture they have created for Skagit county. Limiting these venues will hurt this positive momentum. Farm venues should hold an important place in Skagit county. They are a source of revenue, they allow farmers to diversify, they allow locals to sell wares which have been created uniquely to our area, they are a source of inspiration to all in their beauty, they serve as a easy way to reconnect people to the land. Venues need to operate at a capacity that allows them to flourish, not flounder. Don't cut the legs out from under our hardworking Skagit vendors. Don't hinder people's ability to enjoy our area in safe, responsible ways.</p>

<p><b>59. Anissa Smith</b></p>	<p>15146 State Route 530 Concrete, WA 98237</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>The proposed change to code will negatively and drastically impact many small local businesses. Please do not close public commentary on 7.27.23. Give people more time to give input on such an impactful code change.</p>
<p><b>60. Anissa Smith</b></p>	<p>15146 State Route 530, Concrete, WA 98237, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>61. Lydia Essex-White</b></p>	<p>1517 s 12th st Mount Vernon Wa 98274</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>The farm venues and small businesses are what make Skagit amazing! I support Farm avenues!</p>
<p><b>62. Nick Cecotti</b></p>	<p>15195 State Route 536, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the</p>	

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		<p>March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>63. Emily Stewart</b></p>	<p>1521 Windsor Dr, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>Skagit Farm venues are valuable to the community and deserve to be supported not hindered. Excessive regulations and unnecessary restrictions make it harder for the venues to thrive. They bring extra tourism to the area as well as income to the community. Please take action to save them.</p>
<p><b>64. Sasha Frate</b></p>	<p>15212 N Dewey Beach Dr</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Agritourism is an important way to support our land stewards and connect people with the experience of farming, growing and producing of the food that is being grown locally. We need more, not less of these types of experiences. We need more connection to our food and land, to knowing our farmers. What better places to gather community than on these lands? Agritourism can be in many forms that utilize</p>

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			the crops being produced on the farms, whether it is weddings, farm to table dinners, tours or tastings, with flowers, food, or wine straight from the farm to the tables. Skagit County has a lot of incredible opportunity to be exemplary for providing these types of experiences for local community and visitors to our region.
<b>65. Ty Johnson</b>	15212 N Dewey Beach Dr, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Agritourism is a very important way to support our land stewards and connect consumers with their food, to know their farmers and how their food is produced. Agritourism provides experiences that help to educate consumers and increases opportunities for sales of food and goods grown on the farms.
<b>66. Jennifer Selvig</b>	15228 Wilbur Rd, La Conner	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>67. Jennifer Selvig</b>	15228 Wilbur Rd, La Conner, Washington 98257, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue.	
<b>68. Savannah Phillips</b>	15306 N Wall Mount Vernon, WA 98273	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>69. Miriah Rivers</b>	15371 Josh Wilson Rd Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events.
<b>70. Kaitlyn Stebliy</b>	15586 Penn Rd, Mount Vernon, Wa 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written	

		<p>comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>71. Audrey Matheson</b></p>	<p>15628 Bow Hill Rd. Bow, WA 98232</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>We have been following and participating in this process since last year at the first public comment period. There doesn't seem to be any interest from the county in including the voices of smaller sustainable/organic farms in this process. The committee that was established only included the voices of large conventional farms. We need events/farm stores etc in order for our farm to be viable and be able to survive for generations to come. Events like farm to table dinners foster support from the wider community to care about and support local agriculture and preserve farmland. The makeup of ag-nrl is not just giant conventional farms and any changes to the code should look to support farms of all sizes. These proposed changes will be harmful to the local economy and unfairly impact smaller farms.</p>
<p><b>72 Lacy Edwards</b></p>	<p>15721 Benson road Bow wa 98232</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	

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<b>73. Lacy Edwards</b>	15721 Benson road Bow wa 98232	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not close public comment !
<b>74. Kathy Feldman</b>	15795 Yokeko Drive, Anacortes		
<b>75. John Christianson</b>	15806 Best Road, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I thought the Agritourism survey showed a supermajority of respondents supported ag tourism, and farm weddings. I assumed it would lead to a marketing campaign to attract people to visit Skagit County. What happened?
<b>76. Diane Christman</b>	15843 Yokeko Drive Anacortes, WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>77. Sara Welch</b>	15995 beaver marsh rd Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>78. Andrea Mesple</b>	1600 Sarah St Mount Vernon WA 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23. This issue needs more attentiona me care than it is currently being given. Please leave public comments open.
<b>79. Andrea Mespke</b>	1600 Sarah St Mount Vernon, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Restricting farms from hosting events will have drastic, lasting, negative impact on the agritourism of the Skagit Valley. Events supplement the high cost of farming. Weddings on farms are absolutely agri-tourism. People want to photos of farms behind them, want catering with food directly off the farm. Want to use flowers directly from the farm and higher LOCAL photgrapers, LOCAL staff, it's all run locally by local Skagit people. The amount of business and jobs you will loose here is higher than you can imagine. There is an experience people want from

			<p>Skagit valley and are willing to pay for it. There has been no issue previously with this allowance and it does not make sense to limit events from happen at farms now.</p>
<p><b>80. Andrea Mesple</b></p>	<p>1600 Sarah St, Mount vernon, WA 98274, United States</p>	<p>I am a resident and home owner in Skagit County. I am asking you to please extend the comment period again in regards to new agritourism codes to allow a new solution to be brought forward. The public is trying to be as engaged as possible now that we are allowed to, as at the meeting in March, no public comments or questions were allowed. Completely shutting down celebratory events in Skagit county seems like the most extreme and illogical step to take. Considering the people who are proposing this change are big ag, it begs the question, what are they trying to gain with someone else's loss? What real harm is a 2 acre farm with a barn doing when creating a venue for the celebrations of all stages of life? I am an avid bicycler in Skagit County. One of my favorite things to do is ride along the Dike Rd. One Sunday evening I rode past a beautiful wedding, there were no cars on the road, it was quit, even with people outside. There was ample off street parking and you know what else, absolutely no one was farming. The idea</p>	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am a resident and home owner in Skagit County. I am asking you to please extend the comment period again in regards to new agritourism codes to allow a new solution to be brought forward. The public is trying to be as engaged as possible now that we are allowed to, as at the meeting in March, no public comments or questions were allowed. Completely shutting down celebratory events in Skagit county seems like the most extreme and illogical step to take. Considering the people who are proposing this change are big ag, it begs the question, what are they trying to gain with someone else's loss?</p> <p>What real harm is a 2 acre farm with a barn doing when creating a venue for the celebrations of all stages of life?</p> <p>I am an avid bicycler in Skagit County. One of my favorite things to do is ride along the Dike Rd. One Sunday evening I rode past a beautiful wedding, there were no cars on the road, it was quit, even with people outside.</p>



		<p>that weddings on weekends creates a "no farming allowed" situation is preposterous. I would never advocate for farms to go away, especially the little and tiny ones. Are you going to compensate ALL of the business and families who will lose their livelihoods and possibly homes because of this new regulation? Again, have you asked the big ag "legacy" farmers what they stand to gain in this situation? There are more questions than answers and what's most important to the vitality and diversity of farming techniques, you shut these venues down and we loose this contribution.</p> <p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue.</p> <p>The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important</p>	<p>There was ample off street parking and you know what else, alsolutely no one was farming. The idea that weddings on weekends creates a "no farming allowed" situation is preposterous. I would never advocate for farms to go away, especially the little and tiny ones. Are you going to compensate ALL of the business and families who will lose their livelihoods and possibly homes because of this new regulation? Again, have you asked the big ag "legacy" farmers what they stand to gain in this situation? There are more questions than answers and what's most important to the vitality and diversity of farming techniques, you shut these venues down and we loose this contribution.</p> <p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue.</p> <p>The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for</p>
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		<p>issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p> <p>Thank you for extending this comment period already a d I urge you to do it again.</p>	<p>agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p> <p>Thank you for extending this comment period already a d I urge you to do it again.</p>
<b>81. Cecile Sharp</b>	1612 Cleveland Ave Mount Vernon WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I have a hard time understanding why the county is making this Draconian code enforceable when it will hurt the farming business. Let's keep Skagit County business friendly so we can help bring in more revenue to build programs for our growing community.
<b>82. Michelle Barshaw</b>	1613 Florence Street Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We whole heartedly support "Agritourism" here in Skagit County.
<b>83. Natasha Gendron</b>	1620 Pine St, Everett, WA 98201, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important

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		issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>84. Elizabeth Asher</b>	16260 State Route 536 Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>85. Amy Rasar</b>	16276 Niblick Pl, Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>86. Darcy Olsen</b>	16391 Moore Road, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	These venues respect and support the farmers and I see no reason why they should be limited to the amount of events they hold. They are the perfect hosts to ag tourism in Skagit County.
<b>87. Addis Manley</b>	16402 Allen West Rd, Bow, Washington 98232, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.  Addis Manley Resident of Bow WA	
<b>88. Evan Carlson</b>	16402 Allen West Road, BOW, WA 98232, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on	

		<p>this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Evan Carlson Bow Resident</p>	
<p><b>89. Lianna Neyens</b></p>	<p>16441 Dike Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit</p>	

		County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>90. Susan Hughes-Hayton</b>	16498 Fir Island Rd., Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity, BEYOND 8.17.23, for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>91. Melissa Brown</b>	16535 Jungquist Road, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We own a small scale flower farm on the westside in Mount Vernon. Please reconsider, for the sake of farm owners and our community.
<b>92. Jan Gordon</b>	16544 colony rd, Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	there needs to be more time, this proposal is not good for the community and needs adjustments
<b>93. Colleen Raney</b>	16603 W. Kamb Road, Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please allow the time for this very important conversation to include all perspectives. As a

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			Skagit farmer who relies on these farm venues for 95% of my sales, the restriction of them would be devastating to my operation. Closing discussion so quickly suggests that the county is not operating in good faith with all of its farmers and only really hearing a few.
<b>94. Jeff Miller</b>	16625 Mountain View Rd, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	It is economic folly to foreclose any current lawful business opportunity to our local farms. Please do not endorse this ill conceived proposal.
<b>95. Claire Dimock</b>	16682 Augusta lane, Burlington WA 98233	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I'm asking that you do not close public comment, and that you allow a counter proposal so that everyone involved can be heard. I have lived in Skagit valley my whole life, and I support farmers and small farms being allowed to have venues on site.
<b>96. Virginia Bode</b>	16723 Dike Road, Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not change the use code for agriculture venues. People from the cities love to experience Skagit County's agricultural heritage through these events. As a neighbor of an events venue, we observe them as good stewards of their agricultural environments.
<b>97. Leslee Hughes</b>	16768 Blodgett rd Mount Vernon WA 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>98. Sheena Wilson</b>	16777 Donnelly Road , Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please listen to our community and keep full access to rural farm venues!
<b>99. Linda Lanting</b>	16832 Otter Pond Dr, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on	

		<p>this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<b>100. Herb Geeslin</b>	16931 Kamb Road, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>101. Libby Black</b>	16948 SHOREWOOD HEIGHTS LN, La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We support farm venues
<b>102. Jennifer Johnson</b>	17000 Trout Dr, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for</p>	

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		agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>103. Kathleen Nelles</b>	17053 Avon Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>104. Michelle Moser</b>	17059 Kokanee Ct , Mt Vernon, WA 98274		I absolutely support our local Skagit farm venues. I
<b>105. Debbie Schwab</b>	17062 W Big Lake Blvd, Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I think limiting these venues to this extent is a poor choice and should be reevaluated to allow for more events.
<b>106. Debbie Schwab</b>	17062 W Big Lake Blvd, Mount Vernon 92874	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>107. Debbie Schwab</b>	17062 W Big Lake Blvd, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on



		<p>this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>108. Lara Niedermeyer</b></p>	<p>1709 Akron Ct, Bellingham</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>I own a company that does regular business at Skagit farm venues, such as Christensen's. Please give thorough explanations as to the necessity of these changes, and listen to those whose livelihoods will be significantly impacted by these choices, and who may lose their businesses if the currently proposed changes are made permanent. Thank you.</p>
<p><b>109. Megan Kennedy</b></p>	<p>17126 Wood Rd Bow WA 98232</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Do better, the fact code would be considered without public comment is unAmerican</p>
<p><b>110. Tammy Force</b></p>	<p>17160 Dike Rd, Mt Vernon</p>		<p>Of course we support the Skagit Farm Venues. And I believe the farmers do too! We live very close to 2 of the Venues and never ever have had an issue. The venues and farmers need to co</p>

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			exist and I think it's working now. Why would you want to take something away from Skagit Valley?
<b>111. Tammy Force</b>	17160 Dike Road, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Total BS Skagit County
<b>112. Steve Schleh</b>	17198 Dunbar road, Mount Vernon, Wa 98273, United States	I am against this rule change. It will impact small farmers who need to diversify to continue to service. The next sr Step if this rule is applied will be a change in zoning and rural Skagit is gone. Do not approve. Steve schleh	
<b>113. Steve Schleh</b>	17198 Dunbar road, Mount Vernon, Wa 98273, United States	I am against this rule change. It will impact small farmers who need to diversify to continue to service. The next sr Step if this rule is applied will be a change in zoning and rural Skagit is gone. Do not approve. Steve schleh	
<b>114. Nina Foster</b>	17223 beaver marsh rd	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>115. Nina Foster</b>	17223 Beaver Marsh Rd Mount Vernon Wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>116. Bob Murphy</b>	1730 E Highland Ave, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, USA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>117. Garrett Parlette</b>	1732 cascade vis burlington wa 98233	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>118. Jennifer Basye</b>	17322 Beaver Marsh Rd, Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>119. Bonnie Verge</b>	17394 Olympic Place Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I have attended events at at least two of these venues and appreciate the value they add to our community.
<b>120. Bonnie Verge</b>	17394 Olympic Place, Mt. Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023

		<p>Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>121. Diana Boyce</b></p>	<p>17436 Olympic Pl, Mount Vernon, Washington 98274, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>122. Derrick Helms</b></p>	<p>17439 Olympic Place Mount Vernon Wa 98274</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	

<p><b>123. Rissa Warner</b></p>	<p>17444 BRITT RD, MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come</p>	
<p><b>124. Kristi Sedlacek</b></p>	<p>17503 COOK RD, BURLINGTON, WA</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Restrictive measures will have impact on not just venues but also many businesses that support these events! Many events are also hosted from outside residents and also local residents, generating revenue coming into Skagit County. The understanding of the serious impacts of restricted measures is just being understood by the wider community and needs more time.</p>
<p><b>125. Solfrid Hoover</b></p>	<p>1774 Grand Ave</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>126. Janet McKinney</b></p>	<p>17858 Wood Rd, Bow, WA 98232</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>I think this new agritourism codes need more review. I am upset that farmers can't have certain</p>

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			events at their farms. We need to hear more from the farmers affected by the suggested new codes.
<b>127. Jessica Nelson</b>	17886 Pamela St., Mount Vernon WA 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>128. Trina Uppendahl</b>	1806 Lindsay Loop Mount Vernon, WA 98274		Farming is such a part of this county and one reason we love living here. Please keep these venues available for all of us to enjoy.
<b>129. Susan Sanderson</b>	18093 McLean Rd, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Don't destroy a valuable part of Skagit County, without hearing what the citizens want!
<b>130. Dean Johnson</b>	181 Utsalady Rd, Camano Island	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>131. Allison Rinard</b>	18130 RALEIGH LN, LA CONNER, WA 98257, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>132. Catherine Schubert</b>	1815 S 15th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on	

		<p>this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>133. Susan Anderson</b></p>	<p>18321 Dike Rd Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>I know firsthand after having two weddings at Maplehurst Farms how people come from many states to attend and often stay in the area for numerous days frequenting restaurants and hotels and enjoying the scenic valley and all it offers. To take away these venues and farm stands would be to take away a huge draw to this valley and would be financial suicide for the county. Let's set some guidelines or codes that are reasonable rather than shutting everything down completely!</p>
<p><b>134. Susan Anderson</b></p>	<p>18321 Dike Road, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>These events are smoothly run and our close neighborhood enjoys these celebrations!</p>
<p><b>135. Casey Schoenberger</b></p>	<p>18385 Torset Rd. Mount Vernon, WA 98273</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	

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<p><b>136. Shelley Schoenberger</b></p>	<p>18385 Torset Rd. Mount Vernon, WA 98273</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>137. Ben Winkes</b></p>	<p>18431 Dike Road, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>As a long-time resident of Skagit County who has lived and worked in farmland, I very much support efforts to preserve the farming focus of our communities. However, a vital piece of that preservation is making possible for younger generations to have livelihoods on, and among, our farms. Certainly, agritourism must take place in ways that do not adversely affect farming, but throwing out the ability to creatively offer experiences that highlight the Valley's unique qualities (e.g. "farm" weddings on properties adjacent to farming properties ) will result in millions of dollars of lost revenue and jobs for our local economy. And, many of the currently active, long-time venues would not meet the proposed standards. If the county wants to protect further encroachment on farmland, that is reasonable, but the successful investments of time and money and goodwill that have resulted in current venues need to be respected. Otherwise, the County will be breaking the trust of families and businesses who have already invested themselves economically and personally in our community. Stable agritourism diversifies our economy, now and</p>

			for the future, by offering income streams not ordinarily available in agricultural communities (e.g. money otherwise spent on entertainment elsewhere) and by offering jobs (service, entertainment) that are attractive to many young people. The goal should not be an agritourism policy that "wins" by destroying current agritourism businesses, but a "win-win" for agriculture and agritourism going forward. Respectfully, Ben Winkes
<b>138. Bev Dimock</b>	18518 S West View Rd Mount Vernon WA 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>139. Deb Eaton</b>	18610 Best Road, Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>140. Joan Hill</b>	1906 Tundra Loop, Mt Vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit	



		County for years to come.	
<b>141. Cyndi Johnson</b>	1910 S. 15 St.	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I'd think the venues that are already up and running could be grandfathered in. Then have the stipulation for no new venues.
<b>142. Ken Johnson</b>	1910 S. 15 St.	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	It is ridiculous to argue over properties that have not been used for farming in decades.
<b>143. Cyndi Johnson</b>	1910 South 15th Street, Mount Vernon WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>144. Karla Klein</b>	1923 Olive St., Mount Vernon, WA98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit County farm venues and events. They are an important part of our community. Please do not hurt these important businesses and families.
<b>145. Cassandra Hilliard</b>	19340 Wildes Creek Ln Burlington WA 98233	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This would be a devastating blow to our farm and agriculture businesses in this county. I do not support

			and as far as I can tell the community at large does not support.
<b>146. Laurence McCulloch</b>	19442 Best Road, Mount Vernon, WA98273	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I live in Skagit County and I support farm venues and events. Agritourism rejuvenates rural areas, bringing economic benefits and keeping local populations employed. Agritourism also promotes a knowledge of Skagit County and of the importance of agriculture in people's lives. One of the benefit of agritourism is that it generates growth while keeping the rural character of the County intact. I urge you to support codes for farm venues that allow them to remain in business rather than make them so restrictive that they will disappear. Thank you. Laurence McCulloch
<b>147. Eion Atkins</b>	19479 Landing Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding

		<p>this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>148. Kelly Baker</b></p>	<p>19479 Landing Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>149. Adrienne Crump</b></p>	<p>19479 Landing Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder</p>

		engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>150. Gary Roberts</b>	19479 Landing Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>151. Jenica Medina</b>	19634 Dike Rd	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please save the Skagit farms!
<b>152. Sonja Hild</b>	19752 Trophy Ln Mt. Vernon WA 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Land owners should be able to continue their business venues on their land.
<b>153. Kari Campbell</b>	19889 Cedardale road mount Vernon wa 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>154. Kari Bishay</b>	2006 9th Street, Anancortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not rush the process by closing the public comment opportunity... I just

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			learned about it today and will now let friends know, but the deadline is way too short!!!
<b>155. Robert Elkins</b>	2006 N Ave., Anacortes 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Farm venues are an important income source for many farmers and an important source of locally grown quality food for everyone.
<b>156. Erika Queen</b>	2008 Margaret Pl, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>157. Rachel Stiling</b>	201 N 30th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>158. Rebecca Brewer</b>	201 West Talcott Street, Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Skagit farms depend on income revenue from agritourism. Allow them to have more time to comment on the proposed code, do not close comment on 7/27. Allow a compromise to be reached that allows these farms to actually

			be able to stay in business.
<b>159. Jan Johnson</b>	203 N 5th Mount Vernon, Wa. 98273	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>160. Jimmy Mai</b>	2033 E Broadway, B, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>161. Kari VandenBosch</b>	20417, Cascade Ridge Drive, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed

		to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>162. Kaitlyn Bonnett</b>	20428 Heather Ln, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>163. Angelica Hayton</b>	20584 Skagit City Road, Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Asking Skagit County to NOT close public comment on Agritourism on 7/27/2023 so a counter proposal involving the "tourist" part of "Agritourism" can have a seat at the table/ have their voices heard. The proposal was only made public on 7/6/23 and the public would

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			like longer comment period.
<b>164. Steve Boon</b>	20616 bulson rd, Mt vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>165. Barbera Brooks</b>	20742 Skagit City Road	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>166. Cheryl R Bowers</b>	20818 Hermway Heights Road, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This needs to have more thought and discussion. Why and what is so BAD about Agriculture and Tourism. Who is being hurt and effected today?
<b>167. Cheryl Eubanks</b>	20913 Kelleher Rd, Burilington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>168. Amber Robinson</b>	20996 Prairie Road, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>169. Jill Rohrs</b>	21146 Falcon Court Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Let's celebrate Skagit farms instead of stifling them. Entrepreneurship must be encouraged and our farms supported. Let them do as they see fit to share the magic of Skagit with



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			Farm-to-Table meals, life celebrations and weddings. Thanks you and keep the public comment periods open!
<b>170. Eve Smith</b>	21180 Lake Sixteen Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>171. Marion McKinley</b>	21319 Plaza Drive Sedro-Woolley WASHINGTON. 98284	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>172. Randy McKinley</b>	21319 Plaza Drive Sedro-Woolley Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>173. Amy Melton</b>	21321 Rolling pl Sedro Woolley wa 98284	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Me and my family support Skagit farm venues and events. Small business is key. Let's not drive them out. It is NOT the answer.
<b>174. Leslie Anne Porter</b>	216 Brittany St, MV	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>175. Jane Molinari</b>	216 S 9th Street, Mount Vernon WA 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Agri-tourism is part of the magic of living in Skagit County. It's vital to the economy. Please allow us to continue this

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			discussion. So many folks depend on it.
<b>176. Rochelle Nelson</b>	219 U Ave, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>177. Crystal Semanko</b>	22083 Amick Road, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>178. Kailey Olin</b>	2209 Allison Ave, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Every year countless weddings happen in Skagit county. People from skagit county and other places. These weddings bring a lot of money to the community, anything from vendors to lodging to host families. Limiting these weddings would be detrimental to SO many businesses. These companies pay taxes. Are you going to limit church weddings? Churches don't even pay taxes and are a scam.
<b>179. Caryn Silzer</b>	2218 N Trumpeter Dr, MV 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	There is NO RUSH. This is obviously a contentious issue with drastic implications for numerous people. Please keep the comment period open longer so there's more time to hear from more Skagitonians and come to a compromise that will be mutually acceptable. Rushing to end it now and implement this proposal will end up feeling like it was "shoved down our throats" . No harm in waiting a little longer to get more input and let people have their voices be heard.
<b>180. Scott Postma</b>	224 1st Ave SE	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Bringing in people from all over the country (and them spending money) is a good way to preserve the beauty and uniqueness of Skagit valley.

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<b>181. Mary Melnik</b>	22486 Bulson Rd, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>182. Tiffany Carley</b>	22488 Grip Road Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>183. Andrea Rees</b>	22808 Rallye Ln, Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This has huge ramifications for the county and needs further input!
<b>184. Barb Carnahan</b>	22876 Buchanan St. Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>185. Jennifer Burkland Darnell</b>	22997 Pioneer Hwy Mount Vernon 98273	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	This is unacceptable! There cannot be one good explanation as to why Skagit County would want to restrict Agritourism. My dad was a crop farmer in S. Mt Vernon/Conway area for 40 years. This does not affect farms or farmland.
<b>186. Jennifer Darnell</b>	22997 Pioneer Hwy, Mount Vernon, Wa 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	

<p><b>187. Jennifer Darnell</b></p>	<p>22997 Pioneer Hwy. Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>188. Mahealani Reyes</b></p>	<p>2305 W Meadow Blvd, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>189. Gillian Shipman</b></p>	<p>23073 Sagers Lane, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and</p>

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		enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>190. Sarah LaVoy</b>	23104 state route 9 Mount Vernon wa	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>191. Jaime Ruth</b>	23113 east jones rd Sedro Woolley wa 98284	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Why are we wounding local businesses and artist in the valley. If we want to consider the environmental impact, consider not allowing big box stores to develop in the floodway. Support our farms, support their business ventures.
<b>192. Ellen Schweigert</b>	23152 Buchanan Place Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>193. Nikki Klinger</b>	2333 Crosby Drive, Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We already have a shortage of wedding venues here, so please find a way to preserve farmland while also preserving opportunity and income for our valley. Thank you.
<b>194. Kaitlyn Jensen</b>	23451 Buchanan St, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>195. Top David</b>	23805 river rd, Sedro- Woolley, Wa 98284, United States	Skagit county, what I understand is that most of the feedback and advice on making these rules and changes for c Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you	

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		continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>196. Sherry Hendrix</b>	2406 Austin Lane Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not shut this income stream down
<b>197. Joan Vandermeulen</b>	2407 n 19th place, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not close public comment on July 27,2023
<b>198. Lori Campbell</b>	2412 Washington Court, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>199. Dana Pickens</b>	24204 Alexander street Sedro-Woolley, Wa 98284		Special events, agro tourism, and regular farming flow well together and is essential for many hobby farmers and small event venues to support their families with the land they own. It also gives people outside of farmland a chance to experience the joy of being in our beautiful land!
<b>200. Jaime Susan</b>	24345 252nd Ave SE MV Wa. 98038	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>201. Kathy Hirdler</b>	24797 Brotherhood Road Mount Vernon WA 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I fully support Saving Skagit Farm Venues. It helps protect our farms and provides clean tourism. Thank you for your consideration.
<b>202. Warren Carr</b>	2509 H Ave, Anacortes, WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This proposal is not in the best interest of our agricultural community or overall population of its citizens. More input is needed from folks here in Skagit County!

