

MCAD AGRICULTURE GUIDELINES - TYPICAL LEVELS

THE INFORMATION COLLECTED BELOW WAS A RESULT OF ON-SITE INSPECTION OF AGRICULTURE/TIMBER PROPERTY IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MEETINGS WITH THE AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND INPUT FROM THE OTHER AGRICULTURE/TIMBER SPECIALISTS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY. THE PURPOSE OF THIS INFORMATION IS TO HELP ESTABLISH TYPICAL GUIDELINES AND/OR INTENSITY LEVELS. THE DEGREE OF INTENSITY MEASURES WHAT THE OWNER IS PUTTING INTO HIS/HER AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE IN TIME, LABOR, EQUIPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL, AND COMPARES IT WITH TYPICAL LEVELS OF THESE "INPUTS" FOR THE SAME TYPE OF ENTERPRISE IN THE AREA. THIS MEASUREMENT IS INTENDED TO EXCLUDE LAND ON WHICH TOKEN AGRICULTURE USE OCCURS IN AN EFFORT TO OBTAIN TAX RELIEF. NO ABSOLUTE STANDARDS CAN BE SET ON AGRICULTURE/TIMBER PROPERTY DUE TO THE VARIOUS ACCEPTED TECHNIQUES AND METHODS USED BY PRUDENT OPERATORS. FOR THIS REASON, EACH APPLICATION WILL BE REVIEWED AND ANY DECISION AS TO THE QUALIFYING OF NON-QUALIFYING USE OF THE PROPERTY WILL BE BASED ON THE MERITS OF THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION.

CATTLE

1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 20 ACRES IS REQUIRED.
2. AT LEAST 75% OPEN FOR GRAZING WITH NO MORE THAN 25% WOODED.
3. A MINIMUM OF AT LEAST 8 HEAD OF MOTHER COWS OR BRED HEIFERS ARE REQUIRED ON THE FIRST 20-40 ACRES. EACH ADDITIONAL 5 ACRES REQUIRES 1 COW. EXAMPLE: 50 ACRES = 10 COWS; 75 ACRES = 15 COWS; 100 ACRES = 20 COWS
4. LARGER TRACTS SHOULD HAVE ONE COW FOR EVERY 8 ACRES. EXAMPLE: 200 ACRES = 25 COWS OR 400 ACRES = 50 COWS

HORSES

1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 20 ACRES IS REQUIRED.
2. AT LEAST 75% OPEN FOR GRAZING WITH NO MORE THAN 25% WOODED.
3. **BREEDING OPERATIONS ONLY** WITH AT LEAST 6 MARES PRODUCING FOALS ARE REQUIRED ON THE FIRST 20-40 ACRES. ONE MARE FOR EACH ADDITIONAL 7 ACRES. EXAMPLE: 41-47 ACRES = 7 MARES 48-54 ACRES = 8 MARES
3 MINIATURE MARES = 1 REGULAR MARE EXAMPLE: 20-40 ACRES = 18 MINIATURE MARES 41-47 ACRES = 21 MINIATURE MARES
4. SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE PROOF OF SALE OF FOALS.
5. TYPICALLY, OPERATIONS SET UP STRICTLY FOR BOARDING, TRAINING, AND SHOWING OF HORSES DO NOT SUPPORT AN AGRICULTURAL PURPOSE

GOATS

1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 20 ACRES IS REQUIRED WITH A MINIMUM OF 24-56 DOES DEPENDING ON FRAME SCORE TO QUALIFY 20-40 ACRES. EACH ADDITIONAL 5 ACRES REQUIRES 3-7 DOES DEPENDING ON FRAME SCORE.
2. LAND MAY BE PARTIALLY WOODED, BUT MUST HAVE ENOUGH GRASSES AND OTHER FOOD SOURCES FROM THE LAND TO SUPPORT GOATS.

