

Legal Issues in Hosting On-Farm Events

- Look up permitted uses for your zoning code, and check to see that your event will be allowed within your zone. If it isn't allowed, consider talking with neighbors and the zoning officials about accommodating your event.
 - Make your facility as accessible as you reasonably can to persons with disabilities.
 - Offer basic sanitation facilities at all events: portable toilets, hand sanitizer, and water.
 - If you serve prepared food, check with the local public health official about whether you need a temporary food facility or food establishment permit.
 - Call your insurance agent and discuss the event beforehand. If you charge a fee, will you become a commercial operation and does your policy cover commercial projects? If individuals are injured, will their injuries be covered? Are you up to date on your premium payments? What is the procedure for if a person is injured? Can you get a discount for mitigating risk with waivers, signage, or restricting access? If your agent assures you that your event is covered, create a paper trail by using a log book or a follow-up email to the agent.
 - Be cautious about allowing access to animals. If you do, offer sanitizer, post instructions, and limit access.
 - If you have livestock, check that your fences comply with the legal minimums regarding spacing, height, tensile strength, post location, etc. Your insurance coverage may require it.
 - If your state has Ag Tourism laws to protect the farm owner, be sure to find out what signage you need to display to be in compliance with these laws.
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