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<p><b>203. Ruth LeBrun</b></p>	<p>2509 H Avenue, Anacortes</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>This issue is vital to the lives of many in the Skagit Valley and beyond. Please allow for ADEQUATE public discussion and comment. Thank you.</p>
<p><b>204. Barbara Cheyney</b></p>	<p>2521 Stonebridge Way, Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>205. Fawn Huff</b></p>	<p>26438 Hoehn Rd, Sedro-Woolley, Washington 98284, United States</p>	<p>We love our music and entertainment .... they should be able to have events and as many as they want</p>	
<p><b>206. Courtney Cathcart</b></p>	<p>26704 Paramount Lane, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>207. Kristi Hannan</b></p>	<p>26825 PARAMOUNT LN, Sedro Woolley</p>		<p>More venues give the couple to have a variety of themes for their special day. It will also help save the old historical barns for years to come.</p>

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<p><b>208. Colleen Headley-Lalande</b></p>	<p>2725 E Fir St, #22, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>As it says above, I believe a longer response time for reply is needed and it would be very positive if you would allow this. Thank you</p>
<p><b>209. Randall Eger</b></p>	<p>2728n 27th st Mount Vernon Wa 98273</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	
<p><b>210. Kayla Lively</b></p>	<p>275 N Cherry Street, Burlington WA</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Our small county so desperately relies on the revenue generated from these events, it appears that this decision was made with blind spots in the rearview. My mother grew up on a small farm in Stanwood. She used to ride her pony to the state fair. Whenever we get the chance to drive through, she always talks about how “this wasn’t there before” and “this used to all be farmland”. Keep our farmland from turning into apartment complexes, shopping centers and desolate areas. We are all on the same team. The land itself as much as the community of Skagit County deserves to flourish. This goes without mentioning so many other points. Future generations will not benefit from a ghost town.</p>
<p><b>211. Chara Hanson</b></p>	<p>2832 Friday Creek Rd Burlington WA</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Save the local family farm owed businesses!!!!</p>
<p><b>212. Joel Thomas</b></p>	<p>29117 Bacus Rd, Sedro Woolley, Washington 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the</p>	



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		July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>213. Julie Hunter</b>	2921-Iroquois-Dr-98273 Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please rethink you proposed changes. These venues are amazing and beneficial to the country jobs and revenue.
<b>214. Annie Nersten</b>	29574 Lyman Hamilton Hwy, Sedro Woolley WA 98284	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>215. Evan Westcott</b>	3006 Commercial Ave, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We need gathering places for our community and community members. Farms are great places to allow events and gatherings. Stopping these is a stab at the community and the farmers.
<b>216. Rebecca Pinguoch</b>	3006 State Route 9, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence	

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		<p>that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p> <p>For me personally it would mean much of my shopping would now be only on Whatcom county. Please leave farmstands as they are or at least don't adopt more restrictive policies than neighboring counties.</p>	
<b>217. Ariel Williams</b>	3049 Loch Ness Loop Mount Vernon WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>218. Melody Pritchard</b>	306 Coates, Sedro-Woolley, Wa.	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I believe the citizens of Skagit County should have a say in our local businesses ,they should have more time
<b>219. Marina Melnik</b>	3109 Brairwood Circle Mount Vernon WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>220. Kinsey Youngquist</b>	311 N Spruce St Burlington WA 98233	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I don't believe that a select few farmers have the right to dictate how and when other businesses can operate. Especially considering these businesses who are already established and operating. That would be just as ridiculous as the venues telling these farmers to plant 50% less of their yield, not to operate on weekends, and to only plant aesthetic crops for pictures. They are not a governing agency and have no right to

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			meddle on other people's business.
<b>221. Kinsey Youngquist</b>	311 N Spruce St Burlington, WA 98233	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>222. Ilana Moss</b>	3122 Lily Lake Rd, Bow WA		My daughter was married at a Skagit Valley farm venue! As a result AGRITOURISM was supported when friends and family discovered the beautiful Skagit Valley and decided to explore and shop at various farms, farm stands, wineries and ranches. This amendment is wrong and will HURT AGRITOURISM!
<b>223. Kristine Enniss</b>	31337 W Main St, Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Small farmers need and depend on agritourism to make a living. Unfortunately, the small farms can't make it on farming alone.
<b>224. Heidy Poole</b>	3217 Stone Haven Ally Mt Vernon, WA 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>225. Laura Williams</b>	324 s 1st street mount Vernon wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>226. Leslee Hughes</b>	324 s 1st street, Mount Vernon, Wa 98273, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for	

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		your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>227. Joana Camarena</b>	324 Sedro Woolley, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm and venues.. I am absolutely saddened that this has even become something we have to fight for. These farms/venues have been around for years and have been nothing but amazing as well the Family's who own them. Skagit has always been a smaller town with strong communities. I've lived here all my life. Now years have gone by and it sure is and has grown, it seems like we have to fight for our smaller family owned farms more and It's heartbreaking. I support Skagit farms and venues.
<b>228. Cynthia Grenier</b>	32728 Hamilton Cemetery Road, Sedro-Woolley,	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I believe that more time is needed to review the code and explore ways to work together for the good of all involved.
<b>229. Laryssa Thompson</b>	32759 lyman hamilton hwy	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>230. Flora Lucatero</b>	330 S Waugh Rd, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on	

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<p><b>231. Melissa Jones</b></p>	<p>34465 Hamilton cemetery road Sedro Woolley</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>We need more opportunities not more regulation and red tape.</p>
<p><b>232. Lacey Larsen</b></p>	<p>350 Lakeside Drive, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - we are urging you to create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. This proposed code change is far too drastic to be decided on in such a short amount of time. Every stakeholder wants to find a solution that benefits everyone - please allow for the time and space for this to happen. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important</p>	

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		issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>233. Pamela Jenks Hayley</b>	35667 State Route 20, Sedro Woolley		Skagit farm venues are important to our way of life here in Skagit County. Please don't take that way of life from us.
<b>234. Vicky Raff</b>	3702 Biz point Rd, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Stop fixing things that aren't broken. Stop passing more laws that have no sense or don't support the will of the people.
<b>235. Bristol Latham</b>	3810 Laurel Ct., Mount Vernon, Washington. 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>236. Charlene Watrous</b>	3909 Summersun Street, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Government needs to stop this insanity. Why is the County against the venues?
<b>237. Marcene Swingley</b>	3914 AUTUMN WAY, Mt vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>238. Rebecca Vesely</b>	3914 Pueblo heights mount vernon wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not close public comment!
<b>239. Molly Volk</b>	3920 S Ave Anacortes WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please work with farmers AND venues to find a viable solution for the future of Skagit Valley farmlands. I believe that more discussion is needed.
<b>240. Susan Smith</b>	3927 Rockridge Pkwy, Anancortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not implement the new code that will severely limit and restrict Skagit farm venues, farm stands, and all agritourism businesses.
<b>241. Alicia Dean</b>	393 Chilkat Place, La Conner	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please allow farms to host events freely! It brings a sense of community and life our valley. More restrictions only means less income, less impact, and less tourism. This does not just impact farms, but all the restaurants, construction, and retail shops that depend on the tourism farming brings to Skagit County. Farms do not exist in a vacuum. We are all connected. We all depend on each other for business to support our families. Make it easy for families to thrive here!! Make Skagit a place of bounty.
<b>242. Patricia Law</b>	3941 Rockridge Pkwy, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit Valley Farms and events.
<b>243. Judi Haugness</b>	401 Warner Street Sedro Woolley Wa 99284	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I truly believe people are always looking for unique venues for their Weddings , Parties, Pumpkin Patch's etc.. The Venues that I am aware of in Skagit County keep up their properties to premium standards. What is wrong with that- the Farms are not taking up

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			<p>large farming parcels? I don't understand the problem. I support Farm Venues Sincerely</p> <p>Judi Haugness</p>
<b>244. Judy Haugness</b>	401 Warner Street Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>I truly believe when you are going to be voting on a new code. The public has the right to speak their opinion</p> <p>Sincerely</p> <p>Judi Haugness</p>
<b>245. Jen Lewis</b>	410 Shannon Ave., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>I believe it is important for members of the community to be heard as this is something that effects our community.</p>
<b>246. Earl Striegel</b>	413 E Stat st, La Conner, WA 98257	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>247. Phoebe Carpenter Eells</b>	413 E Highland Ave Mount Vernon WA 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>Dear Commissioners, Skagit's farm venues contribute immensely to the economy of Skagit Valley. I am a business owner in Mount Vernon as well as a resident. I run a shop in downtown Mount Vernon, and a pop up market series. Both of my businesses benefit from having Skagit farm venues open and active. We see customers in the shop who are in town attending weddings, and our market series uses farm venues to put on our holiday market each winter.</p> <p>I can't help but think that there has to be a compromise moving forward to allow venues to remain open AND to allow farmers to farm. Ultimately we all want to see Skagit Valley</p>



			<p>stay farmland. Agrotourism/farm venues along with farming are a way to preserve land and have a dynamic, creative economy in Skagit Valley.</p> <p>I hope you'll consider the many small businesses who would be negatively impacted by the proposed code changes.</p> <p>Sincerely, Phoebe Carpenter Eells elSage Shop Valley Made Market</p>
<b>248. Jonathan Carpenter Eells</b>	413 E Highland Ave, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<b>249. Deana Rindy</b>	415 UMATILLA PL LA CONNER 98257	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>What on earth are you all thinking?! We need small farms to survive. THINK AHEAD. Ffs!</p>

<p><b>250. Karen Ferguson</b></p>	<p>417 2nd st. Anacortes WA 98221</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>251. James Ferguson</b></p>	<p>417 2nd St., Anacortes, WA 98221, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
<p><b>252. Brent Sorensen</b></p>	<p>42129 Cedar st, Concrete WA</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>The families that tend to these landmarks preserve their beauty and re-invest into their integrity, maintaining the history of each place.</p>
<p><b>253. Hillary Mann</b></p>	<p>42362 S Skagit Hwy, Concrete, Wa 98237, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public</p>

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		hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come
<b>254. Sara Wohlgemuth</b>	426 south 38th place, Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I Stand in support with farm venues! We must protect and save these small businesses
<b>255. Sara Wohlgemuth</b>	426 south 38th place mount Vernon wa 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not close the public comment on 7/27/23 We would like a king comment period
<b>256. Brian Farley</b>	4301 Kingsway Anacortes, WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>257. Nancy Lee</b>	438 Klinger Street Sedro-Wiolley WA 98284		I am a Texan living in Skagit county and am blown away on a regular basis by the beauty and splendor of the farming community. It's unique and unrivaled and your proposal will destroy it. I also run a restaurant and catering business in Skagit county that is a pillar of the community. Our catering business would be devastated by the loss of weddings. There are 16 summer Saturdays and those dates are coveted and precious to our neighbors and community members who are starting a life together and celebrating it with a wedding. We already

			<p>have multiple bookings for the 2024 wedding season. You are crippling small businesses and should be ashamed of yourself. Actions like yours are the reason we have no desire to expand our business in Washington State, but plan to do so in Texas. You are running good people and valuable businesses out of the county. Shame on you.</p>
<p><b>258. Ashley Benson</b></p>	<p>45058 Cedar St, Concrete</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>I believe this is one more way to limit small farms from generating extra income. I work at a farm to table restaurant and believe that small community farms and farmstands are a key player in creating a more sustainable future. We need to be sourcing as much food as possible from as close to home as possible. This will limit how these very important farms can generate income. Thank you.</p>
<p><b>259. Terry Ketcham</b></p>	<p>45152 S Brooks Road, Concrete WA 98237</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Agrotourism is important to farms in Skagit County. Please extend the public comment period to allow all voices to be heard.</p>
<p><b>260. Heather Sampson</b></p>	<p>4530 Prairie Lane, Sedro - Woolley, Wa 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written</p>	

		<p>comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>261. Derek Sligh</b></p>	<p>455 PEASE RD Burlington</p>		<p>As a member of the Pacific Party Canopies team I have been privileged to see first hand the import role that Skagit farm venues have in our community. These venues are the backdrop of celebrations of life, family reunions, fundraisers, engaging activities for children, weddings and events that simply enrich our communities knowledge and appreciation of the beautiful county we call home. The extreme action being proposed to limit use of these venues to just 12 days will have a very harmful impact on not just the venue itself and the those utilizing the space but also all of the community involved in facilitating the use. Caterers, DJs, Florists, Planners and many other contributors will be instantly affected in loss of employment and in many cases this may threaten the capability of these businesses to operate at all. I ask that you consider the totality</p>

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			of the impact and work in collaboration with all parties involved to find solutions that have a sustainable outcome that takes in to account the entire community. Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this.
<b>262. Laurie Sherman</b>	4596 ginnett rd anacortes, wa 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>263. Adrienne Beattie</b>	4608 Cutter Dr Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We should not be limiting the use of events held on Ag-NGL land but rather encouraging visitors to experience the 'treasure' that Skagit's farmland offers & this proposal eliminates so much.
<b>264. Anne Bussiere</b>	46355 Washington Street, Concrete	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This is a complicated issue and farm venues are an essential part of the county's economy, both for tourism and for farmers.
<b>265. Dana Dana Chandler</b>	4705 Mount Baker Loop, Mount Vernon, WA, 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>266. Virginia Brightwell</b>	4915 Dundee Drive, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Skagit County farms need all the help we can give them in order to stay in business. Skagit County is at risk of losing farms if they cannot supplement their income by offering venues such as for weddings.
<b>267. Denise Fischer</b>	494 Colville Way, La Conner, WA 98257, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written

		<p>comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>268. Denise Fischer</b></p>	<p>494 Colville Way, La Conner, WA 98257, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>269. Trina Carlson</b></p>	<p>504 South 1st Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is</p>	

		referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>270. Brian Hinson</b>	510 E North st	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	They should not limit the number of events, there's no reason for this.
<b>271. Laura Spehar</b>	520 4th St. Anacortes, WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>272. Scott Shapiro</b>	520 S. King St., Seattle, WA 98104, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and



Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

		consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>273. Melinda Smith</b>	5221 Talon Ct, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>274. Lisa Bugg</b>	526 N 17th Pl, Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Many of us in Skagit County rely - or one day hope to - on agritourism. It offers a wonderful opportunity for those who don't live in these areas to enjoy them and for those who do to share them. Farmland is at the very heart of our beautiful county. It offers sustenance - both physical and emotional. Its use and benefits should not be limited to only a select few, nor should those who do have access to it be

			prevented from sharing it with others in ways that support their family's livelihood and, potentially, even their ability to remain there. Please reconsider.
<b>275. Kim Struthers</b>	5388 E Division St, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>276. Lea Jennings</b>	550 Woollen Road, Burlington, wa 98233	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>277. Sarah Nichols</b>	5677 Patricia Lane, Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>278. Megan McClellam</b>	5799 Edens Rd, Anacortes, WA 98221, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the	

		<p>July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.</p> <p>As someone who resides in Skagit County, is getting married at a cherished farm venue this weekend, and who loves and supports Skagit Valley famers, PLEASE listen to us. Our guests are not only supporting local area AirBNBs and hotels, but also the Skagit Valley Co Op, local florists and caterers, local wedding planners and DJs, restaurants, parks, and other small businesses.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<b>279. Flora Snarrenberg</b>	5836 Chuckanut Drive, Bow WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>280. Linda Peterson</b>	609 Tillinghast Dr., La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not limit farm venues. It brings in tax money to support our beautiful county.
<b>281. Karen Mason</b>	625 Wanapum Dr. La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>282. Ann Acton</b>	627 Central Ave, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community	

		<p>feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>283. Katherine Hicks</b></p>	<p>6358 seashell st Apt B, Anacortes, Wa 98221, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit</p>

		County for years to come.	County for years to come.
<b>284. Alex Bell</b>	664 Overlook Ln, Burlington, WA 98233, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>285. Alice Isackson</b>	671 Muckleshoot Cir, La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>286. Antonia Heffelfinger</b>	6785 Gibraltar Place Anacortes WA 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>287. Antonia Heffelfinger</b>	6785 Gibraltar Place, Anacortes, WA 98221	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Farms and farm venues are critical to the success of Skagit County. Whether it's agriculture, ecology, or revenue from local events, these spaces are the backbone of our local economy. Without them, and without the ability to host as many events in a normal season, many of them will cease to exist. It's crucial that the county revise this proposal and continue to support the

			<p>growth of local farm businesses in the valley. Without them, we will lose the natural beauty that defines this region and allows the continued success of farms and families in the Skagit Valley. Preserve Skagit farmland and farms: pavement is forever.</p>
<p><b>288. Kendra Dobbs</b></p>	<p>6876 Ershig Rd, Bow, WA 98232, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>289. Daniel Thayer</b></p>	<p>700 W Blackburn Rd, Mt Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>290. Madeline Knutson</b></p>	<p>711 Fidalgo Ave, Anacortes, WA 98221, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023</p>	

		<p>Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>291. Jennifer Wiedenman</b></p>	<p>7117 worline rd bow wa 98232</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>292. Angie Feskova</b></p>	<p>733 Hamlin Pl Burlington WA 98233</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>I support saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>
<p><b>293. Lisa Call</b></p>	<p>7407 Thomas Road, Bow, WA 98282, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please reconsider your actions on changing ruling on venues for celebration. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit</p>	<p>Skagit County - please reconsider your actions on changing ruling on venues for celebration. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit</p>

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		County for years to come	County for years to come.
<b>294. Jacqueline Martin</b>	746 Westpoint Pl, Burlington, WA 98233	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I am tired of government and community leaders going back on their word and going against what the community says. It is time to hold them accountable.
<b>295. Stefanie Johnston</b>	7516 Avalon Heights Way Sedro Woolley wa 98284	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>296. Dickman Mariah</b>	7600 Valeria Pl, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>297. Krista Johnson Johnson</b>	763 Chapman Rd, Camano Island	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>298. Cathy Schoenberg</b>	7731 Holiday Blvd Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>299. Susan Strode</b>	812 Whatcom, La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Time is needed to consider and respond.

<b>300. Taryn Aldridge</b>	8203 Avery lane Sedro Woolley wa	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
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<p><b>301. Kristen Hancock</b></p>	<p>825 S 9th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>
<p><b>302. Shawna Blue</b></p>	<p>8286 Reece Ave Sedro Woolley wa 98284</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>303. Laura Williams</b></p>	<p>8629 Copper Lane sedro woolley</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>There must be comprises. Shutting down the venues is not the answer. They use their profits to keep historical barns preserved for the public to enjoy. Wedding bring guests (tourists) into our community. Banning future building, using land for parking, new venues, etc is reasonable. Shutting down existing businesses is not the way.</p>
<p><b>304. Jane Edgley</b></p>	<p>892 Palouse Pl. La Conner, WA</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Please do not restrict farm venues from hosting weddings and other events. Let liberty</p>

			and freedom continue to ring!
<b>305. Kaila Sheckter</b>	8933 Sneeoosh Lane La Conner wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>306. Courtney Holcomb</b>	902 McGarigle, Sedro Woolley, Wa 98284, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>307. Jan Danilson</b>	903 South 38th Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98274, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder	

		engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>308. Hayley Baker</b>	908 31st St, Unit G, Anacortes, WA 98221, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.
<b>309. Myrrica Valentine</b>	919 Marshall St Sedro Woolley, WA 98284		Farm venue events provide economic development to our Skagit Valley area, finding resolution that allows them to continue is necessary. Venues host holiday markets that help local small businesses/creators and attract out of town people.

Attachment 13 – Save Skagit Venues

<p><b>310. Gary Kutchick</b></p>	<p>921 Bennet St, Sedro Woolley</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>These Venues are what makes Skagit County the great county it is. Let's not ruin that and cause hardship on these businesses</p>
<p><b>311. Susan Kutchick</b></p>	<p>921 Bennett St Sedro Woolley wa</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	
<p><b>312. Susan Kutchick</b></p>	<p>921 Bennett St, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>313. Meghan McKenna</b></p>	<p>9311 Harrison Rd, Sedro Woolley, Wa 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on</p>	

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		<p>this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>314. Pam Mash</b></p>	<p>933 TALCOTT ST, Sedro Woolley</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Skagit needs these lovely places to celebrate with loved ones. Please don't take this away from us! It adds so much value to our communities.</p>
<p><b>315. Adam Jewett</b></p>	<p>936 Nelson Street, Sedro-Woolley, Washington 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p>	
<p><b>316. Olivia Yates</b></p>	<p>9369 Prospect St, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284, United States</p>	<p>Skagit County ,  Pease add additional</p>	

		<p>time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue, as it has become apparent that the conversation requires further exploration and discussion. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.</p> <p>Thank you, Olivia Yates</p>	
<p><b>317. Olivia Yates</b></p>	<p>9369 prospect st. Sedro woolley, wa 98294</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>I implore you to keep public comment open on the proposed changes to the agritourism codes impacting Skagit County farmland. As a local wedding florist in the Skagit Valley, who sources 90% of flowers and foliage from farmers in Skagit. It alone spends around \$35,000 annually with local flower farms. My business is proof that weddings and events</p>

			<p>hosted on agricultural land do in fact support local agriculture. My business is a very small portion of a much larger group of businesses that would dramatically impacted by reducing the number of events farm venues can host annually. Outside of my business and ties to the farms and wedding venues in Skagit County, I have a deep background in agriculture, specifically sustainable ag. I encourage everyone involved in this conversation who is under the impression that changing this code will support local farmland, to consider that not all farms and farmers are stewards of the land. In fact, a farm venue could be just as good of, if not a better steward than some conventional farmers. I would encourage all of us to have more conversation around what being a good steward of skagit county farmland looks like and building codes, laws, and regulations around that, rather than assuming supporting antiquated assumptions that traditional agriculture is always the answer. I could continue for pages, but won't. Instead, I will again ask that you keep public comment on this matter open, so the people of Skagit who deeply care about both the land and the people have the opportunity to contribute their ideas to this conversation. I look</p>
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			<p>forward to seeing you at the meeting on Tuesday.</p>
<p><b>318. Chris Weiss</b></p>	<p>9634 McGlenn drive, La Conner, WA</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Dear Skagit County Commissioners and Skagit County Planning Department,</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong support for Skagit farm venues and events and to voice my concerns about the new proposed code that seems overly restrictive compared to neighboring Whatcom and Snohomish counties.</p> <p>The proposed code, as it stands, would severely limit agritourism opportunities in Skagit County, potentially shutting down all but two venues. This would not only impact the local economy but also hinder the growth and development of the agricultural sector in the region.</p> <p>Furthermore, the code's language explicitly bans celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties, or similar events in farm venues, indicating a lack of understanding of the positive impact such events can have on local farmers and their livelihoods. Skagit County should embrace agritourism and its potential to strengthen the community while preserving its agricultural heritage.</p> <p>The recent Skagit County Agritourism 2022 Survey, which indicated strong</p>



			<p>community support for agritourism, should be taken into account. The majority of survey participants expressed a desire to allow weddings and events with certain conditions, recognizing the importance of striking a balance between agritourism and farming.</p> <p>Additionally, the provision in the proposed code restricting the use of existing farm buildings for agritourism ventures is concerning. These structures could provide excellent venues for events, farm stands, and other agritourism activities, benefiting both the farmers and the community.</p> <p>In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the current proposed code and to work towards a more balanced approach that supports agritourism and its positive impact on Skagit County's economy, culture, and agricultural heritage. Please take into account the feedback from the community and find a solution that promotes both the growth of agritourism and the preservation of farming in the region.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
<p><b>319. Cheryl Eskeberg</b></p>	<p>9862 WIndy Ridge Ln, Bow</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>I think it would be sad for us to no longer have the choice of having a farmers' market where folks are selling produce from their own</p>

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			land. If you don't want to go to the farmers market, then don't go but don't stop me from going.
<b>320. Debs Harlan</b>	9923 Pull & Be Damned Rd, LaConner, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>321. Laura Mack</b>	Anacortes	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>322. Tina Sullivan</b>	Anacortes	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I believe that whatever uses the farmers can have at their disposal to help them thrive should be supported in order to give incentive to keep them around. It seems ashamed that this is even being considered. These are people in the community that work the hardest and should be supported by those surrounding them and benefiting from the literal fruits of their labor. It is unfair to tie their hands in areas they are able to subsidize themselves!
<b>323. Janessa Schmaus</b>	Anacortes	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>324. Katherine Hicks</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please DO NOT DO THIS. These venues offer a lot of opportunities to a lot of small businesses in skagit county. With out the events these small businesses would hurt greatly. Skagit county already suffered great loss with COVID and a lot of small businesses were lost then. Please don't make this happen to our county again.
<b>325. Janise Hadley</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not limit Skagit County Farm Venues!
<b>326. Peggy Woods</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Shutting down events on ag land is a terrible idea that will needlessly affect so many people. Small farms, venues, events are a wonderful blessing to this region.

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			Please don't make it harder or impossible for them.
<b>327. Keri Knapp</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>328. Kathleen Deterling</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>329. Janet Pearce</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	No more houses please!!
<b>330. Karen Thompson</b>	ANACORTES	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>331. Lisa McFadden</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>332. Sue Shaw</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>333. Zachary Wight</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>334. Marcia Kastner</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>335. Andrew Jorgensen</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>336. Debora Routhe</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please don't close farm venues in Skagit County.
<b>337. Gale Schwarb</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Agritourism is a benefit and supports keeping small family farms, currently an endangered species, in business. We need more agritourism!
<b>338. Phyllis Thoreson</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I think more input is needed. I would hate to see Christianson's, for example, have to change their much-appreciated events.
<b>339. Amy Angelli</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>340. Kay Berry</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>341. Heather Carlson</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>342. Stephanie Downey</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Anacortes supports Farm Venues & Events.
<b>343. Janet Gifford</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>344. Cyrena Gilpatrick</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Skagitonians deserve time to be heard!
<b>345. Patrice Heyduck</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	The farmers markets are great. It enables people to help our local farmers.
<b>346. John Jeffers</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	By keeping the integrity of American Agricultural intact, you allow independent farmers/growers the freedom to choose how best to supplement their income from the sweat of their own brow and ensure future generations the ability to do the same. Please build bridges, not tear them down.
<b>347. Mary Jeffers</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>348. Jon Lawrence</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	These farm based venues are a key part of what makes living up here so good. We love supporting the farms, and we love the uniqueness of these venues and want them to remain open the way they are. Please keep the public comment period open so these proposed changes can get more discussion.
<b>349. Darcy MacPherson</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Seriously, this is an agricultural county! What is wrong with re-use or additional use of farm areas? Do we not want an educated populace on agricultural practices and model stewardship of the land? I honestly hope you folks haven't waived to developer dollars.

