

 <p>Agricultural Land Commission Act</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Policy L-22 October 2016</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTIVITIES DESIGNATED AS A PERMITTED NON-FARM USE: GATHERING FOR AN EVENT IN THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE ("ALR")</p>
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This policy is intended to assist in the interpretation of the [Agricultural Land Commission Act](#), 2002, including amendments as of September 2014, (the "ALCA") and BC Regulation 171/2002 ([Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation](#)), including amendments as of August 2016, (the "Regulation"). In case of ambiguity or inconsistency, the ALCA and Regulation will govern.

REFERENCE:

Agricultural Land Commission Act, S.B.C. 2002, c. 36, Section 1.

Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (BC Reg. 171/2002), the "Regulation", Section 1(4) and Section 3(4).

Section 3(4) The following non-farm uses are permitted in an agricultural land reserve and must not be prohibited by a local government bylaw or, for lands located in an agricultural land reserve that are treaty settlement lands, by a law of the applicable treaty first nation government:

(k) gathering for an event, if all of the following conditions are met:

- i. the farm must be located on land classified as a farm under the [Assessment Act](#);*
- ii. permanent facilities must not be constructed or erected in connection with the event;*
- iii. parking for those attending the event must be available on the farm, but must not be permanent nor interfere with the farm's agricultural productivity;*
- iv. no more than 150 people, excluding residents and employees of the farm, may be gathered on the farm at one time for the purpose of attending the event;*
- v. the event must be of no more than 24 hours duration;*
- vi. no more than 10 gatherings for an event of any type may occur on the farm within a single calendar year.*

Section 1 (4) Definitions:

"gathering for an event" means a gathering of people on a farm for the purpose of attending

- (a) a wedding, unless paragraph (c) (ii) applies,*

(b) a music festival, or

(c) an event, other than

(i) an event held for the purpose of agri-tourism, or

(ii) the celebration, by residents of the farm and those persons whom they invite, of a family event for which no fee or other charge is payable in connection with the event by invitees.

Section 2(2.4) In subsections (2.1) to (2.3):

(f) gathering for an event, if the event is held only in the lounge referred to in paragraph (b) or the special event area referred to in paragraph (c) of this subsection, and, for this purpose, section 3 (4) (k) does not apply.

INTERPRETATION:

Gathering for an event is a permitted non-farm use in the Agricultural Land Reserve and must not be prohibited by a local government bylaw as long as the event meets the conditions set out in the Regulation.

No more than 150 people may be in attendance and the event must be less than 24 hours in duration.

A maximum of 10 events of any type are permitted within a calendar year on a farm. For example, 5 weddings, 2 music concerts and 3 art shows. Where more than one farm business is being operated from a farm, the maximum 10 events applies. It is recommended that a record of events be maintained by the farmer including type of event, date and number of attendees.

There is no requirement for these events to directly market or promote agricultural products grown on the farm and therefore are not considered agri-tourism events.

People hosting events must make every effort to avoid negative impacts to the use of agricultural land including but not limited to, damage to agricultural land and structures, noise that disturbs animals and livestock, trespass, vandalism, theft and blocking access to adjacent farm businesses.

Events may include weddings, private parties, corporate retreats, music concerts and concert series, music festivals, film and theatrical presentations, art shows, dance recitals, charitable and political fundraising events, dances, and sports events, so long as otherwise compliant with the Regulation. Any event that is not an agri-tourism event falls into this category.

The Regulation allows gathering for events in the ALR provided the land is assessed as "farm" under the *Assessment Act*. If the assessment changes, the use is no longer permitted. The farm may be comprised of one or several parcels of land owned or operated by a farmer as a farm business. The farm parcels should be contiguous or in the same general geographic area.

Permanent facilities must not be constructed or erected for any event activity. Permanent facilities include, but are not limited to: buildings or permanent structures, hard surface parking areas, concrete pads, structural foundations, retaining walls, permanent tents (erected for more than 90 days) and permanent alteration to the landscape (fill, gravel, berms, hills, dugouts, amphitheatres). The conversion of existing buildings and the construction associated with bringing them up to public assembly building code is also deemed as the construction or erection of a permanent facility. If permanent facilities are required, an application and approval of the Commission is necessary.

For the purposes of this policy, parking areas must not be permanent (asphalt, concrete, gravel, etc) and parking must not interfere with the farm's agricultural productivity. All vehicles visiting the farm for the event must be parked on site. To minimize impacting farm land, parking should be along field edges, adjacent to internal farm driveways and roads, and in farm yard areas or immediately adjacent to farm buildings and structures.

Personal family celebrations hosted by the farm owner where no fee is charged continue to be allowed.

This Policy does not apply to agri-tourism activities. See Related Policies.

As per subsection 2.4(f) of the regulation, these conditions do not apply to wineries, cideries, meaderies, breweries and distilleries if the event(s) is held only in the ancillary food and beverage service lounge that has been developed in compliance with section 2(2.4)(b) of the Regulation. Regulation section 3(4)(k) and associated restrictions apply if the event(s) are held outside the lounge area. This means wineries, cideries, meaderies, breweries and distilleries may host an unlimited number of events in their lounge area and an additional 10 events as per section 3(4)(k) held outside the lounge area.

Local governments have the authority to regulate events with regard to structures and building occupancy (including determining if an existing farm building is appropriate for a gathering or requires upgrades for public assembly), parking, lighting, hours of operation, health and safety, noise, access for police, fire and emergency vehicles, etc. Local governments have the authority to require permits for events.

Events in excess of the what is permitted under section 3(4)(k) require an application pursuant to section 20(3) of the Agricultural Land Commission Act and approval of the Commission.

TERMS:

family event means an event attended by

- (a) family members, and
- (b) close personal friends or close business associates of family members

family member with respect to a person means

- (a) parents, grandparents and great grandparents,
- (b) spouse, parents of spouse and stepparents of spouse,
- (c) brothers and sisters,
- (d) children or stepchildren, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and

(e) aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces

fee or other charge includes a gift in lieu of a fee or charge given in connection with the event

wedding means the ceremony of marriage or a marriage-like ceremony and/or the reception celebration

music festival means concert or concert series no more than 24 hours in duration

Unless defined in this policy, terms used herein will have the meanings given to them in the ALCA or the Regulation.

RELATED POLICY:

ALC Policy L-04 Activities Designated as a Farm Use: Agri-Tourism Activities in the ALR

ALC Policy L-03: Activities Designated as Farm Use: Wineries and Cideries in the ALR

ALR Policy L-21: Activities Designated as Farm Use: Brewery, Distillery and Meadery in the ALR