

## Guide for Navigating Vermont Agritourism Regulations

Looking to develop an agritourism business? Start here by using the checklists to help you navigate the regulations, permits, and licenses required for different scenarios and find points of contact for questions and additional help.

### What agritourism activity are you looking to pursue?

#### Farmstays:



#### On-farm events such as weddings, farm dinners, and concerts:



#### Opening a food truck or food stand:



Opening a store or market:



Farm tours and educational events:



Operating a summer camp:



Farmstand or pick-your-own:



Making or selling food made from your farm products:



## Farmstays:

Looking to host guests on your farm overnight? Here are some regulations, permits, and licenses to think about when getting started.

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.

*Note: There is **potential for an exception** if you are using an existing house to host your farm stay, but you should still read through the regulations for your municipality. Developing a space to offer lodging is just like developing a big hotel in the eyes of Vermont, in terms of the rules and regulations. However, if you are not doing any sort of construction but are offering a rental space on your property, you do not need any permits and licensing. [Read](#) more about the rules and regulations under the rental accessory unit law.*

### Permits:

- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#), they can help you determine what permits you'll need.
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).
- Obtain a [wastewater permit](#), or make sure the current permit is up to date.

### Licenses:

- Any farmstay that has three or more rooms or prepares meals requires a [lodging license](#).
  - If you do not prepare food and you offer one or two rooms for short term rental housing, you must follow the [Short-Term Rental Safety, Health, and Financial Obligations](#) but a lodging license is not required from the Health Department.
- If you will be serving or selling alcohol, look into a [malt and vinous beverage license](#).

### Additional Resources:

[View resources](#) for lodging establishments, license holders, a checklist for a food establishment and a guide for developing a farmstay.

Examples (placeholder):

## On-farm events such as weddings, farm dinners, and concerts:

Each farm event will be different and unique to your farm! Use the checklist below to determine what meets the needs of your event. Regardless of the type of event, everyone should **familiarize themselves with Act 143 and Act 31**, and follow the regulations listed if the agritourism activity falls under the legislature .

### Note:

*Any establishment with food service activities that are more than “occasional” – defined as less than once a month – requires a license from the Vermont Department of Health. The Temporary Food Stand license (“fair stand”) is applicable to weekly farmers market vending as well as occasional farm dinners. If other physical facilities are proposed to be regularly used instead of the temporary food stand (a kitchen space on the farm, for example), contact the Department of Health: (802) 863-7221.*

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.

### Permits:

- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).
- If adding permanent bathrooms or an additional space, obtain a [wastewater permit](#), or make sure the current permit is up to date.

### Liability:

- Read through [Act 31](#).
  - Post signs at agritourism activities that meet the specifications of Act 31.
  - Include the warning notice language in every written contract between an agritourism host and a participant.
- Check with your insurance agent to make sure this type of event is covered in your policy.

### Licenses:

- Determine whether or what food will be served at your establishment.
- Obtain a [temporary food service establishment license](#), if necessary.
- Research the coinciding food regulations and [obtain permits and licenses as necessary](#).
- For licensing, operators are expected to demonstrate knowledge of food safety. The ServSafe (or other) certification is not specifically required, however, it is recommended that operators participate in some kind of food safety training to increase knowledge for safe food handling.

### Additional Resources:

View guide on hosting a wedding farm dinner, resources for license holders and a checklist for food establishment facility requirements.

Examples (placeholder):

## Opening a food truck or food stand:

Thinking about running your own food truck? Use these checklists to get you started in the process.

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.
- Review the [health regulation guide](#) for food establishments in Vermont.

### Permits:

- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).

### Licenses:

- Obtain a [commercial caterer license](#).

### Additional Resources:

View a checklist for food establishment facility requirements.

Examples (placeholder):

## Opening a store, market, or farmstand:

Whether you're opening a farm market with all your own products, or other farmers' products, you can use these checklists to get you started when it comes to licenses, permits and regulations.

### Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality. Familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#). (Generally, if your store is selling only items from your farm, it does not fall under Act 143.)
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.

### Permits:

- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).
- If doing construction/renovations [obtain a public building permit](#).
- If you add bathrooms, obtain a [wastewater permit](#).
- Make sure to also consider [ADA requirements](#).

### Liability:

- Read through [Act 31](#).
  - Post signs at agritourism activities that meet the specifications of Act 31.
  - Include the warning notice language in every written contract between an agritourism host and a participant.
- Check with your insurance agent to make sure this type of activity is covered in your policy.