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<b>350. Samantha Murphy</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>351. Hildy Radke</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>352. Elizabeth Lundquist</b>	Anacortes	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	The tourist part of agritourism needs a seat at the table
<b>353. Cleo Bouffiou</b>	Anacortes 98221	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please discard you short sited idea's and support the Skagit Farmers not hinder them
<b>354. James Ferguson</b>	Anacortes, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	The proposed amendments to Skagit Code 14.04 Definitions and 14.16 Zoning drafted by The Agricultural Advisory Board and modified by the Planning Commission should be rejected completely. The independent work of the Agricultural Advisory Board did not respect the public input, public survey, nor the consensus reached by the Planning Commission in March 2023 that the current code is adequate if enforced. Instead, these proposed changes would dramatically alter agritourism uses in ways directly opposed to the wishes of the public as expressed by over 2/3 of the 2022 survey respondents. Any change, if needed, should fully respect the public input and reflect the survey responses.
<b>355. David Smith</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>356. Anna Burns</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>357. John Raff</b>	Anacortes, wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Why would you do this? And why would you do

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			it without ample time for public input?
<b>358. Ole Raff</b>	Anacortes, wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Don't you have better things to do?
<b>359. Elisabeth Raff</b>	Anacortes, Wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support the farmers. They need all the financial assistance they can get. Why would you put more regulation on them
<b>360. Sandra Starbuck</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This is extremely important to our local economy and tourism in the area, as well as to local farmers. We have already been hit pretty hard in the area by ferry instability and cancellation of the ferry to Canada.
<b>361. Cindy Heath</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I participated in all the surveys and as a former farmer, I voted FOR the inclusion of events along with farming. It's hard to make a living as a farmer, and they need the additional income.
<b>362. Kelly McKittrick</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>363. Emma McIntyre-Roth</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Closing Skagit Venues would be of immense detriment to our community and its many small businesses and farmers. Please keep public comment open past 07/27. If this proposal goes through it would have on absurdly negative impact on our beautiful area and its many residents.
<b>364. Kelsi Martinez</b>	Anacortes, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>365. Rebecca Pratt</b>	Blanchard, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>366. Wendy Beplate</b>	Bow	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	

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<b>367. Kaylea Custer</b>	Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>368. Alyssa Stamey</b>	Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not close public comment on Agritourism on 7/27/23.
<b>369. Charlene Day</b>	Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Agritourism drives economies in Europe and educates tourists about local agriculture, we should support local entrepreneurs in our beautiful farmlands !
<b>370. Linda Versage</b>	Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>371. Mindy Graham</b>	Bow	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>372. Kayla Allen</b>	Bow WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Farming is the backbone of skagit county and supporting our farmers should be a high priority. we should not be putting extreme limits on their businesses that would then in turn make it impossible for them to make a decent living doing what they love which is farming and sharing that with others. community members of skagit county deserve time to have input on the decision and have their voices heard.
<b>373. Kamriell Welty</b>	Bow, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>374. Erin Lietzan</b>	Bow, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Farmers need all the opportunities they can get to stay afloat. Give them the opportunity to diversify their businesses by offering their land and buildings as venues for gatherings.
<b>375. Nicole Geertsma</b>	Bow, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events. You should also. Thank you.
<b>376. Kamriell Welty</b>	Bow, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>377. Rachel Perlot</b>	Bow, WA 98232	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	In an ecosystem and climate where farming becomes riskier and less profitable every year, especially for small and medium-sized farms, agritourism is a vital and critical tool for farmers to supplement income, build community and customer base, and foster understanding of agriculture. Do not limit farmers' revenue options and then claim to be pro-agriculture- this code proposal is anti-farmer and anti-agriculture.
<b>378. Andrea Conley</b>	Bow, WA 98232		
<b>379. Alicia Chesnutt</b>	Bow, Wa, 98232	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>380. Lorie Nick</b>	Brier	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>381. Susan Hawkins</b>	Brier WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>382. Cheryl Smith</b>	Burien	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not make it impossible for these wonderful family farms to make enough money to supplement their farm businesses!
<b>383. Maurice Connon</b>	Burien	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I don't live up in that county but I go to events on farms up there a couple times a year. It would be terrible to have those events discontinued.
<b>384. Tiffany Satterfield</b>	Burien, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	The public would appreciate a longer comment period.
<b>385. Rachelle Faber</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>386. Brad Aslett</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I support saving Skagit Farm Venues. By limiting or potentially cutting what they can do will negatively affect so many people. Not just the owners of the venues, but all the vendors out there



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			(coordinators, florists, caterers, DJ's and more).
<b>387. Alexander Bell</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues
<b>388. Mathew Baxter</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>389. Carmen Hershberger</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please don't make it harder for our small businesses to operate in this county. Our economy depends on them.
<b>390. Pamela Lloyd</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>391. Sandra Nootenboom</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Not only does this support our local farms, many Skagitonians have to go outside of Skagit County to hold events since neighboring counties have many more options as it is. Don't pull the plug on these existing Skagit options. They benefit our community and farming.
<b>392. Amy Ackerson</b>	Burlington	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>393. Kim Robinson</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Commissioners- What is wrong with you?
<b>394. Karen Aslett</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	4th generation Skagitonian
<b>395. Brooke Ungersma</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>396. Kelsey Lott</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please, for the sake of the livelihoods of hundreds of Skagitonians, do not close public comment on 7/27/2023. It is so tragic that the fear of few can come this close to destroying an industry that has brought so much joy, beauty, and money to skagit valley without the say of the entire people.

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<b>397. Claire Dimock</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events to hold events at their venues
<b>398. Amy Rasar</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>399. Ronald Extract</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	My partner and I own Garden Path Fermentation, which we could have started anywhere in the world, but we chose Skagit because we wanted to be closer to our ingredients and showcase the county's abundant agricultural bounty. Our goal has always been to offer guests an on-farm, seed-to-glass experience, which we've worked patiently with the country for the last seven years to try to achieve. The proposal that's been published as the culmination of that effort not only blatantly fails to address what we and others have been trying to achieve, it effectively outlaws a significant portion of existing agritourism activities and send a clear message that businesses like ours aren't wanted here.

<b>400. David Jennings</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>401. Joe Towns</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Skagit County. Please do NOT close public comment on Agritourism on 7/27/2023 so a counter proposal involving the "tourist" part of "Agritourism" can have a seat at the table/ have their voices heard. The proposal was only

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			made public on 7/6/23 and the public would like longer comment period.
<b>402. Katerina Burk</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>403. Kris Tully</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>404. Alex Luevanos</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>405. Stormi Miller</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I was born and raised in Skagit Valley and find the idea of limiting farms to these standards to be highly ridiculous
<b>406. Nadia Mitchell</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>407. Elizabeth Olsen</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This would be devastating to our communities in so many ways. Do not hold us back.
<b>408. Yessenia Rocha</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>409. Lillian Spadoni</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	These venues bring people together from far and wide to showcase the beauty of Skagit Valley. This creates a ripple effect-continuously bringing guests to our valley. It is no secret that tourism is a foundation block for our community's economy. These venues give work to catering companies (several I have worked with) and photographers (many I have grown up with).
<b>410. Robert Moore</b>	Burlington	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Commissioners, you are our most important public asset. Please do what's right.
<b>411. Ron McHenry</b>	Burlington, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>412. Kaycee Barber</b>	Burlington, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I think it's important this discussion continue and allow all impacted

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			<p>voices to be heard. With the amount of people that came to support and discuss their concerns at the public forum, doesn't that support the need for further conversation?</p>
<p><b>413. Peter DeVries</b></p>	<p>Clear Lake</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Please do not limit the amount of events farms may have on their land. It will have wide effects on the farm, the families and the community as these events have far reaching economic benefits. It is a unique and important aspect of our area and should be celebrated and encouraged, not restricted/limited.</p>
<p><b>414. Erica Healy</b></p>	<p>Concrete</p>	<p>I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues</p>	<p>Skagit farm venues host events that bring revenue to our local businesses such as photographers, florists, bakery's, catering companies, espresso stands, grocery stores, fast stations, planners, ect. They also provide an opportunity to teach the community about farms and farmwork, crops, and the land. The farms always come first, as I've witnessed this time and time again.</p> <p>Deciding to limit the way people can make a living doing something they are passionate about on land they love and care for is down right wrong. These people have mortgages, children to provide for ect and have put their hearts, blood, sweat and tears into their venues. Please don't take that away from our</p>

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			community. Please listen to the people, the small local business owners, the small local farm owners, the people who make up so much of our beautiful county! Thank you.
<b>415. Anthony Hansen</b>	Concrete	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>416. Madeline Handzlik</b>	concrete	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>417. Patricia Melillo</b>	Concrete WA 98237	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>418. Katie Clements</b>	Fir Island	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please do not take away my livelihood. Our business does not interfere with farming. The ripple effect of this will hurt hundreds of local small businesses, mainly women owned.
<b>419. Tanya Hoffman</b>	Fir Island	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>420. Renata McCauley</b>	La Conner	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I love farm venues and their vendors. I support them 100% and use them.
<b>421. Allison Rinard</b>	La Conner	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Limiting the potential for creative revenue generation on small farms will only exacerbate a trend of farmland being abandoned or developed because a younger generation cannot make a living farming the way their parents and grandparents did. Young farmers with a greater incentive towards conservation and regenerative farming practices need access to land and multiple revenue streams to keep farms operational.
<b>422. Allison Rinard</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>423. Stephen Kessinger</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Our farmers need all the help and opportunities they can get.
<b>424. Margaret Hanson</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please keep skagit farms events available for tourists - and we locals!
<b>425. Margaret Hanson</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please keep skagit farms events available for tourists - and we locals!
<b>426. Karin Hasselberg</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please save these venues...an important part for the local economy
<b>427. Chelsea Jewell</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>428. Eugenia Rocca</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit Farm Venues; farmers need all the help they can get to survive economically. Small farms are especially vulnerable. Eugenia M. Rocca
<b>429. Davery Lorentzen</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>430. James Pethigal</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events
<b>431. Irene Blanchard</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I don't know why the current uses of agritourism are a problem, or "needing to be changed", but this is _Skagit County_. It is how we publicly enjoy our various agricultural locations.
<b>432. David Edgley</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit County farm venues and events and farm stands!
<b>433. Madison Smith</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Event venues are a part of many local celebrations, we also provide event space for more than just weddings, but also charity fundraisers (Skagit Boys & Girls Club) and graduations including the graduation of the Resident Doctors of Skagit Regional

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			Health (who specifically want an outdoor venue after the Covid Pandemic). These events are treasured annual events by those who organize but also those who attend to feel connected to their community and want to host in a venue that represents the beautiful Skagit Valley.
<b>434. Kara Stamback</b>	La Conner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	These conversations are important. They should be set up well so voices are heard and creative solutions can be discovered.
<b>435 Sandra Jensen</b>	La Conner, Wa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support skagit farm venues and events
<b>436. Zoe Fejeran</b>	La Conner, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit Farm wedding venues and urge for continued public comment to ensure a counter proposal can be heard.
<b>437. Margaret Hanson</b>	La Conner, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>438. Chris Weiss</b>	LaConner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>Subject: Support for Skagit Farm Venues and Events</p> <p>Dear Skagit County Commissioners and Skagit County Planning Department,</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong support for Skagit farm venues and events and to voice my concerns about the new proposed code that seems overly restrictive compared to neighboring Whatcom and Snohomish counties.</p> <p>The proposed code, as it stands, would severely limit agritourism opportunities in Skagit</p>

		<p>County, potentially shutting down all but two venues. This would not only impact the local economy but also hinder the growth and development of the agricultural sector in the region.</p> <p>Furthermore, the code's language explicitly bans celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties, or similar events in farm venues, indicating a lack of understanding of the positive impact such events can have on local farmers and their livelihoods. Skagit County should embrace agritourism and its potential to strengthen the community while preserving its agricultural heritage.</p> <p>The recent Skagit County Agritourism 2022 Survey, which indicated strong community support for agritourism, should be taken into account. The majority of survey participants expressed a desire to allow weddings and events with certain conditions, recognizing the importance of striking a balance between agritourism and farming.</p> <p>Additionally, the provision in the proposed code restricting the use of existing farm buildings for agritourism ventures is concerning. These structures could provide excellent venues for events, farm stands, and other agritourism</p>
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			<p>activities, benefiting both the farmers and the community.</p> <p>In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider the current proposed code and to work towards a more balanced approach that supports agritourism and its positive impact on Skagit County's economy, culture, and agricultural heritage. Please take into account the feedback from the community and find a solution that promotes both the growth of agritourism and the preservation of farming in the region.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
<b>439. Ellen Smith</b>	LaConner	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events and am grateful for the money they bring into the county and the way they keep our farmers afloat! Do not use comments on this issue.
<b>440. Jessie Anderson</b>	Maplehurst	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please don't pass the restrictive proposed code!
<b>441. Taina Pomeroy</b>	Marblemount	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We are a Nation of free peoples and we have the right as a people to make free choices. And that includes the right to hold venues on our properties if we so chose.
<b>442. Rachael Sparwasser</b>	Mount Vernon 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>443. Kathleen Nelles</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Why would we restrict a business that helps our county in many ways? From a florist to the caterer...many hands and businesses plan on doing these amazing events so not only

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			would you be restricting the venue, but all the other businesses needed for an event. Don't restrict!!!
<b>444. Theresa Bergquist</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>445. Jennifer Barnet</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>446. Cecily Gubitosi</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>447. Mona Fahoum</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I get controlling traffic at the tulip farms but you are literally hurting small business at these farms, hotels, restaurants, air bnb, and shopping. Unacceptable
<b>448. Marlo Frank</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	My daughter got married at Saltbox Barn and it was a beautiful wedding in a unique setting. We also own a business in La Conner and the weddings support the local economy.
<b>449. Sarah McCown</b>	Mount vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>450. Breanna Fuqua</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>451. Kira Shultz</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>452. Bryan Hancock</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	These are lifelong Skagitonians spanning multiple generations. They provide a positive service for the community. These wedding venues are a revenue source for local companies and destroying this would result in a loss for local businesses far beyond just the venues. These venues only promote our beautiful Skagit Valley, all doing so without inhibiting farming activities to surrounding farm fields. These arent Seattle companies buying up farmland. These are our neighbors, family

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			and friends.  Bryan Hancock, Born and raised in Mount Vernon. Lifelong resident of 44 years.
<b>453. Kim Struthers</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>454. Sarah Rodriguez</b>	Mount vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please listen to the people of Skagit county
<b>455. Kat Oliver</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Farm owners should decide how many weddings they can have, not the government. The more you restrict citizens, more creative they get.
<b>456. Alyssa Oczkewicz</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	This is only one of our county commissioners nonsense laws they are trying to put in place in our county. I'm more than happy to stand up and fight for my friends on agriculture.
<b>457. Lucy Saechao</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Saving farm venues can help educate the public on how important agriculture is to not only Skagit county but the entire state of Washington. Venue owners, vendors and farmers can plan to collaborate to build a stronger community.
<b>458. Jordan Swanson</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Do not do this!!
<b>459. Kristin Wilmer</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I support Skagit Farm venues!
<b>460. Ariel Lepore</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>461. Brianna Owen</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Supporting local farms for use for venues or events, is not just for the financial benefit of the farm, but the enjoyment, love, pride, and support of the community. We also get to be part of their story and enjoy the beautiful farms they are creating in our county. We get to walk their grounds, see the work and sweat of their

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			labor, and immerse ourselves into our very own Skagit farmland. I would feel rob of an opportunity to support, and help grow our local farms and businesses.
<b>462. Kayla Thayer</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I am an employee of a wedding venue in Skagit County. If new regulations are made, this would cost many to lose their jobs & business and lessen the availability for wedding options in Skagit County. These potential limitations would create problems for many people in our county and lessen the amount of tourists/visitors who use these types of facilities for celebrations or lodging.
<b>463. Sean Halpin</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Dear commissioners,  Don't keep farmers from using their beautiful farms to attract people to skagit county. This is a vital source of income for farmers that need all the support they can get. Regardless the county and government should have no say in what Americans use their private property for.  Sincerely, Your constituent.
<b>464. Julaine Nichols</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>465. Rachel Matthews</b>	Mount vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>466. Robin Haglund</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Farm venue events are a key component of life in Skagit. Art, weddings, classes, farm-to-table meals, and so many other on-the-farm gatherings that aren't strictly farming

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			should continue to be a part of this diverse place I call home.
<b>467. Tori King</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	This doesn't just affect the farms/land owners, it would trickle down the businesses that support wedding events, such as caterers, photographers, florists... By passing this absurd legislation, it would not only make small business lose revenue, it would be a loss in tax dollars spent in Skagit. County.
<b>468. Phyllis Stinn</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Farmers have it tough enough without more government bureaucracy. Let these hard working people make a little money. Many families have enjoyed having their wedding at these farms .
<b>469. Andrea Boyce</b>	Mount vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Agritourism is a necessary means of support for any farm to be able to survive in the off seasons. Wedding venues should be allowed to help being needed money to the farms and the community. Instead of shutting down wedding venues and large gatherings held at farms, find a solution with local farmers. Think of the bigger picture and how their large events bring extra money and tourism to your county. Stop trying to suffocate your local farmers and their means of staying in business.
<b>470. L Sloane Winkes</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	To Skagit County Commissioners I support Skagit Farms being able to host events at their venues. Skagit County

			<p>overwhelmingly voted in favor of agri-tourism in the 2022 survey. You cannot ignore the will of the people of this county to support our farmers through agri-tourism. Restricting farms and barns to agricultural use only will prohibit farm stands from selling their goods at these locations . By allowing a farmstand to exist on the farm property, or in a farm building, that allows farmers to sell their crops and draws many tourists, who love to stop on a real working farm to buy their goods. Having a farmstand, or event venue on their property, does not impact the ability to farm the land at all.</p> <p>Additionally, farms and farm buildings that host weddings or other events, including funerals for members of the farming community, are an essential piece of agri-tourism. They bring in much-needed income to our communities through supporting other small businesses, like caterers and florists. People travel from out of town to the events at these venues, supporting our hospitality industry as well and bringing thousands of tourist dollars into Skagit County.</p> <p>Please do not proceed with the restrictions that are proposed on farm venues. This will cost the county hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue brought in by</p>
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			farms, being able to host a stand or event at their venue. these farms are simply trying to celebrate the beauty that is Skagit County.
<b>471. Molly Dynes-Larson</b>	Mount vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>472. Amanda Camp</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>473. Alla Melnik</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Shutting down venues I'll result in business loss for multiple people.. the airbnbs, hotels, Ubers and more... we also need venues big enough to be able to hold weddings, celebration of life, and other gatherings... shutting down skagit farm venues will affect a lot of people and we'll be forced to take our business elsewhere.
<b>474. Kristina Lovyn</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>475. Raisa Datskiy</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please do not shut down Skagit farm venues!
<b>476. Ryan Johns</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>477. Christine Minor</b>	Mount Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	It is important for farmers to be able to supplement their income so that they can continue to farm. They need to be allowed to have farm stands, or rent portions of their property for events. People who attend these events have the potential of supporting other local businesses (hotels and restaurants). There needs to be a balance between preserving farmland and restricting the additional income that could be the difference between success and failure for a farm family.

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<p><b>478. Debra Willer</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>After reading the article in the Skagit Valley Herald, I am baffled by the proposed county code for agritourism. It sounds as if the code was developed without the input of the farm venue owners. Putting restrictions on what is defined as agritourism without an option for these existing ensues to continue their livelihood doesn't make sense. These businesses bring people and money to the Valley while supporting many small business owners such as caterers, photographers, and florists. They are members of our community and support family farming.</p> <p>Please reconsider this proposed code change.</p>
<p><b>479. Christina Sprouse</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>480. Kayla Thayer</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>481. Katie Clements</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Please do not close public comment on 7/27.</p>
<p><b>482. Cecily Gubitosi</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Please don't close public comment on 7/27/23. This issue will have a detrimental effect on farms and small businesses that work these farms for special events.</p>
<p><b>483. Kristin Wilmer</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>484. Emma Christianson</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Do not limit public participation as it is imperative to hear the community response to this issue.</p>



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<b>485. Kim Struthers</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>486. Brock Clements</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not close the public comment period.
<b>487. Lucy Saechao</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>488. Kristen Hancock</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>489. Theresa Bergquist</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>490. Jeffrey Anderson</b>	Mount vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This proposed code must be amended. We look forward to the meeting on 7/25 and are excited to have a spotlight to share our side.
<b>491. Amy Schwab</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>492. Eve Smith</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>493. Stephanie Howell</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>494. Tori King</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>495. Katelin Benoit</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>496. Amanda Scott</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events- please. do not close public comments
<b>497. Troy Philp</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>498. Emma Fox</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>499. Heather Sampson</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>500. Gayle Lee</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please save our beautiful Skagit farms and events. Skagit County is a natural wonderland and our

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			farm venues are a key point in that.
<b>501. Denise Wolf</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	If Christianson's Nursery is concerned, I am too!
<b>502. Roger Emerson</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support the Skagit Farm Venues and oppose the County's proposal to limit them.
<b>503. Lesley Frenz</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>504. Susan Griffith</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>505. Alex Bell</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>506. Jan Johnson</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We need more time-thx
<b>507. Linda Staab</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	The proposed regulations are far too restrictive. The beauty of the Skagit Valley should be shared with visitors - that helps the local economy. County residents cherish the farm stands, and the summer and holiday markets. A rural wedding venue is desirable to anyone who loves the Valley. It is possible to establish some regulations to prevent overcrowding or damage to the land, but an outright ban should be off the table.
<b>508. Bob Jungquist</b>	mount vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>509. Scott Rindal</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>510. Alexa King</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>511. Kathleen Nelles</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do what's right for small businesses and the economy of our valley! How is this ok????

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<b>512. Kali Archipley</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Agrotourism and the sovereignty of farmers and their land is essential to maintain the essence and standard of what it means to live, work and visit Skagit Valley. If the county wishes to pass laws to inhibit the success of farmers and their business, the community has a right to decide to what degree and WHY.
<b>513. Andrea Black</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>514. Darin Blanchard</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Who is proposing these changes? Is it a person, a PAC, a committee? I'm sure the answer can be found in the usual "follow the money". This proposal is absolutely absurd.
<b>515. Nikki Boyce</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support a more inclusive definition of agritourism in Skagit County and support Skagit venues.
<b>516. Alex Brancheau</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>517. Marissa Capasso</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events.
<b>518. Milya Eekman</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events as a future small-scale farmer because having these available helps small farmers and supports free enterprise.
<b>519. Vanessa Erickson</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>520. Samantha Gutierrez-Rice</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>521. Christina Hill</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>522. Anh Huynh</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>523. Jacob Koester</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support farm venues and events
<b>524. Geneveva Koester</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Remember you were elected for the people. You must give the people their voice
<b>525. James Mai</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>526. Perry Montgomery</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please keep public comment open while so many of your constituents desire to be heard on the issue. Thank you.
<b>527. Angela Speer</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	These new restrictions do not serve in the best interest of the community you represent.
<b>528. Giordan Yunge</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>529. Jose Castro</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This community needs agritourism. Houses are half a million and inflation is high. Don't take away farmers income after everything they have done for you.
<b>530. Piper Paris</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>531. Rosemary Kamb Kidane</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>Skagit County already regulates farmland - you must have 40 acres to have a house, and have worked the land at an agricultural profit for a term of years.</p> <p>On Fir Island you cannot start up a new business without it being agriculturally connected. People were encouraged to start sustainable smaller farms and venues. Now this proposal will take that away.</p> <p>Along with that taking goes hundreds of jobs and businesses that</p>

			<p>have grown in a sustainable, organic manner like the farm to table movement in the culinary arts, like the congregating of community in our venues where people may come together to celebrate the really meaningful events of their lives, weddings, wakes, christenings, anniversary parties. And why?</p> <p>Many of these more creative farm practices are implemented by women. Having farmstands IS SKAGIT HERITAGE, its pin money, egg money, flowers, honey, These farm stands were here before mono-agricultural practices depleted the soil There is more diversity and markets today that are being filled by creative industrious individuals that are being totally ignored by this proposal.</p> <p>Many of these venues have restored heritage barns that were becoming dilapidated. These have been transformed to a high standard and have created destination spots. that otherwise would have fallen down.</p> <p>Why is this proposal so very vague? This is like red-ling and I believe that this is micromanaging people's use of their own land.</p>
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			<p>My family has owned property in the Skagit area since before Washington became a State. They came here to own their own land and have the right to earn a living from that land. This proposal takes that away. It is vague, ambiguous, and as such quite arbitrary and the whim of people who appear to believe they should be controlling the free will and pursuit of happiness of others.</p>
<b>532. Haley Vo</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>533. Christa Cooney</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>I personally know many people in the valley who do beautiful gatherings that bring our community together on their lands. To not allow celebrations and such on farmlands is to shut the door on centuries of traditions where communities come together and celebrate, with the beauty of nature as a backdrop. These venues are not in any way harming the farming community. This community wants to support these venues. Stop with the overextending reach of governmental regulations and leave these venues to continue to earn their livelihoods in peace.</p>
<b>534. Kimberly Friend</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	<p>I support our local farms and all the venues that they plan! Public or private! It is their property!</p>
<b>535. Sarah Fleming</b>	Mount Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<p><b>536. Cole Corcoran</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>I'm asking Skagit County to NOT close public comment on Agritourism on 7/27/2023 so a counter proposal involving the "tourist" part of "Agritourism" can have a seat at the table/ have their voices heard. The proposal was only made public on 7/6/23 and the public would like longer comment period.</p>
<p><b>537. Ruby Douglas</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	
<p><b>538. Roslyn Schoeler</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>	<p>Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23</p>	<p>Do not close public comment. Millions of dollars will be spent in neighboring due to this new code.</p>
<p><b>539. Susan Hughes-Hayton</b></p>	<p>Mount Vernon</p>		<p>As someone who has been involved in a multi-generation centennial Skagit Valley farm for many years and has a daughter with a venue and another with a farmstand, it was both thrilling and shocking to attend the Agritourism Code Changes Public Hearing during the Skagit County Planning Commission Meeting on July 26th.</p> <p>It was thrilling to be part of a crowd of over 200 people passionate about preserving farmland and making a life for themselves and their families working here in Skagit Valley.</p> <p>It was shocking to read proposed code that threatens the livelihood of many of them - multigenerational neighbors and relatives, as well as 1st generation and</p>

			<p>returning community members.</p> <p>The idea that event venues co-opt farm buildings and farmland was dispelled time and time again through testimony.</p> <p>It was convincingly put forth that event venues and small farms play an essential role in promoting agriculture through the opportunities events provide for interfacing with the public regarding the importance, rich history, and current challenges of farming.</p> <p>As for concerns regarding “flies in the honey” incidences between big ag and ag tourism, they’ve been far and few between, and in one instance, untrue. Every relationship involves some flies with the honey, better to work through a concern as a good neighbor, rather than work to close down your neighbor’s business.</p> <p>And as for permitting. There was a very compelling incident involving several local multigenerational farmers that elected to pursue a project without getting the proper permits, so this feels a bit like the pot calling the kettle black.</p> <p>It is time for new code, it’s an opportunity to create code that</p>
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			<p>supports preservation of community as well as preservation of farmland. Agriculture and agritourism are mutually beneficial activities.</p> <p>Commitment to our farmland AND community is a legacy worth taking great care and sufficient time to consider.</p>
<b>540. Dan Cano</b>	Mount Vernon		
<b>541. Kylie Hale</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>542. Leigh LaLonde</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	<p>I've been to many wonderful events throughout the Skagit farmlands, and I believe allowing these events to continue will help the community. Not only do they support the locals farms, but they also inform the community of their presence and what they have to offer. It opens the door to agriculture education and exposure.</p>
<b>543. Jessica Nguyen</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	<p>Please consider the impacts of the proposed policy change on our local farms, farmers, and small businesses. As you consider the implementation of this policy, I kindly request that you take into account the significant financial implications it may have on these vital stakeholders in our community.</p> <p>Local farms, farmers, and small businesses play a crucial role in our economy, providing essential goods and services while fostering employment opportunities. They</p>

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			form the backbone of our community, contributing to its vibrancy and sustainability.
<b>544. Ian Faley</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	<p>Dear County Commissioners– Please consider the impacts of limiting the venue use of farms, in this community. Most of us with agricultural land &amp; endeavors are making our farms work (ideally, profitably) through various projects– tours, rentals, parties, etc.– additional value being brought to the community through engagement, greater economic benefits, and a celebration of the agricultural heartbeat of this area. Limiting the ability of how we can use our property cuts off vital economic resources for many of us– and it limits how we can share our special place with kids, and future generations. Please consider supporting the maintenance of farm venues current freedoms on use.</p> <p>Cheers, Ian Faley</p>
<b>545. Jennyfer Lopez</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>546. Alysa Wood</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>547. Joni Morrell</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	If it isn't broken, don't try to "fix" it. This proposal is detrimental to Skagit County and should be dropped immediately.
<b>548. Margaret Dariotis</b>	Mount Vernon, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please allow a counterproposal so the Magic of Skagit can be protected.

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<b>549. Cheryl Schmitt</b>	Mount Vernon, WA		
<b>550. Christopher Hickox</b>	Mount Vernon, WA 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not shut down one of the many things that makes Skagit County unique! Our heritage is rich in farming here and taking away this would be ruining one of the few things we have left that separates us from the others.
<b>551. Heather O'Brien</b>	Mount Vernon, WA 98274	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I support Skagit Farm venues and events. Our local community is dependent upon our farms. I believe they should be able to use their property and structures to support their businesses in whatever way they can and not be limited by an arbitrary number of days per year. I run a short term rental and also benefit from local weddings and events and other agritourism and they have my full support.
<b>552. Daina Bussing</b>	Mount Vernon, WA 98274	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This entire proposal is absolutely asinine!!! Skagit County commissions and politicians she be putting their efforts towards the real issues in Skagit County and not ridding the ability to enjoy what little beauty is left. I am honestly becoming ashamed to live in this county!!!
<b>553. Jennifer Platte</b>	Mount VernonWa	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>554. Kathryn Johnson</b>	Mountlake Terrace	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We need a longer comment period. Thanks
<b>555. Christina Parrish</b>	Mt Vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	I support Skagit Farm venues! The proposed restrictions are harmful to our community as a whole and the economy of our county. We need these businesses!

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<b>556. Martha Deleon</b>	Mt vernon	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>557. Christina Parrish</b>	Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>558. Michael Pennington</b>	Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Why would you try to cripple the economy of our valley? If you vote this in, we will hold personally responsible for the decline of our economy.
<b>559. Joan Hill</b>	Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Anything that needs to be done to help farms success is better than over building housing
<b>560. L. Winkes</b>	Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>561. Elizabeth Young</b>	Mt Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>562. Sally Simmons</b>	MT Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>563. Sophie Lyon</b>	Mt vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>564. Amanda Henden</b>	Mt Vernon		Stop killing small businesses
<b>565. Irene Derosier</b>	Mt Vernon		Agritourism in Skagit County not only helps small farm owners but it helps visitors, many who live in the greater western Washington region, fall in love with our farming culture. The notion that farmers are being asked to curtail their farming activities to accommodate visitors is a ridiculously lame argument and could be addressed in the regulations governing agritourism. The negative financial impacts to small family owned businesses would be devastating. Without these visitors any small businesses would suffer. We can all see that family farms are shrinking and corporate farming is

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			growing in Skagit County. Don't restrict activities that humanize our farming legacy. And promote small business. There is absolutely no viable reason to do so. Respectfully, Irene Derosier
<b>566. Jaime Flores</b>	Mt Vernon Washington		
<b>567. Elise Strachila</b>	Mt Vernon, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit farm venues and events continuing the role they serve in the local economy. They are a beautiful part of Skagit Valley and cultivate a huge community of growers, makers, and artisans. Please do not be hasty in decisions that would hurt farms, small businesses, and the numerous industries tied to celebration and tradition.
<b>568. Anne Long</b>	Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>569. Darren Bell</b>	Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Manage yourselves first. You're ruining people's lives. Keep it si
<b>570. Laura Levy</b>	Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	The new rules are far too restrictive. This has not been properly vetted and needs additional input from community members.
<b>571. Carley Martin</b>	Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>572. John Yengich</b>	Mt. Vernon	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>573. Bruce Shellhamer</b>	P.O. Box 1235 LaConner, WA. 98257	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	We support Skagit Farm venues and events. I have officiated weddings, and memorial services at a number of these venues over that past many years and they serve an indispensable

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			<p>service to our community and completely fit in with our beautiful Skagit County landscape and usage. We strongly oppose any changes that will limit or eliminate any of these wonderful venues - and negatively effect the valuable business owners and those they serve.</p> <p>We strongly support our local farmers - but not in this endeavor.</p>
<b>574. Deirdre Morris</b>	P.O. Box 553	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please DO NOT close public comment
<b>575. Jennifer Yzaguirre</b>	PO Box 2876 Mount Vernon, Wa 98273	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>576. Pamela Youngsman</b>	PO Box 2902, Mount Vernon, WA 98273		Please support these farm venues and not implement unnecessary codes. These venues and events are part of what makes the Skagit Valley magical!
<b>577. Bonny Storrs</b>	PO Box 41 Sedro Woolley WA 98284	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	We the people who live , work and gather in this great county need to be heard in these decisions. This is our livelihood and community. More than ever we need to gather as communities and families. We should be supporting healthy alternatives in these manners, not tearing them down, limiting them or restricting them.
<b>578. Lucy Mae VanZanden</b>	Po Box 812, Conway, WA 98238, United States	Skagit County - please create additional time and opportunity for public engagement on this important issue. The community feedback from the BERK Survey (which is referenced during the March 14, 2023 Planning Commission	

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		meeting transcript), the July 25, 2023 public hearing testimonies, and the written comments that you continue to receive on this topic are evidence that more time with multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to bring positive and enduring solutions for agritourism in Skagit County. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this extremely important issue that will impact generations in Skagit County for years to come.	
<b>579. Steven Blattel</b>	Sedro wooley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>580. Caylie Mash</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	The local wedding industry depends on venues, and most of Skagit's are farm venues. So many couples express the joy of being able to show their family and friends the beauty of Skagit and the place the call home!
<b>581. Madison Hopkins</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>582. Cassee Janes</b>	Sedro woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please allow farm venues! Removing them would be terrible!
<b>583. Amanda Benson</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	KEEP OUR BEAUTIFUL VENUES OPEN!!!! KEEP SMALL BUSINESSES IN BUSINESS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
<b>584. Chelsea Govern</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>585. Jordan Turner</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	This is proposed code change will limit revenue streams that support local farms. Events, in addition to traditional farm revenue, help farms stay successful in challenging times.

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			Local farms don't need any more challenges to face, especially challenges imposed by local government.
<b>586. Cheyenne Fernandez</b>	Sedro woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>587. Naomi Sullivan</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	It is unacceptable to be changing regulations on Skagit Farm Venues to not allow them to have as many people at events they host. This is a huge part of our community and I do not agree with changing the regulations for these businesses.
<b>588. Christine Critchley</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>589. Kate Mintz</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	
<b>590. Megan Chatt</b>	Sedro Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Skagit farms should be supported as they navigate the challenges and new opportunities of an ever changing world. New uses and ways of supplementing farm income do not necessarily compete with traditional farming. In my mind they complement one another and can coexist beautifully. We should be expanding agricultural uses, not limiting them. This affects so many people who live on or do business on agricultural land and they should be free to use their own property as they see fit. This does not always mean they are competing with traditional farming.
<b>591. Emily Hayes</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>592. Jesse Schut</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	



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<b>593. Forrest Hopkins</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please don't put these guys out of business, which is what will happen if this proposal goes through, and I don't see any good reason for it.
<b>594. Fred Hopkins</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>595. Len Hopkins</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>596. Lacey Larsen</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23. There is a much greater discussion and need for education on both sides that is critical to being had.
<b>597. Meggan Dempsey</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>598. Caylie Mash</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not close public comment! There are too many people's jobs and businesses depending on Skagit farm venues. In addition to my own wedding at Christianson's Nursery, every Skagit wedding I've ever photographed has taken place at a farm venue. All couples and vendors have been respectful of the venues and neighbors, and have taken such joy in being able to show the beauty of Skagit to their loved ones. Please give us our chance to participate in conversations with the county and farmers, and come to a decision that supports everyone's needs.
<b>599. Andy Holmstrom</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>600. Naomi Bell</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>601. Kenzie Broadhead</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I've lived in Skagit county my whole life born and raised. It would be devastating if we see all of these places we have been going to for years be shut out. There's too many memories and more to make at them to support local families and friends. Please reconsider not shutting them down.
<b>602. Lara Coggins</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>603. Jamie Corning</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>604. Angel Dye</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please do not attack or limit what farmers can do with their property - this industry is what the Skagit Valley is all about!
<b>605. Sandra Genandt</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This will hurt so many people. Coming from a farming family I want our counties farms to succeed. Why limit their income?
<b>606. Tim Herlickson</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>607. Sarah Herlickson</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>608. April Hughes</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>609. Amy Merz</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>610. Dani Needham</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>611. Sigrid Novak</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not limit agritourism - it makes no sense and is totally unnecessary!
<b>612. Marcie Ozaki</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>613. Bailey Rauch</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>614. Roberta Robinson</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please don't shut down our local vegetable and flower farm stands!!!!
<b>615. Kala Robinson</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>616. Kristin Robinson</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This code is crossing a line and will be greatly devastating to our community. We are an agricultural community and based on what I have read regarding this code the county will be going after more then just farm venues. I support all Skagit County Farm Venues and events as well as all farm stands and any small farm business.
<b>617. Sharene Roodzant</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Please extend the time for comments as I believe the impact this will have in limiting events will be significant and we need to ensure the public has time to make their voices heard.
<b>618. Susan Straathof</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This new code is so very wrong! It would be eliminating an opportunity for our kids and families to have access to seeing where there food comes from
<b>619. Nikki Strickert</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>620. Krista Treadway</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I am in full support of our local farms and their willingness/ability to open their property for weddings and other events. I oppose any legislation that would inhibit their ability to use their property as an event venue as they see fit.
<b>621. Damian Vines</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	

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<b>622. Ming Wagoner</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	I support Skagit county farms and events. Do not place burdensome regulations and limitations on our farms. The revenue they generate from hosting events is part of what makes our county so wonderful.
<b>623. Deanna Wright</b>	Sedro woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>624. Carolyn Hillier</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>625. Maddison Donk</b>	Sedro Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do not close public comment on 7/27!
<b>626. Nicola Woltzen</b>	Sedro Woolley		
<b>627. Sarah Arquitt</b>	Sedro Woolley		I support the use of farm venues of all various means. Removing this would cause undue harm to all businesses in Skagit County as it brings in people from outside. Do not pass this!
<b>628. Samara Poole</b>	SedroWoolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>629. Karmen Wood-Skinner</b>	Sedro-Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please keep farm venues and events alive in our county. We need these small farms and business to succeed.
<b>630. Hannah Miles</b>	Sedro-Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	We need logical and rational conversation about how to support farms and farm venues. This should not be a mutually exclusive ordeal. There should be a solution that supports all parties and their businesses.
<b>631. Savannah Compton</b>	Sedro-Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Farms struggle enough as it is to make money. They are what makes Skagit county great. Don't make it worse for them or the people of Skagit county
<b>632. April Hughes</b>	Sedro-Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Our Skagit Farmers need to be able to

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			provide other services to the community to survive, they are fun, educational, and attract more people that then also support our local small businesses.
<b>633. Pam Mash</b>	Sedro-Woolley	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	Please support these venues as they provide a place to celebrate and share joy in our community. Thank you.
<b>634. Holly Sather</b>	Sedro-Woolley	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>635. Debbie Olson</b>	Sedro-Woolley		We should be able to have any size farm we want as long as we aren't growing illegal substances.
<b>636. Kristi Mckee</b>	Sedro-Woolley, WA	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>637. Sunnie Sundquist Farm</b>	Skagit County	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	27th or 25th?? Let farmers determine what is necessary to their livelihood.
<b>638. G. Jackson Brown</b>	Snohomish	I support Saving Skagit Farm Venues	The Valley needs these venues!
<b>639. Frances Slomian</b>	Snohomish	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	
<b>640. Vicki Hesseltine</b>	Snohomish	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Special Events help the farmers stay in business. Limiting events would keep me from coming up to Mt. Vernon for special occasions and would reduce the amount that I spend not only at the event, but also at restaurants and stores. Please take time to listen. It is important to all of us!
<b>641. Erin Clark</b>	Snohomish	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	Do what is right, let the people speak.
<b>642. Mary Jane Vetter</b>	Wylie Road Mount Vernon WA 98273		I co-own our family farm with my sister. We have always told members of the family that it will never be sold and always farmed since this was a promise made to our

		<p>grandfather who grew sustainably and not mono cropping. It is important that as neighbors we all get along, but not allowing us to use our barns for dances, or sheltering a boat, or high school kids creating a homecoming floats is just ridiculous. Just who's great idea was this? Certainly not a woman!</p> <p>This change of vocabulary is way beyond the pale. We are already restricted to 40 A &amp; years of profit for building. But this ridiculous railroad (when did this come to the Commissioners July 3, hmm, then there is the 4th of July holiday , happens to be the busy time for the small farmers, hmm and quietly put on agenda after very misleading staff notes [I encourage everyone to read the consistency portion!!] .) So, beware of being railroaded.</p> <p>Nearly all of these venues that this criterion affects have been created and nurtured to success by women! Women do the work and practices like this keep others out.</p> <p>Well I do not agree with this change and it appears that a majority of the citizenry does not agree. I suggest that if you want to implement such a sweeping changes as to affect the livelihood of thousands of people - then you</p>
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		<p>probably should grandfather everybody who has relied to their detriment purchasing property they intend to farm but cannot market from their farm, or use their barn, because a non-voted upon discretionary advisory board wants to pull a power play. Everyone appears to have adversely possessed their property and buildings for marketing something beneficiary to the community, brings in tax dollars to the county and helps the small farmer pay their property taxes that keep going up and up and up. Are you thinking you will tax small farms up and then buy them up pennies on the dollar. Think again.</p>
<p><b>643. Wilma L. Crogstad Kamb</b></p>	<p>Wylie Road Mount Vernon WA 98273</p>	<p>My sister and I have co-owned a farm on Fir Island since our father, Lewis J. Crogstad passed in the mid sixties.</p> <p>I promised my grandfather, Peter Nicholas Crogstad, we would farm the land always and never sell. This isn't a question of saving farm land for farming. No one is disputing that. We all want to keep farming. This is a matter of use. The use of our building which we are taxed upon each year. We all know the buildings go with the land. Many people my age earn passive income by renting out their property. We choose to do that</p>

		<p>with our property. If I want to rent one of my existing buildings (that sits empty) to a painter he should have the right to have his paint supplies there, if he doesn't, then you are limiting my right to rent to whom I chose.</p> <p>Like my sister, this feels like small venues are being railroaded by this proposal attaching to a forty something year old act that if anyone screwed up it was the planning &amp; permitting. The county has been taking money (taxing us) for permits for years. Well if this has always been the law, then I think everyone should ask for refunds for years of illegal permits. If this has always been so!</p> <p>Obviously this hasn't been thought through. I'd like to know if any of the "discretionary advisory board" has a venue. This proposal does not do anything but take land rights from people. Rights that have always been is to earn your living from your land and pay your taxes. We have all done that.</p> <p>It should be back to the drawing board with totally new advisory board with all types of farmers including small venues, wineries &amp; vineyards, community gathering places (grange! 4-H) involved since none of them appear to have been allowed to be on this</p>
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			discretionary advisory board that goes totally against the survey on agra-tourism and anyone currently with a business should be grandfathered.
<b>644. Nancy Lomsdalen</b>	Young Road	Skagit County- Please do not close public comment on 7/27/23	This is ridiculous and shame on Skagit County!

**645. Ellen Bynum (Friends of Skagit County)**

The petition created on change.org on July 12, 2023 by SaveSkagitFarmVenues.com appears to violate the Change.org Community Policies. Your community policies state that you will remove content that violates your policies.

This post contains misinformation, disinformation and is misleading. We kindly ask that you remove the content and the petition as soon as possible.

Should you have questions, need additional information or wish to discuss, please contact me directly.

Thank you,

Ellen Bynum, Executive Director, Friends of Skagit County

Ellen Bynum

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Skagit County is proposing code changes because of non-farm related businesses operating in the Agriculture - Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRL) zone. A few farms in the zone have hosted weddings and other public events that are not an accessory use to farming and are not a permitted use in the Ag-NRL zone.

Here is Skagit County's analysis of the proposed code changes in the county's staff report. The exact language of the proposed changes is at the bottom of the document. The background and rationale for the proposed changes is in the report.

The Agricultural Advisory Board, a volunteer citizen committee made of farmers and landowners, researched and proposed these changes to clarify the code and as a solution to the problem of event venues on farms operating unpermitted accessory activities, some for many years.

Petitioners claim the new code "will severely limit and restrict Skagit farm venues, farm stands, and all agritourism businesses". This is simply untrue. Farm related activities like farmstands, farm festivals, farm tours or other agricultural related accessory uses and activities are unchanged. Roadside stands are permitted with size conditions.

Under 14.16.400 Ag - NRL permitted uses do not include weddings or other public events like music concerts. Permitted accessory uses cannot interfere with the active and ongoing farm operations. Permitted accessory uses are secondary to farming and must be related to the activities listed in the code.

The primary function of Skagit County's Ag-NRL zone is the production and distribution of food and fiber. Skagit County's definition of agritourism only includes accessory activities that are secondary to the production and/or distribution of food and fiber, and are related to farming. The proposed code changes states "Celebratory gatherings, weddings, parties, or similar uses that cause the property to act as an event center or that take place in structures specifically designed for such events are not agritourism."

Please see the code below 14.16.400 for the list of permitted uses.

The County's Special Use Permit (SUP) currently allows property owners in any zone to hold temporary permitted events up to 24 days of events per year. The proposed code changes reduce to 12 the number of days temporary permitted events can be held in the Ag-NRL zone only. The code for other zonings have respective lists of permitted activities in that code.

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires Skagit County to identify and protect prime agricultural soils for food and fiber production in perpetuity. Other counties may or may not be in compliance with the GMA and their codes reflect various levels of protection for the other counties' farmland. Skagit County is one of last remaining commercial farming area in western Washington because of its commitment to not allow conversions of farms and farmland to other uses. Skagit County also wants to avoid speculative purchases of farms for other uses. Clarifying the codes lets prospective buyers know that farmland is to be used for food and fiber production and farm and agriculturally related accessory activities that are included in the code can be permitted with a special use permit.

The proposed code changes are the result of over two years of work by the Skagit Planning Commission, Skagit Planning & Development Services, the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board and BERK Consultants. All materials from meetings concerning the Agritourism study and associated work were publically noticed and minutes of the Planning Commission are posted on the County website. The upcoming hearing is part of the process of taking testimony from the public on the proposed code and will be part of the legal record that the Planning Commission members will review in order to make their recommendation to the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners.

Skagit County codes (partial):

14.16.400 Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands (Ag-NRL).

(1) Purpose. The purpose of the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands district is to provide land for continued farming activities, conserve agricultural land, and reaffirm agricultural use, activities and operations as the primary use of the district. Non-agricultural uses are allowed only as accessory uses to the primary use of the land for agricultural purposes. The district is composed mainly of low flat land with highly productive soil and is the very essence of the County's farming heritage and character.

(2) Permitted Uses.

(a) Agriculture.

(b) Agricultural accessory uses.

(c) Agricultural processing facilities.

(d) Co-housing, as part of CaRD, subject to SCC 14.18.300 through 14.18.330.

(e) Commercial greenhouse operations that are an integral part of a local soil-based commercial agriculture operation.

(f) Individual or multiple farm composting as an incidental agricultural operation to a working farm with no net loss of soil. The composting operation shall be managed according to an approved nutrient management plan in conjunction with the local Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and all applicable environmental, solid waste, access and health regulations. Such use shall not generate traffic uncommon to a farm operation.

(g) Family day care provider as defined in Chapter 14.04 SCC; provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed.

(h) Farm-based business carried on exclusively by a member or members of a family residing on the farm and employing no more than 3 nonresident full-time equivalent employees.

(i) Historic sites open to the public that do not interfere with the management of the agricultural land.

(j) Home Based Business 1.

(k) Manure lagoons.

(l) Cultivation and harvest of any forest products or forest crop and necessary accessory buildings.

(m) On-site sorting, bagging, storage, and similar wholesale processing activities of agricultural products that are predominantly grown on-site or produced principally from the entire commercial farm operation. Such activities shall be limited to those which are integrally related to the agricultural production and harvesting process.

(n) Seasonal roadside stands not exceeding 300 square feet.

(o) Single-family detached residential dwelling unit and residential accessory uses, when accessory to an agricultural use; and provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed for accessory uses.

(p) Water diversion structures and impoundments related to resource management.

(q) Wholesale nurseries.

(3) Administrative Special Uses.

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- (a) Agricultural slaughtering facilities.
  - (b) Bed and breakfast, subject to SCC 14.16.900(2)(c), provided the use is accessory to an actively managed, ongoing agricultural operation and no new structures are constructed outside of the home for lodging purposes.
  - (c) Expansion of an existing major or minor utility or public use; provided, that the expansion is designed to utilize the minimum amount of resource lands necessary and meets items in Subsection (3)(c)(i) or (ii) of this Section as well as the item in Subsection (3)(c)(iii) of the following requirements:
    - (i) The expansion is located within the existing building envelope which may include the required landscaping for the approved use;
    - (ii) It is to be sited on existing impervious surface or in existing right-of-way;
    - (iii) The applicant has proven that there is no other viable alternative to providing the expansion on non-natural resource lands.
  - (d) Greenhouse operations not otherwise permitted in SCC 14.16.400(2)(e). Greenhouses operating in the Ag-NRL zone as an administrative special use, should they cease operation, shall be required to return the land to its former state or otherwise place the land in agricultural production.
  - (e) Home Based Business 2, provided no conversion of agricultural land is required to accommodate the business activity.
  - (f) Minor public uses related to the provision of emergency services where there is no other viable parcel or non-resource designated land to serve the affected area. Applicants shall demonstrate the need to locate the use in the natural resource land. Analysis of alternatives to the development of the use within the natural resource land must be provided.
  - (g) Minor utility developments including those that are a necessary part of a salmon recovery or enhancement project pursuant to SCC 14.24.130, including stormwater management projects, where there is no other viable parcel of non-agricultural land to locate the project.
  - (h) Personal wireless services towers, subject to SCC 14.16.720.
  - (i) Seasonal roadside stands not exceeding 2,000 square feet, except as allowed in Subsection (2)(n) of this Section.
  - (j) Temporary manufactured homes; provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed.
  - (k) Temporary events related to agricultural production; and provided, that no agricultural land is converted and no permanent structures are constructed.
  - (l) Trails and primary and secondary trailheads.
- (4) Hearing Examiner Special Uses.
- (a) Aircraft landing field, private, as an accessory to an agricultural use only, provided the applicant has proven that there is no other viable alternative to providing the service on natural resource lands.
  - (b) Concentrated animal feeding operation.
  - (c) Habitat enhancement and/or restoration projects, except mitigation banks as defined by SCC 14.04.020.
  - (d) Home Based Business 3, provided the use is accessory to an actively managed, ongoing agricultural operation and no conversion of agricultural land is required to accommodate the business activity.

(e) Kennel, limited, if accessory to an existing residence or natural resource operation; and provided, that no resource land is converted or taken out of production.

(f) Major public uses related to the provision of emergency services where there is no other viable parcel of non-resource designated land to serve the affected area. Applicants shall demonstrate the need to locate the use in the natural resource land. Analysis of alternatives to the development of the use within the natural resource land must be provided.

(g) Major utility developments where there is no other viable parcel or non-agricultural designated land to serve the affected area. Analysis of alternatives to the development of the utility in the natural resource land must be provided.

(h) Natural resource research and training facility.

(i) Outdoor outfitters enterprises as defined in Chapter 14.04 SCC that remain incidental to the primary use of the property for agriculture, result in no conversion of agricultural land; and provided, that temporary lodging, etc., as regulated in SCC 14.16.900(2)(d) is prohibited.

(j) Primitive marinas with not greater than 3 slips.

(k) Seasonal roadside stands not exceeding 5,000 square feet, except as allowed in Subsections (2)(n) and (3)(h) of this Section.

(l) Shooting club (outdoor), with no associated enclosed structures allowed except as needed for emergency communications equipment; and provided, that no conversion of agricultural land is allowed.

(m) Temporary asphalt/concrete batching as defined and limited in Chapter 14.04 SCC, provided there is no other viable parcel of non-resource designated land to serve the purpose.

(5) Dimensional Standards.