*Note: Roadside farmstands do not meet the specifications of Act 31, so if you choose to open a roadside farmstand, you do not need signage.*

### Licenses:

- Decide what food and products will be sold at your establishment.
  - Research any [regulations and permits](#) that may be necessary for those products.
- If you are preparing food, you will need a food service license, and should contact the [Health Department](#).
- For licensing, operators are expected to demonstrate knowledge of food safety. The ServSafe (or other) certification is not specifically required, however, it is recommended that operators participate in some kind of food safety training to increase knowledge for safe food handling.

Examples (placeholder):

## Farm tours and educational events:

Thinking about opening your farm up to the public for tours, classes, or other educational events? Use these checklists to get you started on the right path when it comes to licenses, regulations and permits.

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.
- When offering a tour to the public, it will need to comply with the [ADA \(Americans with Disabilities Act\)](#). This may mean creating accessible routes over uneven ground or installing a ramp.

### Liability:

- Read through [Act 31](#).
  - Post signs at agritourism activities that meet the specifications of Act 31.
  - Include the warning notice language in every written contract between an agritourism host and a participant.
- Check with your insurance agent to make sure this type of event is covered in your policy.

### Permits:

- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, [obtain a public building permit](#).
- If adding additional space, consider a [wastewater permit](#), if adding to your septic load.

### Licenses:

- Decide whether there will be any tastings given as part of the tour.
  - Research any [regulations and permits](#) that may be necessary for those products that you will be allowing guests to sample. (You should also consider this under [Act 143](#).)
  - For licensing, operators are expected to demonstrate knowledge of food safety. The ServSafe (or other) certification is not specifically required, however, it is recommended that operators participate in some kind of food safety training to increase knowledge for safe food handling.



Examples (placeholder):

## Operating a summer camp:

Thinking about opening your farm up to kids for overnight summer programs? Use these checklists to get you started when considering the licensing, regulations and permits.

*Note:*

*There is no license needed to operate a day camp in Vermont. For more information on this, you can visit the American Camp Association's regulations for VT.*

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.
- Overnight summer camp requires following certain regulations and requirements because it qualifies as an overnight farmstay. These can be found under "Licenses" below.

### Liability:

- Read through [Act 31](#).
  - Post signs at agritourism activities that meet the specifications of Act 31.
  - Include the warning notice language in every written contract between an agritourism host and a participant.
- Check with your insurance agent to make sure this type of event is covered in your policy.

### Permits:

- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, [obtain a public building permit](#).
- If you are adding bathrooms or additional space which increases your septic load, obtain a [wastewater permit](#).

### Licenses:

- Apply for an [overnight summer camp license](#).

- Read through the [Licensed children's camps rule](#).
- If serving food, you will need a license. See these [guidelines](#) for help picking the best one for the situation.

### Additional Resources:

[View guide](#) on hosting a summer camp.

## **Pick-your-own:**

Want to bring the public to your farm for pick-your-own? Use the checklists to get you thinking about licensing, permits and regulations.

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.

### Licenses:

- Decide what products will be U-Pick.
  - Research any [regulations and permits](#) that may be necessary for those products.
- Meet with a [regional permit specialist](#).
- If doing construction/renovations, contact a district coordinator to determine the need for [obtaining an Act 250 permit](#).
- If doing construction/renovations [obtain a public building permit](#).

### Liability:

- Read through [Act 31](#).
  - Post signs at agritourism activities that meet the specifications of Act 31.
  - Include the warning notice language in every written contract between an agritourism host and a participant.
- Check with your insurance agent to make sure this type of activity is covered in your policy.

*Note: The main thing with pick-your-own is liability, so following Act 31 is essential.*

Examples (placeholder):

## Making or selling food made from your farm products:

Thinking about using your farm fresh products to make or prepare food items? Use these checklists to get you started when it comes to licenses, regulations and permits.

### Land Use Regulations:

- Read through the [zoning regulations](#) for your municipality and familiarize yourself with [Act 143](#). To determine if your agritourism addition meets the specifications of Act 143, you can use [this guide](#).
  - Obtain a zoning permit, if necessary.
  - Determine if your municipality requires a site plan review.
  - Submit an application and site plan review to your municipality, if necessary.

### Licenses:

- Determine what type of business you will sell your product from and [obtain a license accordingly](#).
- Determine if any product you will use or make requires a separate license and [obtain accordingly](#).

Examples (placeholder):