(a) Setbacks.

(i) Residential.

(A) Front: 35 feet minimum, 200 feet maximum from public road. If a parcel is located such that no portion or developable portion of the property is within 200 feet of a public road, the maximum 200-foot setback shall be measured from the front property line. The maximum setback may be waived by Planning and Development Services where critical areas, preventing the placement of residential structures, are located within the 200-foot setback area. The maximum setback may also be waived by Planning and Development Services in cases where nonfloodplain or nonprime agricultural land is located on the lot outside of the setback area, which would provide for a more appropriate placement of residential structures. In cases where a residence exists outside the setback area, residential accessory structures may be placed outside the setback area if located in accordance with the siting criteria outlined in Subsection (6) of this Section.

(B) Side: 8 feet adjacent to a property line.

(C) Rear: 35 feet.

(D) Accessory: Same as principal structures.

(ii) Nonresidential. (A) Front: 35 feet. (B) Side: 15 feet. (C) Rear: 35 feet.

(b) Maximum height: 30 feet or shall conform to the Skagit County Building Code.

(i) Height Exemptions. Flagpoles, ham radio antennas, church steeples and fire towers are exempt. The height of personal wireless services towers are regulated in SCC

RCW 14.16.720.

(c) Minimum lot size: 1/16th of a section of land or 40 acres. Smaller lot sizes are permissible through CaRDs or as provided in SCC 14.16.860.

(6) Siting Criteria. In addition to the dimensional standards described in Subsection (5) of this Section, new, non-agricultural structures shall be required to comply with the following provisions:

(a) Siting of all structures in the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands district shall minimize potential impacts on agricultural activities.

(b) When no structures or no compatible structures exist on the subject property or adjacent properties, new structures shall be located in a corner of the property and all development including but not limited to structures, parking areas, driveways, septic systems and landscaping shall be contained within an area of no more than 1 acre.

(c) When structures exist on the subject property or adjacent properties, siting of new structures shall comply with the following prioritized techniques:

(i) Locate new structure(s) within the existing, developed area of any compatible structure(s) in the same ownership, and utilize the existing access road.

(ii) When the provisions of Subsection (6)(c)(i) of this Section are not possible, locate new structure(s) within the existing, developed area of any compatible structure in the same ownership.

(iii) When the provisions of Subsection (6)(c)(i) or (6)(c)(ii) of this Section are not possible, site new structure(s) to achieve minimum distance from any existing compatible structure on either the subject property or an adjacent property.

(7) Additional requirements related to this zone are found in SCC 14.16.600 through 14.16.900 and the rest of the Skagit County Code. (Ord. O20090006; Ord. O20080012 (part); Ord. O20080004 (part); Ord. O20070009 (part); Ord. O20050003 (part); Ord. O20030021 (part); Ord. R20020130 (part); Ord. 18375 §§ 4 (part), 5, 2001; Ord. 18069 Appx. A (part), 2000; Ord. 17938 Attch. F (part), 2000)

14.44.275 Special use permits in Ag-NRL.

(1) As certain uses in the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands zone are allowed only in conjunction with or accessory to an agricultural use/operation, specific documentation may be required to evidence an existing agricultural use/operation.

(2) Whenever the Administrative Official has reason to believe, or an RFI is filed alleging, that there is a violation of a special use permit on a parcel in the Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands zone with no obvious indication of an agricultural use/operation, the following documentation may be required as evidence of compliance. The Department should review and verify the following documentation when required, but not copy or retain either item for permanent record.

(a) Temporary Manufactured Home—Accessory to Farm Dwelling Unit. If requested by the Department, the farm owner/operator must submit an IRS Form 943, filed in the current or previous year, indicating that at least one farm worker was employed in farm work.

(b) Special Uses Allowed as Accessory to an Agricultural Use/Operation. If requested by the Department, the farm owner/operator must submit an IRS Form 1040 Schedule F, filed in the current or previous year, indicating income from agricultural activities.

(3) If documentation meeting the above stated requirements is requested but not submitted, the activity may be deemed a violation. (Ord. O20140004 § 1 (Att. 1 (part)))

14.16.900 Special use permit requirements.

(1) Special Uses.

- (a) Purpose. To provide a means to recognize and approve land uses not specifically identified as allowed uses. A special use permit must demonstrate that the proposed activity will not adversely affect or prevent those uses normally allowed within the respective district.
- (b) Process/Authority for Special Use Permit.
  - (i) Administrative special uses shall be reviewed as a Level I permit, pursuant to Chapter 14.06 SCC.
  - (ii) Hearing Examiner special uses shall be reviewed as a Level II permit, pursuant to Chapter 14.06 SCC.
  - (iii) The Hearing Examiner shall have authority to order that a special use permit be revoked, suspended, or modified based on a finding that the conditions have not been satisfied by the applicant. The Administrative Official or party of record may request a review by the Hearing Examiner on a special use permit pursuant to a Level II action, pursuant to Chapter 14.06 SCC.
  - (iv) The approving authority's decision may be to grant or to deny an application.
  - (v) The burden of proof shall be on the applicant to provide evidence in support of the application. The criteria for approval or denial shall include the following:
    - (A) The proposed use will be compatible with existing and planned land use.
    - (B) The proposed use complies with the Skagit County Code.
    - (C) The proposed use will not create undue noise, odor, heat, vibration, air and water pollution impacts on surrounding, existing, or potential dwelling units, based on the performance standards of SCC 14.16.840.
    - (D) The proposed use will not generate intrusions on privacy of surrounding uses.
    - (E) The proposed use will not cause potential adverse effects on the general public health, safety, and welfare.
    - (F) For special uses in Industrial Forest—Natural Resource Lands, Secondary Forest—Natural Resource Lands, Agricultural—Natural Resource Lands, and Rural Resource—Natural Resource Lands, the impacts on long-term natural resource management and production will be minimized.
    - (G) The proposed use is not in conflict with the health and safety of the community.
    - (H) The proposed use will be supported by adequate public facilities or services and will not adversely affect public services to the surrounding areas, or conditions can be established to mitigate adverse impacts on such facilities.
    - (I) The proposed use will maintain the character, landscape and lifestyle of the rural area. For new uses, proximity to existing businesses operating via special use permit shall be reviewed and considered for cumulative impacts.
- (c) Approved special uses identifiable through the Department's permit tracking system shall be mapped upon request.
- (d) All special uses, including master planned resorts, shall require a development project be commenced for the entire parcel within 2 years of the permit approval, unless development is phased. For the purposes of this Section, "commenced" shall mean either (1) the use permitted by the permit has been established or (2) a complete building permit has been filed with Planning and Development Services for the principal building which will allow the use. Upon building permit approval, the principal building shall be completed (i.e., final inspections completed) within 3 years. Those portions of the property, which are not included within the development area and where the above time frames are not met, shall automatically be removed from the special use approval, unless a phasing plan is approved

pursuant to Subsections (1)(d)(i) and (iii) of this Section. For purposes of this Subsection, “development area” shall mean all portions of the site needed to meet UDC requirements, such as lot coverage and setbacks.

(i) If an applicant desires to phase development of a special use, a phasing plan shall be submitted and reviewed as part of the special use permit application. When a special use includes a phasing plan, the initial phase shall be commenced and completed within the time frames articulated above, except that for master planned resorts, development in the initial phase must be commenced consistent with the approved phasing plan. Subsequent phases for special uses, except for master planned resorts, shall be commenced and/or constructed within the time frames established in the phasing plan, or within a 6-year period. Subsequent phases for master planned resorts shall be commenced and/or constructed within the time frames established in the approved phasing plan. Otherwise, the special use shall expire for those portions of the property where these requirements are not met.

(ii) Where a special use did not initially include a phasing plan, but prior to the automatic permit reversion an applicant desires the phasing of the operation, a phasing plan may be submitted to the County for consideration. This plan shall be reviewed through a Level II review process and be reviewed for compliance with the special use criteria.

(iii) The time limits established above shall be tolled pending resolution of any appeals, and may be extended by the Board of County Commissioners upon a showing that the applicant is diligently taking actions to obtain necessary permits and approvals to establish the use.

(2) Special Uses with Specific Criteria.

(h) Temporary Events. Special use permits for temporary events are also subject to the following criteria:

(i) Events may occur on no more than 24 calendar days per year.

(ii) Parking for all events shall be fully contained on the subject property and shall not include the use of any road right-of-way.

(iii) Does not create a detrimental level of electrical interference, line voltage fluctuation, noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, traffic or other environmental impacts on the surrounding area.

(iv) All lighting is directed away from neighboring residences or businesses.



**Thursday, August 17, 2023**

**Skagit County Planning Commission**

1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**Via hand delivery and email**

**RE: Comments on Agritourism Amendments to Skagit County Code**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

On behalf of the many stakeholders listed below who are members of the Skagit Agritourism Stakeholder Group, we are submitting some agritourism policy/code concepts for your review and consideration. These have been developed collaboratively under a consensus decision-making model. The stakeholders participating are representative of the agricultural community, the tourism community, and the farm event venue community.

Members of this group joined in a collaborative effort to review and consider the proposed code through the lens of the policy positions of:

- The Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board, April 12, 2023
- The Skagit County Policy Concepts as presented by BERK Consulting in March 2022
- Western Washington Agricultural Association as presented in their position paper dated July 30 2023
- Skagit County Farm Bureau as presented in their position paper dated August 2, 2023 and
- Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland as presented in their position paper dated April 2022

The goal of the group is to capture the spirit and intent of the various stakeholder interests with regard to agritourism within the Ag-NRL zoned lands of Skagit County.

Additionally, this multi-stakeholder group recommends for your consideration the creation of additional opportunities for stakeholders to engage with you and/or other County staff on this important issue. With the release of the proposed code amendments during the peak season for both farmers and farm venue operators, the timing has had the real impact of making it extremely difficult for stakeholders to engage in the current process.

With additional time to work after the peak of harvest is over, we are confident we can develop additional and more detailed recommendations reflecting broad stakeholder support. It is vital for key stakeholders to be able to participate and have their voices heard on this critically important issue.

Big Lake Trees & Events  
Boldly Grown Farm  
Christianson's Nursery  
Country Cousins, Inc.  
Eagle Haven Winery  
Gordon Skagit Farms  
Maplehurst Farm

Saltbox Barn  
Skagit County Farm Bureau  
Skagit Tourism Bureau  
Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland  
Skagit Tulip Festival  
Skagit Valley Wedding Rentals  
Washington Bulb / RoozenGaarde  
Willowbrook Manor

## **Agritourism Multi-Stakeholder Work Group Agritourism Policy / Code recommendations**

Recommend **adding** the following definitions to SCC 14.04.020

**Agritourism** - Agritourism is a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owners. Activities may involve education, entertainment, outdoor activities, hospitality, life events, farm events, food service, farm stays, or similar purpose. These activities link to and support the primary agriculture activity of the land and its economic viability. Agritourism activities are separate and distinct from Farm-based businesses and Agricultural Support Services.

**Farm Event Venue** - means an ongoing business operation at a privately-owned facility or site within the Ag Natural Resource Land (Ag-NRL) zone for the purpose of hosting Agritourism events or activities.

Recommend **amending** the following existing definitions in SCC 14.04.020

**Agricultural support services** - any nonagricultural use which is directly related to agriculture and directly dependent upon agriculture for its existence. These support services generally exist off-site and within districts that are intended to facilitate the production, marketing, and distribution of agricultural products. **Agricultural support services are separate and distinct from Farm-based businesses and Agritourism.**

**Farm-based business** - an on-farm commercial enterprise devoted to the direct marketing of unprocessed and/or value-added and soil-dependent agricultural products that are produced, processed, and sold on-site. Farm-based businesses are intended to supplement farm income, improve the efficiency of farming, and provide employment to farm family members. **Farm-based businesses are separate and distinct from agriculture support services and Agritourism.**

Recommend including Agritourism as an Agricultural Accessory Use subject to the following:

- Demonstration of farm income as evidenced by IRS federal form Schedule E, F or equivalent. Agricultural Lease income may be included pursuant to Skagit County's implementation of Chapter 84.34 RCW, Open Space Taxation Act.
- Will not result in the permanent conversion of farmland,
- Will not interfere with surrounding farming operations and practices.
- Agritourism activities are subject to Skagit County's Right to Manage Natural Resources Ordinance (SCC 14.38) and Skagit County's Right to Farm Ordinance No. 12815 incorporated therein.
- Will provide experiences to visitors that promote and enhance Skagit agriculture overall.

#### **Recommend creating a new Limited Entry Permit for Farm Event Venue**

It is recommended that Skagit County create a limited entry permit system for Farm Event Venues with a primary purpose of Agritourism.

- Establish a cap on total number of permits available with preference for existing Farm Event Venues.
- Limited Entry Farm Event Venue Permits should be subject to renewal every three (3) to five (5) years.

#### **Recommend adding the following to Permitted Uses within SCC 14.16.400(2)**

- **Farm Event Venues** serving no more than 25 persons for the primary purpose of providing educational classes, direct instruction, workshops, trainings or similar, which are directly related to on-site agricultural production.

#### **Recommend adding the following to Administrative Special Uses within SCC 14.16.400(3)**

- **Farm Event Venues** serving up to 100 persons for the purposes of Agritourism subject to the following:
  - Events may occur no more than 24 days per year.
  - No new buildings can be built except when using the footprint of an existing building or from an existing foundation that is still intact.
  - A conservation easement with a binding site plan is placed on the subject parcel where the Farm Event Venue is located.

**Recommend adding the following Hearing Examiner Special Uses within SCC 14.16.400(4)**

- **Farm Event Venues** serving more than 100 persons and/or events occurring more than 24 days per year, for the purpose of Agritourism subject to the following:
  - Events may occur more than 24 days per year as determined by the Hearing Examiner based on site-specific evaluation and provided that events do not create a detrimental level of electrical interference, line voltage fluctuation, noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, traffic or other impacts to adjacent farming operations, neighbors, and/or other environmental impacts on the surrounding area.
  - No new buildings can be built except when using the footprint of an existing building or from an existing foundation that is still intact.
  - A conservation easement with a binding site plan is placed on the subject parcel where the Farm Event Venue is located.

### **1. Randy Good (Friends of Skagit County)**

My name's Randy Good, 35482 State Route 20, Sedro-Woolley. Can everyone hear? Okay. The Agricultural Advisory Board has worked diligently in putting forward and clarifying this proposed amendment proposal for over two years with agritourism surveys, public meetings, workshops, and newspaper articles. The Board and membership is made up of representation from all aspects of the Skagit County ag community with long-time wisdom passed down from generation to generation with the knowledge and expertise on Skagit agriculture. I was one of the founding members of the Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program and member of the Ag Advisory that helped develop these existing County ag codes with the intent to preserve and protect agriculture and to fortify the 1991 Right-to-Farm ordinance without interference of any kind, as required under the Growth Management Act. If Skagit County was enforcing these existing codes, we would not be here today discussing these amendments. If the existing codes had been enforced, the public would have been well aware of what was permitted or not. Now all County citizens are dealing with misinformation to mislead the community to change County code to allow non-ag activities on farmland. Non-agricultural activities such as weddings, concerts, and meetings are going to interfere with the right to farm. If these venues are allowed, agriculture in Skagit County as we know it today will be gone forever. Are we going to preserve and protect the right to farm? The failure to uphold the right to farm has resulted in five crop farmers losing their right to farm in eastern Skagit County because of the imported, non-native elk contaminating fresh and organic produce and other damages, making it impossible to raise produce or even think about a seasonal roadside stand. We encourage the Planning Commission to support the Ag Advisory Board's recommendations and adopt the proposed minor changes to be in compliance with the right to farm in Skagit County. Thank you

### **2. Ellen Bynam (Friends of Skagit County)**

Good evening, Commissioners. Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County – I have to look up my address; I moved – 419 South Main Street, Number 207, Mount Vernon. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Friends of Skagit County supports the proposed code changes that strengthen and clarify this county's ability to conserve farmland for the future. Conversion of any Ag-NRL-zoned land to any other use except agriculture production and soil-dependent production is currently and has been illegal since 1990. As the now-deceased president of Friends of Skagit County, June Kite, liked to remind: Skagit County cannot permit an illegal activity. So I'm going to give you some background.

In 1990, Washington State passed the Growth Management Act and they started by having Counties inventory, designate, and conserve ag lands, forestlands, and mineral lands. RCW 36.70A.180 is the chapter Implementation. It's the Intent. The next one, .030, is the Definitions and it has long-term commercial significance for ag production as its priority. The Finding of Intent goes on to reiterate that and the Planning Goals state that as well. The Guidelines to Classify state that's a priority and the Designations and the Timeline for doing that state that. 36.70A.177, Ag Lands, Innovative Zoning Techniques, and Accessory Uses list things that Skagit County has already done. We did a 40-acre minimum, we identified soils using the soils map,

and the other list of things are there for you to read. I want to point you to the last section, which is number (c), and it says “Counties and cities have the authority to limit or exclude accessory uses otherwise authorized in this (sub)section (3) in areas designated as ag(ricultural) lands of long-term commercial significance.” This is where we start. Skagit County in its policies, codes, and Comprehensive Plan chose to limit or exclude non-agricultural accessory uses on Ag-NRLs and the said accessory uses must be soil-dependent activities. Whether other counties chose to save farmland or not is irrelevant to Skagit County’s decision, because it was decided in 1990 and reaffirmed every year that the Comp Plan is updated. Skagitonians recognize that the largest economic driver in the county agriculture and they want to comply with the GMA. Friends of Skagit. SPF, Evergreen Islands, and individuals have prevailed on the – in many appeals which sided with the protection of farmland in perpetuity.

So – (timer rings)

Ms. Bynum: – homebased businesses also have limitations –

Chair Raschko: I’m sorry, Ellen.

Ms. Bynum: That’s okay.

Chair Raschko: Thank you.

Ms. Bynum: I’ve written all of the codes and the RCWs and you guys can read them. And you need to go back and read the code and read the plan.

Chair Raschko: Thank you.

Ms. Bynum: Yeah.

### **3. Don McMoran (AAG)**

Thank you, Commissioners. My name is Don McMoran and I reside at 14573 Beaver Marsh Road in Mount Vernon, Washington. I’m here tonight because I serve on the Skagit Ag Advisory Board as an ex officio member and I’ve done so since 2006. During my tenure on the Board I’ve seen tremendous changes to our valley and our Ag Advisory Board has elected to live and let live. We mostly would have continued down this path if it was not for the leadership in Skagit County and other organizations encouraging us to define “agritourism.” Through this 2½- year process the Skagit Ag Advisory Board listened intently and gave suggestions on how to guide the process. More recently the AAB Land Use Committee went deeper into the code to find out what was there and what the preferred outcome would be for the people that farm our highly productive Skagit soils. Unfortunately I only have three minutes of time so I’ll focus my attention on the area where the committee has received the largest number of complaints: wedding venues.

In our research, we learned that wedding venues on agricultural land are not a permitted use. There are two exceptions of wedding venues on Ag-NRL land but those permits – it specifically states a wedding venue would self-certify, which they have not done so. So currently there are no legal wedding venues located on Ag-NRL lands. Weddings are not farming, and it really isn’t agritourism either, at least not by our definition. This puts the AAB and now will put the Skagit

County Planning Commission in a very difficult position. What does one do with an illegal activity that has been in operation for decades and is an industry that is currently growing in Skagit County? Currently there are 13 wedding venues and most are well beyond the 24 temporary use events that are currently allowed.

So the starting point – realizing that every wedding venue in Ag-NRL land is illegal, what is the AAB Land Use Committee to do? Close them down? No, it's impossible. For one, it's not very neighborly and it's not a Skagit County thing to do. So let's work to make them legal. Let's also limit on how many weddings can occur and what they would look like. Our starting point is 12 calendar days per year. Why? Because we think that's as many weddings as a person would want to take on if they were actively farming. That is another big push by the AAB Land Use Committee. We refer to it as "Big A, Agriculture, little t, tourism." The AAB wants our farms to be farmed.

In closing, my understanding is you'll be hearing some complaints tonight that are counter to the AAB Land Use Committee suggestion. My first comment is: Aren't we all so fortunate to live in a country where we can have public discourse and we can allow the legislative process to decide our futures?

My last comment if the AAB knows that tonight will not be the last night that we discuss agritourism in Skagit County, and I look forward to further discussion as this policy moves through the Skagit Planning Commission –

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Mr. McMoran: – as well as to the Skagit County Commissioners. And I will concede no more time \_\_\_\_ thank you.

#### **4. Terry Sapp (AAG)**

It's a pleasure, Commissioners and staff and Jack Moore, to speak to you here again. This has been – my name is, as I said, Terry Sapp – and was said. I reside at 804 Ferry Street in Sedro-Woolley. I farm in that area as well, with my wife, who is an equal partner in all of what we do there.

I had some notes that I intended to share but some of them have already been said so I'll turn my direction slightly differently to say that as a member of the Agricultural Advisory Board and one who has worked on this project for three years – actually I took interest in it in 2017 when I began working on that and have been because of that work in this room many times with the Agricultural Advisory Board. Also enjoying meetings with the Planning Commission with no attendees whatsoever, even though invited. It's a great surprise and of great interest to see so many people suddenly here and involved.

This has been a long process. The law is part of a long process. Nobody made this up last week or two months ago or when the announcements were made. This is well established law in a large body which includes not only the fine details like how barns are to be used. I know people are upset about some language involving that. But it goes all the way up through the full code for the Agricultural-Natural Resource Lands and exceeds even the County's ability to write code

because overarching all of this is the Growth Management Act, which has, as Ellen had previously said, some very clear statements to offer about what is and isn't limited – is and isn't allowed in the agricultural zones throughout this state. So the County is restricted to act still within the umbrella controls of the Growth Management Act no matter what any of us might wish to do to change that.

Now I'd like to turn to one very pivotal issue that I think you'll hear a lot about. This wasn't part of my plan but because my speech has already been taken I'm going to suggest that you attend to one very significant, pivotal point you're sure to hear about often. It was taken into consideration by the Agricultural Advisory Board. That is the distinction between activities that support a farm and activities that are part of a farm. Those activities that support a farm – let's say, to make it simple, just generate money so that a farmer has more than what –

(timer rings)

Mr. Sapp: – might be generated from the farm are endless. Endless list of possibilities.

#### **5. Michael Trafton (AAG)**

My name is Michael Trafton. I reside at 13999 Trafton Road in Anacortes. I am a member of the Agricultural Advisory Board as well. And a statement came out on Friday – the changes which were developed by the Agricultural Advisory Board. I think in order to be fair, some clarification is required here. The Agricultural Advisory Board was asked to evaluate the current code as it relates to agritourism. We spent more than two years of intense study, research, and debate. We came to a number of observations that we shared with the Planning Commission. The term "agritourism" needs a better definition as it relates to the agricultural natural resource lands. We offered a well thought out definition that ties agritourism to soil-based activities related to the specific farms. There were other areas of the code we felt needed stronger verbiage or articulation in order to strengthen and put teeth into the existing code. We do not propose to change the existing code. More importantly, we recognize that enforcement of the existing code as written needs to be diligently adhered to. Our society functions smoothly when rules and regulations are adhered to and followed. We may not like all those rules but we follow them. People know where they stand and they can plan accordingly if they follow the rules. The farmers and ranchers that reside in Skagit Valley today are required to follow certain guidelines in order to manage their farms and ranches within their specific zones. Is it not too much to ask that others abide by their zoning rules and regulations as well? Twenty years from now Skagit County and the Skagit County farming community will look a lot different than it does today. That's a given. We don't have to look too far to the south of us or to the north of us to see examples on what it would be or what could be. What Skagit County looks like is important. That's why we're all here tonight. Is it going to be something we'll all look back on and be proud of, or is it going to be something that we look back on and we may regret?

#### **6. Ken Dahlstedt**



I'm Ken Dahlstedt. I reside at 3718 Shoshone Drive in Mount Vernon, former County Commissioner for 20 years. And first of all I want to thank the Planning Commission. There's a lot of people here that are going to have a lot of differing positions and no matter what decision you make, some of the folks won't be happy.

I'm a fourth generation farmer. Been here for a long time, seen all these changes. I'm going to ask one question, if that's okay, for a show of hands. How many people here have attended one of the wedding venues or funeral or any activity? So it's something that's become really popular and certainly challenging. Skagit County currently has two code enforcement officers. Two. And if you've been reading the newspaper lately, they don't have enough money to hire more staff. They're actually looking at cutting those departments. So whatever decision you make or however much government overreach we might create, it is not going to solve the problem.

I want to give you one example also. I know one of the Planning Commission members, one of the Ag Advisory Board members, and a general manager of one of the largest farms out in the valley. I can tell you they're not on the same page because I talked to the general manager who says their operation runs a 40-acre parcel – that's 35 acres of farmable land and a wedding venue. They've worked cooperatively in the wedding venue and that farm operation. They respect one another. They find ways to make that work that's mutually beneficial. It's kind of called the good neighbor plan. I think that there have been some definite violations for people, whether it was a photographer or somebody that's gone onto these farms and created a problem, but I can guarantee you if you make this more restrictive and think the code enforcement officers are going to resolve it, they're not. That's why there're so many currently. If you drive down Cook Road, I see there's a farm that was kind of abandoned and now is a rock, bark, and a materials supply facility. And if you drive just a little further, there's an old dairy farmstead where the huge barn has all sorts of doors to park boats and motor homes. There's half-a dozen housing units that are there that were farmworker housing that are now rentals.

If the County's going to try to shut every single thing down, it's going to be a problem. Whether you have 24 events or you have 12, if you don't have a good neighbor one might be too many. So that's the challenge there. I think finding these – the County doesn't have a big enough tax base right now to support what it's trying to do. These venues create millions of dollars of revenue that comes into the county. And most of these old farm buildings, there's –

(timer rings)

Mr. Dahlstedt: – homeless shelters and a lot of rundown facilities out there that they're improving.

## **7. Terry Gifford**

I'm Terry Gifford. I'm with Willowbrook Manor English Tea House and Farm Stay at 27420 Minkler Road in Sedro-Woolley. I'm wearing the hat of a farmer today. I'm also on the Skagit Tourism Bureau Board. I'm the board president of the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival. So I'm very interested and concerned of the impact that we are all here for today.

But I want to share with you the feeling that I had when I was at Central Park in New York. I was so impressed at the foresight that planners had to create a green space in the center of what was to become a true concrete jungle. And sitting there and feeling the peace of this green space, I was grateful. We have beautiful space and people long to come here and to feel well. Just today a guest came to my farm and said, “I feel rejuvenated.” The people who come here need spaces to feel well. I personally would love for our county to provide avenues for small farms and large farms to be able to provide spaces for people to feel well, rejuvenated, hope, health. We live in a world where there’s so many pressures and there is need for nature to speak in his quiet tones that when the wind kisses your cheek it gives answers to difficult questions. Please allow that to be part of the heritage of our valley. Thank you.

#### **8. Brock Clements (Saltbox Farms and Save Skagit Farm Venues)**

Hi. We’re Brock and Katie Clements, the Saltbox Farm on Fir Island and the Save Skagit Farm Venues group. I want to say I’m sorry for all the emails this week but these people wanted to talk.

My family’s 56 acres of farmland on Fir Island, it’s been in our family for 125-plus years. It’s been passed down generation to generation. I was raised on this land and I want to be here for the rest of my life. Approximately 97% of our property is dedicated to food-producing crops with our lease partner. Potatoes, corn, barley, et cetera – 97% of the property. With the other 3% we host events in the retired farm buildings. The income from these events goes to four things. The first thing is it goes to maintaining the farm. It goes to improving the barns. Unlike so many of the farms and barns we see out there today, we are rejuvenating our barns. The second place it goes is to my mother, who has worked her whole life as a small farmer and this is a way to subsidize retirement. Third it goes to Katie and I. And then fourth, and to a much greater extent, it goes to hundreds of Skagit businesses that benefit from these events. These include every restaurant, every hotel, every motel, every florist, everybody in the beauty industry, caterers, photographers, bakers, breweries, DJs, gas stations, planners, art galleries. It’s not just the venues here. Thousands of people would be affected by this in hundreds of Skagit County businesses.

We can do better than what’s proposed today. We do need a path that protects farming activities and the farmers and the farmland. Yes. We do it at our venue but we understand it needs to be everywhere and all the time. It can be done. There are people on both sides – and I think we’re going to hear them today – that think what’s being proposed is not good enough and it goes too far. It kills a wanted and needed industry. Even your survey said 68% of the public wanted it in some form with some restrictions. Please do not close public comment on this issue. Allow time for a better solution, and for any solution make sure you have a plan to pay for it. Next, my beautiful wife, Katie.

#### **9. Katie Clements (Saltbox Farms and Save Skagit Farm Venues)**

Hi, everyone. Thank you for having us and letting us have the opportunity to speak. We’ve heard the word “transparent” many times. If this were so transparent – this whole process – over the years, you would not have us here tonight. I would argue most of these people are

here tonight because of the group we made, Save Skagit Farm Venues. We have over 3700 signatures on a petition. I've emailed you guys over 736 emails of support of keeping these farm venues in a way that works with farms. Like my husband said, we know it can be done because we do it. Our farmer friends tell us, You guys should be the model. You're doing it right. Many people in this room have gotten married at our venue, been there for many events. Even the people opposed to this, which is kind of funny.

I also want to talk about the illegal thing. We're second generation wedding venue proprietors. This has been going on since the '90s. There were venues operating. If we're illegal, prosecute us. You can't because there isn't anything in place. So where will the money come from to prosecute us, and is it really in the best interest to prosecute tourist activities? We're talking millions of millions of dollars these people bring to Skagit, and if you do this it's going to go elsewhere. I cannot fathom how anyone on a government board wants to see that money go away. You don't even have enough money to pay employees. You're talking about layoffs. So let's just end this industry. Excuse me. It's emotional because it's my livelihood. And again, we weren't told about this. We heard through rumors. We've had to deal with lies in the press about incidents that supposedly have happened at our facilities, our friends' facilities. Lies.

You're all missing an opportunity here to realize that if you want people to care about farmland you can't remove them from it. The Ag Board, it seems pretty clear they do not want the public on farmland. That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. I didn't grow up on farmland – never cared about it. I started caring about it when I was there working on it every day. And the venues can be that conduit, that connection, that liaison between the farmers and the public. We don't really understand how people coming up from Seattle to get married in front of a cornfield is not agritourism. If that's not agritourism, what is?

We don't think that the amount of events should be limited, and if it should it should be case by case. We own a 56-acre farm that borders our property completely. Why would we have to limit? We do hope we can find a common ground, though. I'm not – nobody's saying we want to have hundreds of events. We don't want to work that much! I mean....

Lastly, you're going to – like my husband said, all the other businesses that will suffer from this. I just want to add that they're mostly women-owned businesses and we all know women have had to fight pretty hard to make it in this place, and that'll go away too.

Yeah, oh –

(timer rings)

Ms. Clements: Oh, my last thing. Why wasn't the –

Chair Raschko: Thank you.

Ms. Clements: Why wasn't the tourism board or EDASC involved in any of this? Agritourism?

#### **10. Allen Rozema (Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland)**

Good evening. I'm Allen Rozema, director of Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland. Our office address is 414A Snoqualmie Street. Thank you, Commissioners, for allowing this opportunity. I

first want to thank and acknowledge the tremendous – I mean, my God – the tremendous amount of work that has been done to get us here tonight. The Ag Advisory Board, all the others. The stakeholder meetings. It's been a tremendous amount of work. So thank you to everyone.

On behalf of our board, we want to acknowledge that we feel there – we have some concerns and while we have some concerns – what we think is some ambiguous language – we would like to encourage the Planning Commission to – as part of your process – to allow public comment and more public input to help us clarify and work through some of the ambiguity that we're seeing.

We'll get some of that addressed in our written comments. And another piece of the puzzle is what we're working towards to try to find that clarity – we've been working with several ag groups, Western Washington Agricultural Association and the Farm Bureau, and we've been reaching out to multiple stakeholders right now. And tomorrow we're hoping to start a dialog again with Ag Advisory Board members, with the farm community, with the venue community – the agritourism community – to try to find some common ground, if you will, on some of these definitions and ambiguity, and if you afford some more time for public input and comment we would like to deliver that work to you to help in your deliberations and to help with the deliberations of the Board of County Commissioners.

So thank you, and again I want to thank everyone involved to get to where we are tonight. And with a little more public input an opportunity for some who feel maybe they've been disenfranchised by the process a little bit more time. I think (it) will give your body and the Board of County Commissioners additional information to consider. Thank you.

#### **11. John Christianson (Christianson Nursery)**

Hi, I'm John Christianson. I have Christianson's Nursery on Best Road near La Conner. My daughter's here and my wife. My grandkids are out in the lobby. My great-grandson's out there. So I win the award for packing the generational audience tonight!

The ag tourism survey did show an overwhelming support for ag tourism. I was so encouraged by that – I have not been involved at all. I'm not – I'm busy. I work every day and I don't really have time for this. But I was real encouraged. And it never occurred to me that things would turn around as they have, based on that survey. The discussions that must have happened – unbeknownst to me – didn't reflect the survey. And the survey had solutions that seemed reasonable, too, and I can't say that I've seen those either applied. So the survey was great. I just didn't see people listening to that survey, based on the super majority of support that ag tourism had. So what we've done as owners of Christianson's Nursery, we've grown over the years. We've had it now 34 years, since 1990, and we now include potato storage sheds; we have the food hub; food distribution; and 60 acres of blueberries.

We're longtime supporters of the Skagitians to Preserve Farmland and I think most of us here are that. We host the Skagit Valley Farmers Market on Sundays and that runs June through October, Sunday, from 10 to 2.

(audience laughter)

Mr. Christianson: In the last 34 years we have witnessed the loss of so many old barns. Many of you are my age. Some of you are older. All of you have seen this. It is a sorrow that I – whenever I see a barn falling down I think gosh, can't somebody do something? Well, let's face it. Grain, hay, horses – it's done. Those barns don't have that use anymore. What can we do to preserve these barns? And they're being replaced by ugly metal buildings that look very industrial. There's no image of Skagit Valley farmland that shows ugly metal buildings. It's always beautiful old barns. And those barns are going to be gone in many of our lifetimes. They're simply going to be gone, unless something happens. We have this opportunity to use these old barns for something. Repurposing them and certainly wedding venues seems to be the path that allows one to make improvements that can't be done with modest income farm tours – are great – education's great. None of these things make any money, but it promotes your farm. Indirectly you profit. But honestly, the venue thing allows you to have the funds to reroof the dang barn! That's the beginning. Then you've got to do that top loft where all the hay used to be, and then you work your way up.

So anyways, I really feel like, you know –

(timer rings)

Mr. Christianson: – our nursery has preserved many of these old buildings – and I want to thank you. Sorry

## **12. Tom Shields (Eagle Haven Nursery)**

Tom Shields, 31683 Pipeline Road, Sedro-Woolley. Me and five other partners bought the Eagle Haven Winery a year-and-a-half ago. Spent a little over a million dollars. You drive up the beautiful Highway 20 and you see this beautiful sign that says "Tourism Activity Next Right – Eagle Haven Winery." And then now all of a sudden we're saying that we're breaking the law and we're not following the rules. Well, there was two owners previous to us that they seemed to get by just fine. We are also in an old dairy barn. That barn has been restored. It looks very nice. We actually had a memorial service there today for Pola Kelley, a pillar of this community, and I think that we should have the right to have that. It is very, very hard for us to make it on the apples and the grapes that we grow. We've added 1700 grape plants. We're working with 1100 different apple trees. I usually don't get home until 10 or 11 o'clock every night and my wife's not very happy with me. But it is a path that we chose and it is very surprising to know that the County had these rules. I guess I'm sorry that we didn't look into that. And why didn't somebody warn us not to spend your million dollars on a winery because they're not permitted in Skagit County? We don't have very many weddings. We do have events there. We have fund raisers for cancer patients. We earned a little over \$20,000 for the Boys and Girls Club last year. Hopefully we'll be allowed to earn them another \$30 or 40,000 this year. It's not all about us. We try to give back to the community. I love farming. I love the farmland. I think that we would all be willing to preserve that land into farmland. We don't want to see anything else happen to it. We want it to stay farmland. And we're trying very, very hard to farm it, but it does not make us enough income.

So who's to determine what activities would be considered related to farm-ag business? When we're on the Festival of Family Farms, we're growing over 200 pumpkins for the kids to come in and paint. There's no charge for the pumpkins, there's no charge for the painting. To try to get other people involved in farming – and I think we're doing a good job of trying to help educate people that way. We try to teach them what happens when apple tree from the seed through the pruning through the grafting. I just think that it's a shame that we have all these issues with this County when we don't want to hurt farmland. We want to support farmland. We're here to support farmland. And I honestly believe we are farmers. My fingers are dirty. I worked on the farm last night, the night before, the night before, the night before. I work there every day very, very hard. We're trying very, very hard to be good farmers and good stewards. We've heard no complaints from any of our neighbors. If there are some going to the County, we certainly haven't heard of any, and most of our neighbors come over and like to visit with us. We had two of them walk in today. They noticed we were having a memorial service. They just kind of said hello and they walked off. But, I mean, they actually love to come over and see us. Terry is actually a neighbor of ours. She has people that comes over –

(timer rings)

Mr. Shields: – from her place to ours and the other way. Thank you very much for your time

### **13. Chris Dariotis**

I live at 17389 Hulbert Road, Mount Vernon. It's about a mile east of the roundabout in La Conner. I just have a small, 18-acre farm where we have a small farmstand that we sell our vegetables at. I'm not like a big producer of a venue or anything like that, but I support those people who do have venues because they need a way to generate an income for themselves.

And I've written these comments and sent them to you, but I'll just try to read them – a few paragraphs from them: It was great expectations of a more expansive future for tourism in the Magic Skagit. I attended several of the Planning Commission meetings and spoke at some of them, but never did I hear the Commissioners or those running those meetings discuss the possibility of these drastic changes to the code. These are all new things. I had these expectations of what it would be like to have agritourism in the Magic Skagit, because when I was a young man I travelled in Tuscany, Italy, and I was learned by the invitations to experience long-term stays. They had, like, farm stays of a week at a historic vineyard in Tuscany to participate in the harvest, to learn about cooking on the farm and from the crops from the farm, and just to enjoy the beauty of sitting in the Tuscan sun. When I purchased my 18 acres, I envisioned the one day we would see such experiences in the Skagit Valley. I spoke at those Planning meetings of the difficulty of producing an income from a small farming operation that I've continued to pursue in retirement and suffering from partial disability. But mostly I listened to the other speakers. I learned that there were many people who, like me, had visions for what this Skagit Valley could become. Not only industrial scale farms producing the major crops of seeds, potatoes, corn, and hay and barley – and I mention barley because that's the new hip crop that now is in disfavor because the malting facility has closed. So now all the people who have invested in the –

(timer rings)

Mr. Dariotis: – barley crops have to find something new.

#### **14. Scott Postma**

My name is Scott Postma. And I'm actually speaking to you as an outsider of Skagit County. I do not live in the county. I live in Sioux County, Iowa. So every year our family will take a two-week vacation and every single year they all and always want to come to Skagit County. Now the primary reason for that is that we have family that lives here, but at the same time this is one of the most gorgeous counties in the country. And I've had a chance to travel throughout my life. You guys have something so incredibly special here. It's mind-blowing. A lot of people from our area in Iowa have been to Skagit County and it's not because they want to farm. It's because they want to visit and experience the county through tourist activities.

Now I have no doubt that farming is incredibly important and is a major income driver and a way of life for many of the Skagitonians. I grew up on a farm, my family in Skagit County, you know, works on the farm also. So I understand the importance of it. At the same time, what makes this county special also is just all the different tourist-type activities that are possible. So when you've got things like wedding venues where these wedding invitations go out – all across the country, okay? – and these people end up attending the wedding venue in Skagit County with the Cascade Mountains in the backdrop with Mount Baker – right? They spend their money in the county and they leave with incredible memories. And some of those people eventually will come back year after year if that's what they desire because they had such a good time. Some of my best memories growing up are the times we spent in Skagit County. And I would just like to encourage the County Commission to creatively think of ways that agriculture and tourist activities can coexist. And part of the reason that that's important is because while agricultural activities are key, there are going to be times that agricultural activities in the county are going to be stressed, because that's the way cycles of economic activity work. And you want to have layers of activity for income from the County perspective that allow you to continue to maintain your budgets.

And I would just want to charge you guys to think of a way and work hard – and it's probably going to take more time, but figure out how you guys can work things out so that things like wedding venues and other activities are able to coexist with farms. Because if you can do that in a way that's unique and in a way that works, it can become the model –

(timer rings)

Mr. Postma: – for how many other counties in the United States can do it.

#### **15. Joey Van Pelt (Skagit Bridal Hair and Makeup)**

Hi everyone. My name's Joey Van Pelt and I own Skagit Bridal Hair and Makeup. I wrote a little something here. I moved back from living in Seattle for over 10 years to start my onsite bridal hair and makeup company. At first local business for me was slow but soon business picked up and I was able to build a team of local female freelancers. Many of these freelancers are not

only female but they are moms and the bridal industry for bridal makeup and hair works with their schedules being moms.

We work venues such as Saltbox, Christianson's Nursery, Vanderveen Farm, Maplehurst, and Grand Willow. If the recommended restrictions are put into place, not only will you be cutting into venues' much needed income, but you will also be displacing income of female business owners like myself and many others. Please let us go back to the drawing board and find a solution that works not only for farmers but also local female business owners. Thank you.

#### **16. Mikala Staples Hughes**

Good evening, Commissioners. My name's Mikala Staples Hughes. I reside at 18065 Skagit City Road. I stand before you today with a heartfelt plea: To preserve not only our farmland but also the very essence of agricultural operations that sustain our way of life. As an executive in the agricultural industry and the wife of a fourth generation Fir Island farmer, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges that threaten our agricultural legacy. Today farmers face real risks and it's not just about preserving the land. It's about safeguarding the very ability to perform essential agricultural activities. Lawsuits, negative public perception, and burdensome regulations threaten their livelihoods daily. Consider a farmer with 4,000 acres of land and an average field size of maybe 50 acres. That operator is managing at least 80 individual fields that are complete with their own set of challenges, landlords, and neighbors. Farmers lose operational hours to individual requests by neighbors to not spray when they are home, or they choose to skip an area of a field when digging spuds because the dust could ruin the neighbor's barbeque. Or maybe they have to skip a pole with a big gun when they're irrigating because vendors are setting up chairs at the neighboring wedding venue. These challenges are paired with the already complicated nature of farming as we are at the mercy of wind, rain, and crop maturity.

As it pertains to wedding venues, let us be transparent in confronting the previously unspoken truth. All have been operating illegally within the Ag-NRL. We must recognize the County's past enforcement shortcomings and that now is the time to rectify these issues and establish stringent regulations that provide a legitimate pathway for the deserving and diligent venue operators. To achieve this, I would propose robust additions to the existing code governing administrative special use permits for temporary events in the Ag-NRL permitting 24 calendar events per year. These recommendations strike a decisive yet delicate balance supporting both our farmland preservation goals and thriving businesses within our region. Some suggested changes may include requiring annual reviews after permits are issued to ensure ongoing compliance; requiring permit holders' active presence during events; or including agricultural representation in the review of new venue permit applications to ensure consideration of the unique needs of our industry. To further bolster our farmland preservation efforts; and to mitigate challenges posed to the farming community, I would suggest the venues operating in the Ag-NRL be subject to a farmland preservation tax payable to Skagit County's Farmland Legacy Program. This investment will strengthen our resolve to secure the future of our cherished farmland for generations to come. Together, these recommendations harmonize the needs that protect our farmers, their operations, and our County's 300-million-dollar annual



agricultural economy. We have an unprecedented opportunity to leave a legacy for future generations.

(timer rings)

Ms. Staples Hughes: As we move forward, I implore you to make decisions –

**17. Lacey Larson (Evergreen Weddings)**

Hi there. My name's Lacey Larsen. I am previously known as Lacey Robertson. I'm 32 years old, born and raised a Conway girl so I have a lot of that Skagitonian pride that we all know and love here. I am a wedding planner. I own Evergreen Weddings. So I have a very unique perspective on this side of the argument. As a wedding planner, I see couples and their plans from start to finish. I see who they hire, the decision making process, and the money that they spend to make their day happen.

Now I have to point out there could be some humor here because I really can't imagine two more vastly different industries fighting for protection and space to operate – farmers and wedding planners, right? And wedding venues. So let's just laugh for a second. But from the event industry side of things, all we want truly is for the chance to be heard and seen for the growing powerhouse that this industry has become. I don't know how much you know about weddings but the industry within the United States is a multibillion-dollar industry. And I'm going to run through some numbers on what kind of money gets brought into Skagit. But first and foremost I just want to state that where a lot of our frustration lies on the event side of things is the immense lack of effort from the County, from the farmers to have a conversation through all of these years of studying. Like, I respect how much work has gone into these proposals, the studies, all of that, but there was a lack of effort to have a conversation for those that would be directly affected by this – namely the wedding venues.

So with that said, I just want it to be known I speak for all people within the event industry. Nobody is against protected farmland. If you're from here, you understand how important farmland is to our county. So let that be known. Nobody is against it. But what I want to talk through right now is just education and background on what the wedding industry brings to Skagit County.

So earlier it was said that there's 13 venues here. As far as I know, there's actually 21. If you want to count venues that are out in Anacortes. There's the Hope Beach Club out in La Conner. So it spans all from Anacortes and Bow and Conway. And so if we take these 21 venues – I talked with these owners and it's been determined that they host about 30 weddings a year, so that's 630 weddings. Follow my math here. On average, couples spend anywhere from \$30 to 50,000 on their wedding day, and so that gives us a range of 18.9 to 31.5 million dollars that's brought in for these small businesses that operate within the event industry. And that doesn't include money that's spent on guest lodging, where they're dining out, if they're shopping small for a gift for the couple. Like, this is a luxury industry. People want to spend money on it.

Secondly, on average a couple will hire roughly 10 businesses to make their wedding day happen. Brock Clements ran through a standard list – caterers, planners, bakers, the venue itself, florists; the list goes on.

(timer rings)

Ms. Larsen: Can I finish real quick?

Chair Raschko: No. I'm sorry. It's not fair to everybody else.

Ms. Larsen: That's okay!

### **18. Jessie Anderson (Maplehurst Farms)**

All right. Good evening, everyone. My name is – thank you. My name is Jessie Anderson and I live at 18495 Dike Road in south Mount Vernon. I grew up at Hayton Farms on Fir Island and married my husband, Jeffrey Anderson, who is also a lifelong Skagit County resident from another generational farm family. In 2008 we bought his grandparents' homestead – Richard and Pat Smith – and it was a 5.75-acre portion of their family farm. Our farm, Maplehurst Farm, includes a historic home, a shop building that had previously been abandoned by the family farm because their farm outgrew it, a field, mature trees, gardens, and a spare lot where a neighbor's home once stood but the family farm had torn it down and it had been converted to a farm access route and parking for farm equipment. We also lease 10 acres from Jeffrey's mom and aunt for farming. This year we're farming orchard grass and planting berries. We've not taken any farmland out of farming and have nothing but respect for the farmers in the Skagit farming community, which we are a part of. When our first daughter was born in 2010, we began hosting some events at our farm as a way to supplement our income. Our farm venue immediately filled a void within the community. We began hosting weddings, memorials, school auctions, charity fundraisers, youth group meetings, high school proms, company meetings, and much more. Seeing the look on people's faces when they attend events at our property is extremely rewarding. For some of our guests it is the first time that they have spent time in our county, seen a working farm, or learned where their food is grown. This can be an emotional experience and I've seen many people moved to the point of tears when they are struck by the beauty that surrounds up and the opportunity to learn about the Skagit Valley and its rich history.

Skagit County's new proposed code seems to deem agritourism as incompatible with agriculture. Agritourism businesses like farm venues bring economic benefits like keeping local populations employed while promoting knowledge and an appreciation of the land and agriculture. Limiting the potential for creative revenue generation on small farms will only add to the trend of farmland being abandoned, developed, or taken over by larger farms or companies. Young farmers need access to land and multiple revenue streams to keep small farms operational. An oversight of the code proposal is that it doesn't give –

(timer rings)

Ms. Anderson: Thank you for your time. Thank you for listening.

### **19. Janie Kelley**

I'm kind of emotional, probably because I'm really pregnant. But I'm feeling like a lot of things are happening in this room! I didn't plan any – I'm a DJ! I can talk loud – just so you guys know! No, I'm here because I've been in this event industry for about nine years. This has been a business that I've grown. Probably two-thirds or more come from Skagit. I do a lot of work at Maplehurst, Wisteria Gardens, Saltbox Barn, Vanderveen. I know a lot of different faces in here and I'm super, super supportive of continuing to somehow bridge the gap of preserving farms and continuing our livelihood as vendors.

One thing I wanted to say is on any given weekend day, we could see an average of 210 different businesses working these weddings. These businesses span from Whatcom County all the way down to King County, with the vast majority of them residing right here in Skagit. So, you know, I don't have a lot of – I'm not a math person, I'm not – you know, the codes; I have a hard time following a lot of different things. But from my own experience this has allowed me to continue to grow my family. I love serving in this community. I love Skagit County. I love all the people that that I've met. And if we could somehow just work on a plan that somehow appeases the farmland people and us in the event industry, like, that would be amazing because this is – you know, my future is in this business. And I would love to see everyone get what they want in the end. So thank you.

### **20. Jessica Winn/Nguyen- Davey**

Hi, My name is Jessica Winn. Address is 19526 East Hickox Road. And I just recently purchased a 50-acre farm with my husband and my brother. An awkward time to buy a farm. With this farm, what I want the Commissioners to consider is the barrier to entry with new farmers. When you have – today farmland is extremely expensive. It's hard to start. If you are not a generational farmer it's a first generational farm, like ground zero. These properties need significant restoration. My barn needs an overhaul, my greenhouses need an overhaul. And when you are trying to consider code changes it's not about necessarily today's needs but tomorrow's. And how do you create code that's sustainable for a generation for years to come? And how do you continue to support that? You have to have diversification of income. Fifty acres sounds like a lot but 50 acres of potatoes won't support what this property needs for longevity for it to be a producing farm. That is our goal. We want to farm. Obviously there's other resources available on properties like this, and those are going to be needed. That's how you're going to support these micro-farms, farms like this. So I just ask that consideration be around to a new generation of farmers in Skagit County.

### **21. Andy Mayer (President and CEO of Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce)**

Andy Mayer, president/CEO of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce. Trying to come up with a policy that everyone agrees on appears to be difficult. Well, as you're hearing, so is farming. Agriculture in Skagit County has continually been evolving over the past century thanks to changes in market demand, wars, weather, droughts, floods, and many other factors. Sometimes it has led to prosperity; sometimes not. Farmers have typically relied on off-farm

income in order to survive. Some have also used agritourism to make the difference between barely getting by and being able to support families for generations to come.

In this process that we're discussing, some of the steps identified as important have been reflecting what the community wants, providing a path for those not in compliance to become so, and to have code that can be reasonably and equitably enforced going forward. I don't think these things have been addressed yet. Instead, what is proposed is all about prohibiting or severely limiting certain activities. The limitation of special events to 12 per year, as an example, is arbitrary, as some of you discussed in your previous deliberation.

And the stipulation that agritourism be incidental and subordinate opens up a big can of worms because it is nearly impossible to measure. Also the proposed policies could endanger longstanding permitted agritourism activities that contribute significantly to the economy of our area if the proposed codes are interpreted in certain ways.

The Chamber's suggestion is that you take a couple of steps back and consider proposals that are inclusive and allow appropriate and significant economic activity. They have been developed. And yes, they might depend on neighbors communicating with each other, but I think they can do it.

So such proposals need to be comprehensive, not piecemealed as is currently happening. Thank you.

## **22. Jake Buganski (CEO of Skagit Tourism Bureau)**

Good evening. My name's Jake Buganski. I'm the CEO of the Skagit Tourism Bureau. Our offices are located at 1932 East College Way. I came here from the east coast. I've been in the tourism industry for my entire career. I've run a few other tourism bureaus in other locations. I was a former state tourism director in the state of New Jersey. And on the private side of the industry I've worked with destinations all over the country. I was enamored with this place the minute I arrived, and I was enamored with it because of the things that we're talking about here today: because of the bucolic, agricultural landscapes that we as a tourism bureau are here to preserve. It does not benefit us in promoting this area to do anything that jeopardizes the character or integrity of this place as a destination, and everything that we do and are in support of reflects that sentiment.

The Tourism Board and I came up with some agritourism policy positions that we had discussed a few months back and, I think like a lot of the folks in the room here today, kind of have become confused along the way in the process in terms of where there were opportunities for us to articulate those positions. Our position was pretty comprehensive, but two of the main bullet points there were that any policy decisions that are made should absolutely do nothing to jeopardize the character or the integrity of this place as a destination. But the second most important on the list was that any policy decisions that are made should be made based on research and best practices from other agricultural communities. And I think that we've thought throughout the process with the proposed policy options that the process would include that type of thinking. I think that where we are now is at a point where we're just confused about how we got from the place where the policy options that were presented are

reflected in what the proposed changes that we're seeing are. I think that what we're looking at is something probably closest to the current policy option and I think that that was one that did not have much support, based on the surveys from the public hearings. And so, like we've heard from a few of the other folks in the room tonight, a few of the other organizations in positions like ours, I think we'd be best served to take a couple steps back. We are here as a resource to be a part of this conversation that we've not been a large part of prior to this. We have resources available to be able to contribute to the conversation. And I would just welcome you to avail yourself of those resources and suggest that we take a couple steps back in the process and think about how we got to where we are.

### **23. Amy Frye (Boldly Grown Farm)**

Hi, my name is Amy Frye. I live and farm at 8855 Ershig Road in Bow, Washington. I own and operate Boldly Grown Farm. My husband and I run the farm. We have two little kids. This is our ninth year of farming in Skagit. We do wholesale certified organic vegetables, we're salmon-safe-certified. We were able to buy the property on Ershig two years ago and it was a long, hard road to get to that point but we're happy to be there. Many of you know the property. You've seen us basically take an old, derelict farm and try to turn it into something that's a community resource. We have a little farmstand onsite, and we're happy to be there.

And I didn't really have prepared comments. I'm going to sidestep the venue question for the most part. But I do think that, at least from what I see, the voices of farms like mine have not really been part of the discussion. It seems like it's mostly bifurcated into the events versus the old boys' club – no offense, it's a turn of phrase. But it is, you know, mostly boys. I do feel like there is room at the table for farms like mine, first generation farms who are excited about farming. We grow vegetables as our primary income but, man, it is hard to make a living as a first generation farm in Skagit. It was not cheap to buy the farm. We got it by the skin of our teeth. We only could buy it because it was a derelict farm that needed a lot of work. We're really happy to be stewards of that property now, but we really also need to be able to find creative revenue streams to be able to farm into the future. I don't exactly know what that looks like. I don't want to touch weddings with a 10-foot pole personally, but I appreciate those of you who do because a lot of us get married. So life cycle events are a really important part so I do want to acknowledge that.

I do think – I guess if I start to ramble too much my long story short is I tend to agree with Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland that the comment period needs to be extended. There needs to be some more voices heard. I would like to see there be some more farms like mine at the table. And I don't think we need to recreate the wheel. I think there are examples elsewhere in the region, in the country where agritourism can be done in a way that doesn't degrade the surrounding farmland, so let's look at those. I think as someone who's been following this process the entire time, I do have questions about what happened to the work that BERK Consulting did. Was it thrown out? What happened there? It feels like a lot of that initial input just kind of went away. So these are just questions I have as someone who's kind of been watching the process happen.

Yeah, so I would in general like to extend the comment period. And I think one thing that hasn't come up tonight is, you know, for farms like mine who, again, try to make our living on vegetables, we want to do a few extra things that the part in the proposed change about limiting the public from farm buildings is concerning. So if I have my CSA members out to my farm for a dinner because they want to see where their food is grown and it starts to rain, I can't bring them into my hoop house to get under cover? So I just think there's a bit –

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Ms. Frye: – of concerning language there. So I look forward to hearing where the discussion goes.

#### **24. Nick Cecotti (Lefeber Turf Farm and Vanderveen Wedding Venue)**

Nick Cecotti. I have Lefeber Turf Farm and Vanderveen Wedding Venue. It's all been said 10 times. To me the hard part is I'm not sure you guys are very receptive. I'm sorry to say. I could see it in your faces in the beginning. And from my perspective, I tried to get a permit. I was met with opposition. It wasn't to help me get there. It was no, you can't do it. I don't like those kind of things so I bucked the system. To me, public service people are to help us get there. I look at the multi-generations. They've kind of got it made – not "made," but, I mean, they've got a good start, they got a good foothold. The first generations don't. That's me. I don't believe you're going to do anything with a 20 or 50-acre farm in straight ag that's going to create a good living for anybody anymore. So I believe in protecting the farmland first. I believe that if you have existing buildings and you can make something of them, you should be allowed to do that. If you can make a little more living. I looked up my last two years of taxes. My lowest piece of property went up 20%, the highest 50%. My wage didn't go up that much. I got to do a little something extra to make ends meet if I'm going to stay here. I would love to do that. I spent my whole life here. Fifty years I've been on this farm. But I'm a pimple on a gnat's ass. I need extra avenues to make an income on that. I don't have thousands of acres anymore. I just have, you know, 100, 150, 20 acres – whatever. You need other avenues. There's not enough that can be produced on 20 acres of dirt. I have personally not seen any problem interacting with any of these other farmers. I've not heard anybody personally complaining to me. We've had many, many events. People love the farm. I'm sure it can work. I would like to see you guys try and help us get there so we can all keep it. That's what we're after, is keeping our farms going. So for the little guy: Let them do something with their land. Thank you.

#### **25. Suanne Rohner**

Suzanne Rohner, Anacortes, Washington. When in doubt, look at what's already on the books. This is a WAC – sorry, it's an RCW from 2007. And by necessity I have to talk really fast. And it's outdated statistics in here but it's still relevant.

The legislature finds that "maintaining the capacity to provide adequate food and fiber resources is essential to the long term sustainability of a state's citizens and economy. The nation's population has reached 300 million and will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. Further, the world population is now over six billion and is projected to reach nine billion by the year 2050. In Washington state the population's growing by over one million

people every decade with much of this growth occurring in western Washington. This growth is increasing the competition for land, not only for housing but also associated retail, commercial, industrial, and leisure industries. The legislature finds that many once productive agricultural areas in western Washington have been overtaken and irreversibly converted to non-agricultural uses. Other agricultural areas in the state have diminished to the point that they are dangerously close to losing the land mass necessary to be economically viable. Further, only a limited number of areas in western Washington still retain a sufficient agricultural land base and the necessary agricultural infrastructure to continue to be economically viable both in the short term and the long term. The legislature recognizes that because this significant decline has occurred in less than half a century it is imperative that mechanisms be established at the state level to focus attention, take the action needed to retain agricultural land, and ensure the opportunity for future generations to farm these lands. The legislature finds that history shows that previous advanced civilizations in the world were founded on highly productive agricultural lands and food production systems. But when the land or its productivity was lost, the civilizations declined. In contrast, other civilizations have existed for millennia because they maintain their agricultural land base, its productivity, and economic conditions sufficient to maintain stewardship of their land. The legislature finds that there is a finite quantity of high quality agricultural land and often this agricultural land is viewed as expendable resource. The legislature finds that the retention of agricultural land is desirable not only to produce food, livestock, and other agricultural products, but also to maintain our state of economy and preferable environmental conditions. For these reasons and because it is essential that agricultural production be sufficient to meet the needs of our growing population, commitment to the retention of agricultural land should be reflected at the state policy level by the creation of an Office of Farmland Preservation to support the retention...”

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Ms. Rohner: – “of farmland and the viability of farming for future generations.” Thank you.

## **26. Linnea McCord**

Good evening. My name is Linnea McCord and I live in 6478 Bayview in Anacortes. And I want to introduce a subject that not's been discussed here and it's called food insecurity. Americans take their food for granted. They're not watching what's going on all around the world. They're not watching what's happening to the farms and they're not watching to the Ukraine, which is the breadbasket. I really love seeing everybody here. I'm a retired attorney and college professor in a business school, and I hope that we take this opportunity to start that conversation. But we have to know what the rules are and we have to know the vantage point. What you're saying is that you can't make a living. That's right. The very rich and the very poor has become a very wide gap in America over decades. You're right. There is something wrong.

The other thing I will tell you is I spent 31 years in California, 15 years in Texas, and in California I saw the deterioration. I saw it happen. And you're California North. You have to be very careful what you do, how you do. Take all that energy, but you need to understand this is not a conversation where you get to be considered as an equal person at the table unless you first understand you will be sued, they will be sued. Agritourism activity is defined (as) “any activity

carried on at a farm or ranch whose primary business activity whose primary business activity is agriculture or ranching and that allows members of the general public for recreational or entertainment or educational purposes to view or enjoy rural activities including but not limited to farming, ranching, historic cultural and onsite educational programs. Recreational farming programs can include hospitality services, guided and self-guided tours, petting zoos, farm festivals, corn mazes, harvest \_\_ operations, hayrides, barn parties, horseback riding, fishing, and camping.”

When the law gives you the examples, they’re telling you the parameters. Wedding venues are not on that for a reason. Here’s the other thing I’m going to tell you. I had students tell me they spent 40 or 50,000 dollars on a wedding, to which I responded: You’re in a business school. How much did you borrow for your education? There’s a problem mathematically in the country. We together have to figure this out because we’re all sitting on the Titanic together. This is not something that you can change. This is not about them deciding to put you at the table. This is the statute. It’s federal law. It’s state law. It’s to protect farmland. There is something wrong. Take a look at the New Green Deal. Take a look at the regulations. Take a look at what the price of oil is. Take a look what the price of groceries is. Take a look at what the taxes. Take a look at the big picture. What we have to do is talk to each other about what is actually going on in our communities. I love it here.

(timer rings)

Ms. McCord: It’s gorgeous. I hope we do that.

### **27. Val Mullen**

Right, right. Yes. Right. Val Mullen from \_\_ Road in Sedro-Wooley. My concern is for small farms as we have a small fourth generation family farm near Lyman. I, like just about everybody in here, is in – I’m in favor of saving farming in Skagit County. I’m also in favor of keeping farmland for farming rather than just event centers. Farmland, in my opinion, should not be sold to anyone that is not farming. If a piece of land is zoned as farmland and no farming is occurring, that property should probably be rezoned appropriately.

I’m concerned about this proposed code change for small farms, though. This code change appears to target places where the codes have been abused with activities not related to agriculture. This zoning change is more regulations, rules, and it’s not clear how this will affect the small farmer. In my opinion, more rules and regulations don’t really save anything. The small farmer has to compete with big farmers, cheap products that are flooding the market from other states and countries, many rules and regulations we already have in this state and this county. It’s not clear how this code change will help any of these issues for the small farmer. It’s also unclear how it will be enforced. If I have a small farm and I’m trying to make a living as a farmer, cutting the number of agritourism days from 24 to 12 could hurt my chances of making a go of it. I find this code change is rushed. The definition of “agritourism” is still too ambiguous, and it may need more conversation. It adds more costs, regulations to the small farmer, and I’m not convinced that it will accomplish the goal of saving farming. Thank you.

### **28. Judy Billings**



Judy Billings, 14455 Gibraltar Road in Anacortes. Throughout the world farm production is under assault. Our main concern is food. I like to eat. It's a big concern of mine! Our Skagit soil is fertile and needs to be used for growing food. Ag land is farmland, not event land. I understand the constraints of small business, having run a small business for 40 years myself. I understand the need of a small grower to supplement the farm income. This can be accomplished by means other than event centers. I discovered one ag event center that has had almost 350 wedding events in six years, and that includes two Covid years. So that's about 59 events a year. I could not find any special use permit for this event center. Wedding event centers are a business of their own. They have nothing to do with farm production. I feel the Agricultural Advisory Board is being extremely generous even allowing 12 wedding events on ag property. There should be none.

There are many ways to supplement income, especially for hobby farmers: petting zoos, riding lessons, farmstands, tasting shops, U-Pick it, et cetera. Functions that are connected to the soil, to agriculture. A farmer is receiving a tax discount on their acreage to produce food because it's important to society. The balance of the discounted tax amount does not just disappear. It's paid for by everyone else in that district, so the government gets their full amount. For a wedding venue to have a property tax discount makes no sense. They do not contribute to food production. Some farms are being turned into event centers period.

Developers all over the world are destroying farmland and paving it over. Preserving the 88,000 acres of rich soil in Skagit County should be the only concern of this body. That's all there is, and once it's gone it's gone forever. Thank you.

### **29. Miles Baron (Avenue Catering)**

Hi. My name is Miles Baron, 1510 Windsor Drive, Mount Vernon, co-owner of Avenue Catering. And I came here with one question that I still don't understand the answer to completely because it is ambiguous. What is the current and/or proposed definition of "agritourism"? And does it include venues that just happen to be located on a farm or are they considered separate agritourism and outside the scope of the proposal? After hearing much of the comments tonight, I got an education, so I'll relay this real quickly.

I grew up in a small town and by that I mean I grew up in a village within a town that had 4,000 people on a farm. The two industries – three industries – were twine, farming, and summer resorts. There were 17 summer resorts, 20-something farms. Middlesex County, Connecticut was the largest land area county in the state and most of it was farming, the rest twine or summer resorts. Zoning was strictly enforced. That town is unrecognizable today because the zoning was enforced that only farming happened here, and if you owned a farm you couldn't sell anything else. If you were working for the twine mill only the twine mill and, you know, if you had a summer resort you probably couldn't even have a vegetable garden.

I was very encouraged when we moved out here, I think, 17, 18 years ago to see venues – to see farms, rather, with venues to help support the farm. To say that a wedding venue has nothing to do with the farm that it's on, as a caterer in the background seeing what they're doing, you know, as we come in to set up, that can't be farther from the truth. That wedding

obviously supports the farm and makes it so that farm can exist. And as an industry that supports the wedding industry and we support farming, of course. We buy our potatoes locally, we buy our vegetables locally whenever we can. Reducing the number of events at these places to the point where they won't be able to sustain their farm because they have a few weddings, that just doesn't seem correct. And then having worked for the County for a couple of years, going out with a proposal that basically cuts off your nose to spite your face by reducing your tax base and reducing the amount of income to other businesses like myself who pay taxes, just – there doesn't seem to be any logic. As someone mentioned, I think you have to go back to the beginning. A law that – I recognize –

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Mr. Baron: – law in 1991 is outdated.

### **30. Rosemary Camp Kidane**

Hello, my name is Rosemary Camp Kidane. I'm a lifelong resident of Mount Vernon. My family were territorial settlers of Fir Island and they've continued farming there since before Washington was a state.

In your summary of your staff report it says that you are placing restrictions on private use of land basically. This is a taking. You are taking something from the people who own this land. Now Mr. Christianson rightfully pointed out that the agritourism really was encouraged in Skagit County, and a lot of you people went into business because agritourism was promoted in this county. And we've had advisory people come up here and tell us that we're not changing the law. We're just doing what we should have done. But because it wasn't done properly all of you are being punished for it now and you're going to pay taxes to buy these permits and you're going to be told because you haven't told us the uses that oh, that's not a use, and then they'll have to do another permit and another tax. It's not fair to people out here.

I've met or heard a few of the Advisory Board people. I still don't know who they all are or whether of them have a venue that sells something that's small. Because it appears to me this is big farmers versus small farmers. If you have a big mono crop you don't want any of these little guys getting in your way of your tractors on the road or your irrigation. But there's a lot more small farmers than there are big farmers in Skagit County.

Mr. Christianson pointed out that agritourism came up and that a report was given and that three policy options were outlined and another no-action alternative in March of 2022. I would like to know what the three other options were because when no action was taken this Advisory Board decided that they would work on it. Well, again, who's the Advisory Board? Have they any venues in our area?

You've also said that all events must be accessory to agriculture use and incidental or subordinate to the working farm. Every single person who has a venue out there that's working on a farm, everything goes to keeping that going. You all know that. And I would say we are not California. I'm sorry. I understand that you think the Growth Management Act covers all this but –

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Ms. Kidane: – when you change definitions you have changed the law. And I think we have the right –

### **31. Jacqueline Martin**

All right. My name is Jacqueline Martin, 746 West \_\_\_ Place, Burlington. We have heard a lot that there's not a definition of "agritourism," but – I don't know where Jake went – there's a great definition of "geotourism" on the website of Skagit County. Geotourism sustains or enhances the geographic character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and well-being of its residents.

I'm not from here. I'm from New York. I got drafted out here because I have over a decade and a half of experience in planning, evaluation, and putting things into place like this. Though there was transparency in the development of these codes – because I was able to do quite a bit of internet research and find stuff – it seems it was done in a silo. There are a lot of other organizations that do absolutely support conserving the land of Skagit County. I stayed in Skagit County because it's by far the most beautiful place I've ever seen. I've seen most of the Lower 48, Alaska and Hawaii, as well as travelled internationally for work.

We have a – someone said it – a food insecurity issue was released today by the Skagit Population Health Trust that 57% of their survey respondents found that food was too expensive and inaccessible. We do need to support farmland. We need to support small farms in order for them to actually produce - \_\_\_ boldly – I love your CSA. It was great! – But in Skagit County, Robert Wood Johnson identifies that most people living in Skagit County do not make enough money to live in Skagit County. Everybody is just barely getting by. To limit ability to create and sustain themselves in Skagit County – you're going to see people leave. We have enough brain drain as it is. We have enough things closing as it is. I don't know why Skagit Malting magically closed its doors, but that was a big loss. We need to consider what is going to happen. Then something in 1990 is absolutely not even close to appropriate to use today. There are completely different generational issues as well as climate issues that we need to consider. Additionally, Washington state has the least available housing in the nation. We need to consider our housing availability. We need to be able to consider our benefit opportunities, our medical and behavioral health access as well, as we see those issues rise. These are not independent of each other and they need to be worked on in a collaborative manner. I highly suggest and recommend that the –

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Ms. Martin: – timeframe for public comment be extended because of that reason. Thank you.

### **32. Larry Jensen**

Larry Jensen, 15356 Produce Lane, Mount Vernon, Washington. I'm here to talk a little bit about myself just to give you a little background from where I'm from and where my perspective is coming from.

I'm from a third generation farm. I don't think that's important that much because we all have the same passion here. If you'll listen to everyone that we've talked to – listeners talk – so far everyone has wanted to make sure that the farmland continues. There isn't anybody saying, Let's destroy farmland.

But I think we have to look at it from a perspective of how do we keep people farming, from a profitability standpoint. And for me, I've been both a national and an international marketer and I can tell you that the things have changed from the time I was in high school to today. When I was in high school in this county, basically everybody grew for a processor. It was National, it was Twin City, it was frozen peas, it was frozen corn, it was something else. That's changed. There are basically none of those people left. That market is not available to any size grower small or large. Which means everybody now in this transition has had to come at it from a different perspective. The large farmers have hired expert marketers, safe food safety people, compliance people, expert people in terms of application of chemicals and fertilizers and so on. And the small farmers have had to get creative on how they can hold their land, take care of their buildings, take care of their farm, and take care of their families and their relatives who probably willed them that or at least they bought it from.

So to me, we have to have a partnership that's going to accomplish that because without that we are going to see the farms – the small farms in particular – become estates for rich people who are coming out of Seattle who don't need to work. They will buy the farm and they will have an estate farm. They would maybe have a horse or two, and the rest of the farm will not be productive.

So I'm advocating that we use these small farmers to our advantage, and that advantage is this: They have a great way of communicating with the urban public that the large farmers do not do. We do not elect the people who control our futures. The people who control our future lives in Seattle and Tacoma and the large cities, and those are the bridges we need to build and the people who do that best are the small farmers who have the time, who have the events, who can explain to them we need a way to do our irrigation, we need groundwater to do that. We need a way to get rid of our wastewater in the winter. We need proper drainage. We need to have labor laws that help us compete nationally and internationally. And we need those sorts of things and, frankly, it's the small farmer that's going to build those –

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Mr. Jensen: – bridges for us. Thank you.

### **33. Connie Funk**

Hello. My name is Connie Funk. I live on Pleasant Ridge, 13973 Dodge Valley Road, Mount Vernon, rural Mount Vernon. And here we are in economic hard times for just about everyone and here we are with yet one more divisive issue. I just want to echo everything that has been said. Larry was beautiful because he has lived experience as a large farmer, as a longterm farmer, and understanding that being creative and collaborative and developing community partnerships with urban populations is the way to the future. So I'm very much in favor of extending time and having conversations without being divisive. I'm not for booing and hissing,

but actually applause is freedom of expression. So I will thank all of the speakers tonight that are supporting farmland. My husband and I are surrounded by farmland. We're not farmers. We consider farmland safety. I'm looking at Richard Gilkey's painting. That is the Magic Skagit. And we consider farmers sacred. Without the people here, there are no farms. And for people that have venues on farm property, they consider it sacred too. So let's have conversations that are including everyone's voice at the table and let's be neighborly to each other in this divisive time. Thank you.

#### **34. Angelica Hayton (Hayton Farms Berries)**

Hello. My name is Angelica Hayton. I own Hayton Farms Berries located on Fir Island here in Skagit Valley. My great-great-grandparents settled my dad's farm in 1876 and he farms right next to me. I grow different varieties of berries and raise grass-fed beef. My current farmstand is 200 square feet and I do not have enough room to adequately display my grass-fed beef and frozen berries in freezers. The new code would prevent me from using my ag support buildings to sell any of my farm-raised goods. I do not wholesale my farm products. I sell all of my produce and beef at farmers markets and my farmstand. When Covid-19 shut down farmers markets in Seattle, I opened my farmstand and it became a very important outlet for me to be able to sell my produce and beef directly to the public.

My dad and I both farm within several miles of two farm venues. It has been a very positive experience. They bring in people to our area who visit my farmstand on Fir Island, and while they are here they learn about our farms and often follow up with me at farmers markets where I sell my produce and beef.

The farm venues haven't interfered with our farming and I believe they provide a valuable service to our community. Please don't close public comment on this topic. Agritourism is a positive thing for our community and our economy. I'm worried that the new code will harm my farm and other local small businesses. This code needs to be more thought-out and be more inclusive to all businesses in Skagit Valley. How it is written now is not inclusive and it seems it'll be very harmful.

#### **35. Racheal Ward-Sparwasser**

Hi there. My name is Rachael Ward-Sparwasser and I live at 19687 Trophy Lane in Mount Vernon – Conway, technically. I grew up at 1699 Beaver Marsh Road at the corner of Beaver Marsh and Calhoun. My great-grandparents and my grandparents moved here a long time ago. They lived on Bolson Road. My grandfather worked as a farmhand in dairy farms around the county, which there are few of now. My parents started a business here, Valley Electric, in the '80s. I grew up here. I graduated from Mount Vernon High School in 1994 with the idea that I was going to move away and never come back. I went to the University of Puget Sound and then the University of Washington for law school. I have a law practice in Edmonds, Washington. I subsequently moved to Denver, started a real estate investment firm, and then in 2019 I was invited back by a group of friends that I graduated from high school with – Class of 1994, Go Bulldogs! – and we started talking about some of the changes that were happening in the county. Again, I had never lived here, hadn't moved back here, but my eyes were opened to

some of the challenges that the county was facing. And at that point I felt like there were some legacy projects here in Skagit County that could be captured for the benefit of not just the county, not just for other businesses, but also for farmland. And I think the mistake that people are making is that it's one or the other, and that somehow one type of farming is more important than a different type of farming, or that one type of farming is actual farming but the other type of farming isn't farming. I grow tulips, for example. That's farming. I don't produce food. So some of the arguments that are getting made about all ag land should be produced by food doesn't fit for our valley, and the Tulip Festival brings in millions of dollars every year and tax revenue. There is nothing about the weddings that I've been to here. I actually bought a wedding venue. It was the \_\_\_ Gardens. At the time I bought it, five years previous a company from China had it that had no intention of investing anything here in the valley. But the price was so cheap they bought it. They let it sit, overgrow, everything. That is what is going to happen.

Change is inevitable, and I get that we don't like it but can we not come around a common value of this is what is important to – I moved my whole family back here in 2018. I could live anywhere in the world and do anything that I want to do, and I want to be here. I want to invest in what's important here and see it continue. And that's what I see when I look around this room. It's all people that have that same vision and that same desire. They just see different ways of doing it. And the two most common phrases I've heard since I moved back here is "Well, we've never done it that way,"

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Ms. Ward-Sparwasser: – or "We've always done it this way," and it's time to stop doing it! That's how –

### **36. Ron Extract (Garden Path Fermentation)**

Hi, I'm Ron Extract. I'm co-owner of Garden Path Fermentation. I reside at 231 South Anacortes Street in Burlington. My partner Amber and I came here in – we moved here in 2016 to start Garden Path Fermentation because we wanted to be close to our ingredients. And Skagit Valley's one of the very few places in the world where you could actually source everything you need, not only to make beer but wine, cider, meat, all sorts of really cool fermented beverages within about a 20-mile radius. And we may be the only producer in the entire world that makes all of these things using over 98% of ingredients grown within 20 miles of where we're located.

We came here with that vision, but also with the vision of being able to offer visitors a seed-to-glass experience. Wanting to grow our own – some of our own ingredients, not to the exclusion of other local farmers' with whom we currently enjoy a great partnership, but to be able to grow some things ourselves and to really be able to showcase the beauty and the bounty of this land. And when we spent our first two years here really looking for a property where we could do that, and we had a lot of false starts because we were looking in the Ag-NRL zone. We were told no, you can't do that there; there are a lot of limitations. You can have a winery or a brewery but you can't have a tasting room. You could offer samples, but not glasses. You can offer snacks, but not meals. None of this was in the code. There were no delineations anywhere

as to how these things were defined. We were just told what we couldn't do. And our response was Okay, so where can we do it? Can we do it on Rural Reserve? We found a section in the Skagit County Code that specifically allowed for winery tasting rooms in Rural Reserve land, and we asked about that and we were told, Oh, no. We removed that years ago. Rural Reserve is now the same as Ag-NRL. You can't do it there either. And we said, Okay, what zone do we need to look for? Where in the county can we do this? Where can we build a seed-to-glass venue where we could grow our own ingredients, where we could be open to the public, where we could really showcase what it is that they're consuming, and the answer was "Nowhere." But we were assured that there was a process by which this was going to be addressed. We were assured that this was something that we weren't alone in wanting to pursue and that our business was the sort of thing that Skagit County needed. And we participated actively in that process. We've been involved in that process for the last seven years since we came here. We bought property in Skagit County. We built a home here. We invested our life savings and our family's life savings in starting a business here and creating jobs here, and we were assured that there was a future for us. And then the end result of this is only saying what can't be done on Ag-NRL land. It's not saying, Oh, but here's what you can do on Rural Reserve. Here's some other pathways forward. Here's a place for agritourism. What it's effectively saying is, You're not wanted here. Go somewhere else. And, you know, I really wish if that's the message that Skagit County wanted to send us that they would have sent it seven years ago when we first got here. But that's the message that we're getting now. And –

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Mr. Extract: I'll end it there. Thank you.

### **37. Vivian Larson**

Good evening. Thank you for allowing us this time to speak. My name is Vivian Larson. I live at 19003 County Line Road. It's a Stanwood address but it is Skagit County. I am a farmer. I am a small farmer. The only food I raise is for my family. I am a flower farmer. Part of what I do supports the venues in this county. There are many small farmers like me in this valley who raise flowers, who typically – that's what we do, that's how we make our living. Anytime you go to someone and you say we're going to restrict your income by 50%, that has a trickle-down effect that we're going to see everywhere. We pay a lot of taxes in this county and that's – it's hard to be able to make that ends meet if we are not allowed to do business.

I would like to say please leave the comments for this proposal open for a longer period. I think that we need to talk this through. I believe that the farmland is sacred. We grow farmland all over Fir Island. I do small plots of land that are not totally accessible to large tractors and large farmers. There is a place for everyone. I believe that the venues that we are talking about – I think that they open people's eyes to coming here, to seeing how beautiful it is, and I think that we have a responsibility to keep it beautiful and to keep it farming. But there is a way to do it together successfully and not fuss about all the little things that are going to make people angry. I would like to say that the Saltbox Barn has been across from our family farm for a number of years and we have never had a problem with their venue operation. They are

respectful to my mother-in-law who owns her place, and I would like to see it continue. Thank you.

### **38. Kristi Sedlacek (Stepping Stones Garden)**

Hi, my name's Kristi Sedlacek and I am with Stepping Stones Garden in Burlington, Washington. Our family bought the venue a couple years ago and it's been a wedding venue for many years. But our family background: We are a family-run business and we're also family with multi-generational farm experience. We've also had to tear down a barn back in the 1990s that was absolutely beautiful. You know, if we would have had the entrepreneurial idea back then, we might have been able to keep that barn.

We are a wedding and event center – not just weddings. The amount of land used, I also want to point out, is very small for an event. But also, the \_\_\_\_\_ but also has almost 100-year-old magnificent house that is also used to showcase the history of the Skagit Valley. We provide weddings but also event space for charity, such as the Boys and Girls Club, that raises over \$100,000 a night for the kids of Skagit Valley. We also host the graduation of your local doctors, and we hope to keep them in the valley and they want to host it at event centers like this because it showcases where these people just spent a large portion of their education in the Skagit Valley. Where these events take place do not impede on agricultural activities.

Also if we start to limit the number of events that we have we will have to make business choices because for the charity events, because we want to be part of our community we offer them a discount compared to a wedding. Weddings do bring in a lot of money but we also want to support our local charities. So if we have to make a business decision whether – you know, we will take the weddings. They're more expensive if we have to limit them. So that would limit the event spaces for other charity events that raise a lot of money for local charities.

What we are hoping is that we provide a beautiful venue that's also next to a large farmland owned – and the farmland next to us is owned by a large corporate farm that owns big warehouse farms, and we have beautiful gardens next to it and many people come, and they enjoy – they love the beautiful fields and they come enjoy our gardens, which adds to the serenity and beautiful culture of the Skagit Valley.

Now I am born and raised in Mount Vernon and went to Mount Vernon High School, but I moved away and lived in England for 14 years and in Germany. Both of those – and I lived in the country out there, and both of those areas had similar growing pains like here: large farm fields and now there in England there's pubs next to the farm fields. People sit in picnic benches and drink beer and the farmer's running –

(timer rings)

Ms. Sedlacek: – their tractor. So –

### **39. Judy Peterson (Stepping Stones Garden)**

That was my daughter. I'm Judy Pedersen. I'm the owner of Stepping Stones Garden, but I'm also the owner of about 200 acres of farmland. And my family goes back to the end of 1875. I



have made it a purpose that I will save that farmland. So I own a goat-milking operation, I own cropland – but you know what? I have to rent it all out. So I think here's a chance to save Skagit County and save the beauty because it's important to our lives. And I wish you the best, but save the farmland. I went to farmers markets all over the place. I served grass-fed beef hamburgers to 25,000 people at a soccer tournament. When I had enough money, my husband said, Listen, you have spent too much time doing this, and I said, Okay, when I get enough money, I'm going under farm credit service and I'm going to pay those farms off, and that's what I did. It can be done, but you have to be creative.

#### **40. Jones Atterberry**

Commissioners, thank you. Jones Atterberry, 4019 Peters Lane, Anacortes. People talk about history. I have history too. Lived in Woolley, lived in Burlington, grew up in Anacortes. The Atterberrys are up on DB Minkler Road up there. They had the 80 acres that included Minkler Lake. Now this is back in 1905. Doesn't matter.

But I did pick strawberries for Sakuma and on Stewart's little farm up there off of Whistle Lake Road. I did pick raspberries on Young Road. And I did run for Libby's – I was the combiner out there for Libby's cannery working for – out there off of Best Road. Thank God I'm not a farmer, nor do I want to be a farmer, but that doesn't mean I don't appreciate the farmers and all the stands and all the people and all the venues that I use and so dearly love to buy flowers and vegetables and watching the Nelson people with their potatoes. And them donating boxes of potatoes to the Burlington Lions Club so we can have our potato feeds. That is what Skagit County is all about. It's the community.

I've been around here a long time. I'm 73 years old. I've participated in a lot of functions and I want to thank especially the venue people for allowing people like me and other citizens to come in and still feel, smell, and be part of the farming community. And that's what keeps farming healthy – is by bringing us in so that we will support you, the venues, which support the large farms. We appreciate them all and we need them all and we don't need overzealous planners with WACs, and we surely don't need attorneys like this lady was – threatening to sue people. I'm sick of those people. Thank you very much.

#### **41. David Top**

Hi there. My name's David Top. I'm a third generation farmer in a sense. I lived and worked on my parents' dairy farm in Sedro-Woolley for 29 years before moving away and getting married. I'm very aware of the hardships that farmers have and I've chosen not to take over our dairy farm back when that was an option, because I could see declining economics involving in dairy. I now see my parents' farm barns in decay because of the lack of need for them. Crop farmers are farming the fields but they have no use for the barns. We purchased our own farm 15 years ago. It consists of two acres. It's not enough for fulltime farming. I'm surrounded by – well, the City owns the property around me now and they hope to make it a park addition someday.

But, yeah, so we've raised pig, chickens, cats, dogs, a cow, along with our five kids on the property. But two acres also is a lot to maintain just if you can do nothing with it. So we need something to make it worthwhile. Holding events and weddings has been something that we

could fall back on so we figured we'd try that. We also went to the County, who told us, You can't do anything with it. So that was real nice to hear. We've heard objections to the ideas of holding events and weddings, like the idea that people don't want a bunch of drunk people partying at their place. And I call this foolishness because we would not hold drunken parties on our property. Like I said, we raised five kids there and we would only allow wine or beer, no hard alcohols. I think people watch too many movies and see where Hollywood presents weddings and wild parties and a lot of people get confused about that.

Another issue I have heard is that the farmers must not be hindered in their work so that the land can be preserved. We have a respect for the farmers. We've had events where farmers were spraying and working in the fields, driving tractors. We have no problem with that. This is part of being in Skagit County and it's not a problem. We understand that.

I know that the code for Agricultural-Natural Resource Land does not include allowances for weddings. I ask that it be changed. Holding events on our property in our barns and yard does not take away from the fields that are being farmed. It just doesn't at all. My two acres can't be farmed.

I also ask that special use permits on small parcels like my two acres be allowed. And agricultural work does not need to be done on the property because we're not preserving anything.

It's not something I can do in a small piece of land, and although we do the best to make use of it – my wife grows flowers –

(timer rings)

Mr. Top: – maintains floral gardens there.

#### **42. Heather Top**

Hi, my name is Heather Top. I lived in Skagit County for 13 years. I moved here from Pierce County to marry my husband, David Top, who's lived in Sedro his whole life and was a farmer for 29 years. We bought a house just two minutes from his parents, and what a blessing it's been. We bought an old farmhouse with a huge shop, a large barn built in the '50s, and various outbuildings on two acres of land. In the thick of raising babies, I got into gardening – found a love for growing and designing flowers. This proved to be a healthy outlet for me and where I'd eventually find my way into the wedding industry. I started a floral design business and have blessed many happy couples with flowers from my gardens and other flower farms. My business is a family affair where my kids all help me and get paid to wash buckets. They maintain the gardens and they steward the land that we've been blessed with.

I have worked at several of the venues here in Skagit as a florist and love the community that serves in the wedding industry. I applaud the venue owners for preserving these old buildings and sharing the beauty of farmland that surrounds them. People drive hours to come and enjoy the beauty of Skagit to escape their concrete jungles and suburban neighborhoods. I worked at a venue last August that held a wedding on a Monday. I noticed life went on as normal for the farmers. They were out there harvesting the wheatfield while everyone enjoyed the wedding

while witnessing the beauty of farm life safely from a distance. Nobody got in their way or asked them to stop. It was a beautiful day of farming and celebrating.

We've held a few weddings in our barn that we've been preserving. A few kinds from our youth group asked, Hey, can we get married in your barn? We'll help you paint, we'll help you clean it and fix a couple doors. I said sure. We soon and quickly realized, Wow, what a blessing this is to bring so many people here together to witness the beauty and history of what used to be a working farm just 20 years ago. I heard it said these building should be used for farm purposes only, not human habitation. Well, what do you suggest I do with this beautiful, structurally sound barn that doesn't have a purpose for animal habitation anymore? It doesn't hold farm equipment. It's retired. Its purpose is gone. Do I let it rot like my neighbor's building next door? Do I let the ivy and the blackberries and the weeds seep into the cracks of the wood that the hard-working farmers built 70 years ago that we hope to make a living off just like they did to support our family like they did?

I love serving others. I love a good party. I host events in my barn where I teach kids how to barndance, teenagers specifically. Wouldn't it be awesome to serve my community with the joy of weddings and events, sharing the beauty of Skagit-grown flowers and preserving a beautiful barn Skagit County Planning Commission Public Hearing: Agritourism Code Changes July 25, 2023 Page 34 of 48 that no longer can serve cows on just a few acres. I can offer a place to create memories away from city life, to give others opportunity to enjoy their birthday parties, retirement parties, \_\_\_\_\_. A place where kids can come and run around in the grass, play a game of corn hole, and smell the aroma of flowers. My friends from Puyallup travelled up here to experience just that. They didn't want to get married in the worn-down grange in their town or the historic movie theater with no parking and homeless people living on the sidewalks, or \_\_\_ Hotel, with no character. Every person from that wedding said, Wow, I wish I had something like this. What a dream. Thank you for sharing this with us.

We live in a time where –

Chair Raschko: Pardon me. Excuse me. Your time's up.

Commissioner Mitchell: Your timer went off but it didn't sound. Sorry.

Ms. Top: Oh, it did? Okay.

Chair Raschko: I'm sorry.

Ms. Top: Well, I hope we can work together.

#### **43. Mark Bensen (Eagle Haven Winery)**

I live in Outlook Lane in Sedro-Woolley. I'm one of the principal owners of Eagle Haven Winery and we do events at our winery.

A little bit of background: When we bought it, it was neglected for a number of years with Covid. It did have a lot of events prior to us. The previous owners' option, if we didn't buy it, was to bulldoze it all down, burn it, and plant 41 acres of Doug Fir because that's what he wanted to do. He was out of that business. We took over the winery, the orchards, the

vineyards. We've added another two acres of vineyards. We're adding another 500 cider trees. We're trying to bring back – if you've been around the place, we're bring (sic) back the orchard. We're trying to build back our cider capability, which it didn't really have before. Make our own wines with our own grapes, our own fruits. And be good neighbors, good neighbors with our fellow farmers. We share equipment, we share space, we share knowledge. What we have and somebody else doesn't have we give it to them and they reciprocate. We get free poo from one of our friends. We just gave 20 bales of – round bales – of hay to one of our neighbors because we didn't need it and we didn't have the equipment to do it. So we have great, great relationships with our fellow farmers.

We feel that a lot of this discussion has been adversarial – us versus them – and I don't think it needs to be that way. I think we just need a little bit more time to come to some common ground. Again I would – like so many other people here – I would recommend to the board that we extend that comment period, that input period. Give us time to work together. I'm working with the Skagitonians as a group to come up with maybe some more cohesive language that would make it easier for the board to implement into code regulations. And then more importantly, you know, once we get there it's absolutely imperative that you give us a shot of coming into compliance. You know, we bought it and, you know, bad on us. We didn't know that this was an issue, you know, until now. You know, until we went out and got – you know, tried to get permits and things like that, and then it became an issue. So give us time to get into compliance. We are a working farm and we want to be a working farm. And, you know, we just – we need that time. We need that time.

#### **44. Glen Johnson**

Yes, I'm Glen Johnson and I'm from La Conner, Washington, or the old county really. I get an opportunity in my life to make a movie out of the Skagit Valley pretty much every day of the year. I spend two to three hours inspecting all of the farm opportunities and circumstances that we have here ongoingly. I was a seed farmer, so my thoughts were international and here they came. We're feeding – we're growing people. We're growing crops but we're growing people, and people have to have, like, someone was suggesting, the respite ground where they can come to experience our daily life. We live in the Skagit for a reason. I mean, I was born and raised here but I travelled the world. There's very few places that can possibly draw me back. I can't even imagine going up to Rockport, to be honest with you. It's a little too much rain.

(audience laughter)

Mr. Johnson: But the truth is, people want to come here to experience what we get to live every day. And to take that away – I mean, I'm trying to put events together that put the hammer down, make the money in a weekend with agritourism. I know that scares a lot of people away but we stretch the Tulip Festival for a month. We could bring the Tulip Festival into a weekend event in August and most of the farmers they're like, Hmm, most of my crops are in cruising on autopilot. I don't have a whole lot of tractors on the road. Right now would be the time! This weekend we could make millions of dollars with having Taylor Swift here rather than down there!

(audience laughter)

Mr. Johnson: And put the hammer down and make the big money and then have them all go back to wherever they came from! We could have fun doing this rather than it is – most of us are eh-eh-eh! I mean, I farmed and did 50 different crops on a few acres and I scabbled a living, but it was so fun to host a wedding one time when it was simple, friends. They paid us 150 bucks! I'm sure you guys are going to throw a laugher at that! But we had a great time. We had people that talked about it for years afterwards. One event where the people from the city got a chance to come out and breathe my fresh air, hear my frogs in my pond, and go home and say, Wow, that was one of the neatest weddings I've ever been to.

And so I just think that we have to be open to, you know, putting clamps on edges.

(timer rings)

Mr. Johnson: I mean, when I was putting events together I had people saying no, you can't do this and that and the other.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Johnson: Okay, I'm done. Is that right?

#### **45. Adrienne Hopkins**

I'm Adrienne Hopkins. I don't live here. I live in Everett right now with my husband but was in Cle Elum for five years and we're moving back because we can't afford to live in Skagit County and we're buying a home in Kittitas. And I'm a floral designer and I do weddings and events and some of my favorite venues are here, like Christianson's and Saltbox. It's like all these different places here I just love so much, and when I thought to move over here to Everett to live with him I was excited about, you know, possibly getting to do more weddings up in Skagit Valley and be able to – you know, I use flowers from the local areas wherever I go. I travel statewide to design a rose and sparrow floral. And it's just me and I hire on, you know, extra people for extra help. But the thing I love the most is coming, you know, to this area. I buy from the local farms – Jello Mold Farm is one of my favorites and I use some of these flowers here to, you know, decorate. And most of the weddings, I've found, in this area even are kind of smaller micro-weddings, too. They're not like these huge necessarily – like, you know, 250-people weddings. So it seems to me like the discussion, it's just kind of a little blown out of proportion.

But also in Cle Elum I'm a preferred vendor for Suncadia and then also, you know, out in Ellensburg, Bright Side Vintage Farm and the Cattle Barn in Kittitas – sorry I'm nervous. I'm shaking my voice. I love designing out in these open spaces and I use, you know – I hand-forage for materials over there on that side of the mountain. And a lot of the people I know there are very hands-off. Some of the owners also. And so, you know, it's just an interesting conversation. And I thought I'd come and hear more about how maybe too much of the traffic was the problem, like people were, you know, polluting the area or something. It sounds more like that's not really an issue so I'm still a little unclear about, you know, sort of the problem actually – why you wouldn't allow venues to continue hosting weddings, except that it would take away from the farmers' ability to be farming fulltime, I guess.

So I just wanted to speak up, and I just have so much respect for everybody here, and thanks for allowing us to share. But also just – you know, I travel statewide and it's affecting me personally as well because I might not be able to do work over here and I might, you know. And so many people I know, so many other people in the industry might – you know, these small businesses that are just women trying to make a living. You know, I just got married. I'm 43. I've been single my whole life and it's like, I'm just trying to, you know, not have to move back to Oklahoma, where my family's from. So I love them but they're crazy! But I like it here so thank you!

#### **46. Hector de Leon (Tulip Valley Winery and Eagle Haven Winery)**

I'm Hector de Leon. I'm the co-owner of Tulip Valley Winery and also part owner of Eagle Haven Winery. I've been here over 20 years in the valley. I've worked with numerous farmers. I do a lot of charity and foundation work. From my own winery I make the wine, I make the hard cider. I'm a world-renowned cider maker, top notch wine-maker and earned the medals. I can show you any day. I also educate other cider makers and we grow organically and salmon-safe. I have 70 acres in eastern Washington, 70 acres we farm here. We lease out to other farmers.

I spent three tours in combat, died twice, and here I am, sitting here in front of you guys trying to cut the small farmer out. I see a lot of farmers out here. We have \_\_\_ micro-farmers at Viva Farms out there and they want a big piece of a barn that is abandoned and want to work it. This will feed the people. I've been to war-torn countries. People are starving. And now they're trying to crunch the farmers in other parts of the world \_\_\_. They're fighting back. But I'm telling you: They're good people here. The vendors are good people.

I educate the people that come from Seattle and all over the world. I get them from all over the world. We educate people at DWSU on cider making. I get them from Mexico, Africa, Alaska – you name it. They're from all over the world. England. And to see here – I fight for my country and see you guys trying to crunch the small guy. We can work with the big guys. There's a lot of new industry, a lot of new technology that can work together. We go there. We have venues. I educate the people there. They don't know anything about farming but by the end of the day they leave my venue they know about the potato farmers, they know about the \_\_\_ farmer, they know about everybody who farms out here. I love the animals, I try to protect the birds, I love the eagles. And I'm telling you, these are good people. Both businesses \_\_\_\_\_, I like to see them grow. I love to see the childrens in the sport. I support dogs, Children's Hospital. I spend 90% of my own personal time helping people in the community and people know it.

To sit there and put these restrictions on anybody – they're willing to work with you, but they don't want to come up there and you say "No" right off the bat. They want to comply. They want to make it safe. They love the land. They only use a small footprint, but that small footprint projects a big footprint in this outside areas. I'm telling you, I get it from Seattle, New York, you name it. They sit there and we enjoy a nice glass of wine or cider and I educate them on the beautiful farmland we have here and how all these little small farmers want to be a good farmer. And we can feed the world. We have one of the greatest seed production farmers out here in the world, and I see that. And I also worked with other \_\_\_\_\_ in Africa. We're trying to increase the bee population. I'm working with products to help people.

(timer rings)

Mr. de Leon: So we're all in this together. Thank you.

**47. Courtney Bourasaw (The Skagit Table)**

Hello. My name is Courtney Bourasaw. I own The Skagit Table. I have recently opened my – well, I've had my business for eight years but I've recently opened my own brick and mortar in downtown Mount Vernon. We offer many food service-related things but at some point we use local produce in all of them.

When I started my business, I was a student at Skagit Valley College. I grew up in LA and had never heard of the term "farm to table." I received my passion for small farmers and using what was in season while I attended college. I don't know that I would have had that interest in farming had I attended school elsewhere. I love having access to produce the way that we do here. I love the small guys, the ones who have just started this – had just started but see this beautiful dream. Every time I see a new one on social media I do my best to reach out to them and see how I can best support them, because I know how hard it is to start up. They dream of making it, providing for their families, raising their kids – whatever their desire to do – on their own land that they bought, that they work on, that they pay taxes on that is theirs. I visit every farm I buy produce from. I hear their stories, their love for providing food and making it. I also see how incredibly hard it is to farm and then I'm blown away at how little they charge for this produce. Lots of them want food to be affordable for everyone and break their backs bringing their customers food that has value, but that alone is not enough to financially support anyone in this economy. Times have changed \_\_\_\_\_.

I get rules are rules, and I do know most of us do want to do the right thing and get permitted so their livelihoods are not at risk, but it needs to be attainable, it needs to be worth it. The current proposal would hardly allow venues to cover their costs. Unless you've worked in the wedding industry, you do not know the incredible amount of work it takes to maintain a property, and I'd say the same for farming. They are both extremely hard jobs. But both care about agriculture and so there needs to be a happy medium. Shutting down venues or even limiting them as proposed would impact this new adventure I'm on. It would trickle all the way down to my employees and my kids. Thank you.

**48. Hayden Blackwood**

Good evening. My name is Hayden Blackwood. I am 45 years old. I am a father of four and we have a farm over on Sterling Road where we do pumpkins. My dad is 85 and is also still actively farming. And my ask is when I listen to this group in here tonight, is listen and hear the stories of my 85-year-old dad who grew up on a farm up in Birch Bay which is now an abandoned wasteland to go to the at-the-time an active Kent Valley, which was 12.7 miles of farmland which is now gone. It's nothing but buildings. My ask is more or less to really take full accord to the venues, the preservations of the barns for wedding venues. Everything needs to work together. Otherwise my biggest fear is this beautiful valley of ours, by the time my grandkids are around an adult, may not see Skagit Valley as I am talking about it as at this moment. Thank you.

**49. Pergine \_\_\_\_**

My name is Peregrine \_\_\_\_, 17165 Snee Oosh \_\_, La Conner, Washington. Listening to everybody here tonight, it seems incredibly obvious that all of these issues are, all of these sides that we're talking about are entirely complementary. We're not talking about, you know – they don't need to be adversarial. They don't need to be anything like that. These are complements to each other to uphold the economic and long-term production of agriculture in this county. It should be obvious that the economic sustainability of a small farm is the foundation of its ability to be continued – to continue using it as productive farmland. If these farms can't continue to make it economically, they're not going to be able to use them as farmland. If we're wanting to limit something, maybe we should look at limiting outside investment for event venues. But when owners are venue operators they should be provided the opportunity to do so.

These are not corporate venues we're talking about. These are mom-and-pop venues. They need our support and we need them. Please keep the comment period open. Thank you.

**50. Christine Wakoski**

Good evening. Thank you so much for this amazing evening. I feel like I've been very enlightened to many things. My name is Christine Wakoski, 775 Shelter Bay Drive, La Conner, Washington. We've been here four years and I'm a board-certified holistic nutritionist. It's a little bit of a different angle here but the father of modern medicine, Hippocrates, 2000 years ago said "Let thy food be thy medicine and thy medicine be thy food." And I've had the extreme privilege of knowing Margie and Chris Dariotis of La Conner Gardens and working with them occasionally. They have the most amazing five varieties of garlic I've ever seen in my life, and as we all know, garlic is an amazing form of medicine. And I come to you tonight with this proposal and with this vision and with this comment, and that is that we hear about farm-to-table. How about farm-to-pharmacy? It's an amazing thing that we could educate people on these beautiful farms, many of them small, and we could have discussions about how the various foods like broccoli and the sulforaphane from broccoli and how it is very helpful for the immune system and for fighting against cancer and other maladies, and we could have an amazing ability to train and to teach and to educate people when they come onto small farms of what exactly they're partaking of and what the farm is producing to give us amazing health and vitality. And so my little comment is that an – and just to say please do consider keeping this discussion open because I think it is a very important discussion. Thank you very much.

**51. Jill Shipman**

Hi. My name is Jill Shipman. I'm at 23073 Sagers Lane in Mount Vernon. I'm the accounts director at Pacific Party Canopies and I also serve as a board member on the Mount Vernon Farmers Market. I moved up here from Napa and Sonoma seven years ago. I came up with the heartfelt interest of starting my own venue and being about to work with other venues to showcase farm-to-table because I came from Sonoma and Napa where it is so popular. In Napa County about 15 years ago they shut down the wedding industry and I watched hundreds of my counterparts lose their jobs and have to move out of the area that they found so dear to their



heart. And this topic to me breaks my heart to see it happening here in Skagit County. There are amazing people within this industry that work every day. They work hard. They work when farms can't. They work all the time. Now not to say that farms aren't important, because obviously I'm on the board of the Farmers Market. I work with many farms but do serve and go to different farmers markets and be able to sell, and by doing this it'll take away that opportunity that they have to make a living and showcase their foods at multiple locations and give it to multiple people.

Gosh, there's so much to say. I have it all written out. I wasn't expecting to speak tonight. But I do beg you, please, leave this open. Have a further conversation. There's lots to be heard through this community of strong individuals that help support the farming in Skagit County. Thank you.

## **52. Tina Champeaux**

I'm Tina Champeaux. I live at 1641 State Route 9, Sedro-Woolley. I live on 17½ acres that used to be a dairy farm. I grew up a farm girl and I've lived in the 39th district either between Snohomish County and Skagit County since I was eight years old. I love farming. I also was a government worker for 23 years for DSHS. You can cry at any time. So I understand government. And I think that there's something that needs to be refreshed every once in a while, and I believe that government must be reminded of the following, and it is our due diligence and as governed to see that all officials are notified on a consistent basis. And that is: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

That would be all of you. That's the Declaration of Independence, 1776, the Constitutional Convention from May 25th to September 17th of 1787. The delegates were intelligent, well-educated with vast and varied experience. Delegates agreed on basic values and principles. Among these were the God-given unalienable rights to life, liberty, and property. I hold property very dear. It appears that we have strayed from the foundation upon which this nation was built. We own land upon which we pay taxes and are so compromised by government bureaucracy that in many cases we cannot use the land upon which we dwell. Now we hear the common cry, "Save the farmlands," so for what and for when, how, where? Our farmers are so overtaxed and so overregulated that our farms and farming has and is still dwindling. Our farmers are seeking ways to continue farming and still earn a living. That's the right to do that. As our current administration in Olympia has never seen a tax they didn't love, it appears that Skagit has never seen a permit fee they didn't love with employees who act like elected judges to carry out their verdicts on us.

(timer rings)

Ms. Champeaux: I'm not done but I guess that's enough.