SHEEP

1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 20 ACRES IS REQUIRED WITH A MINIMUM OF 24-56 EWES DEPENDING ON FRAME SCORE TO QUALIFY 20-40 ACRES. EACH ADDITIONAL 5 ACRES REQUIRES 3-7 EWES DEPENDING ON FRAME SCORE.
2. LAND MUST HAVE ENOUGH GRASSES AND OTHER FOOD SOURCES FROM THE LAND TO SUPPORT SHEEP.
3. SHEEP OPERATIONS THAT QUALIFY FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES ARE MAINLY DEDICATED TO WOOL AND MUTTON PRODUCTION, AND NOT STRICTLY TO BE SOLD FOR SHOWING PURPOSES.

HAY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 5 ACRES IS REQUIRED. 2. THERE SHOULD BE PROOF OF 2 CUTTINGS DURING NORMAL YEARS (NO DROUGHT). 3. TYPICAL YIELD IS EITHER 60-100 SQUARE BALES PER ACRE OR 3-5 ROUND BALES PER ACRE PER CUTTING. 4. PROPERTY SHOULD BE FERTILIZED HEAVILY (300 TO 500 POUNDS PER ACRE) AT BEGINNING OF YEAR AND TOP-DRESSED LATER AS NEEDED. 5. THERE SHOULD TYPICALLY BE NO ANIMALS PRESENT ON HAYFIELD DURING GROWING SEASON, BUT ANIMALS MAY BE WINTERED ON HAY FIELDS.
ORCHARDS NURSERY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 3 ACRES IS REQUIRED FOR ALL THREE. 2. FOR ORCHARDS, A PECAN 40X40 GRID = 27 TREES/ACRE, PEACH 18X18 GRID = 135 TREES/ACRE, BLUEBERRIES 5X8 GRID = 1089 TREES/ACRE. 3. IT MUST BE A WHOLESALE OPERATION. 4. EACH APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.
TRUCK FARM (LARGE GARDEN)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 3 ACRES IS REQUIRED WITH SPRING AND FALL CROPS. 2. IT MUST BE A WHOLESALE OPERATION. 3. SMALL OPERATIONS MAY QUALIFY IF MANAGED INTENSIVELY AND PROOF CAN BE SHOWN THAT PRODUCE IS SOLD WHOLESALE OR TO THE PUBLIC.
CHRISTMAS TREE FARM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 3 ACRES IS REQUIRED. 2. CHRISTMAS TREE GRIDS ARE TYPICALLY 5X5 = 1742 TREES/ACRE OR A 6X6 = 1210 TREES/ACRE. 3. TREES SHOULD BE TRIMMED ANNUALLY.
EXOTIC FOWL	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF APPROXIMATELY 3 ACRES WITH 50 ADULT BIRDS IS REQUIRED. 2. ONLY LAND THAT IS ACTUALLY USED FOR BREEDING AND PRODUCTION (IE, FENCED IN) WILL QUALIFY. 3. OPERATION SHOULD BE BASED ON PRODUCTION OF MEAT, LEATHER, AND OTHER SPECIALTY PRODUCTS, NOT SOLELY BREEDING. 4. EACH APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.
EXOTIC DEER/ LIVESTOCK	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF 10 ACRES WITH REQUIRED NUMBER OF ANIMAL UNITS VARYING BY SPECIES. 2. TYPICAL RECOMMENDED STOCKING RATE BY BREED EXAMPLES: *AXIS - 3 HEAD/ACRE FOR A TOTAL OF 30 MINIMUM TO QUALIFY *FALLOW/WHITETAIL - 4 HEAD/ACRE FOR A TOTAL OF 40 MINIMUM TO QUALIFY *ELK - 1 HEAD/ACRE FOR A TOTAL OF 10 MINIMUM TO QUALIFY MUST HAVE HIGH GAME FENCE, AND AN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT SUCH AS MEAT, LEATHER, OR BREEDING STOCK MUST BE PRODUCED.
HEMP FARMING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A MINIMUM OF 3 ACRES IS REQUIRED. 2. MUST PROVIDE PRODUCER/HANDLER LICENSE, FACILITY PERMIT, AND LOT PERMIT ISSUED BY TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE EACH YEAR.

CATFISH FARM

1. MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF PURCHASE OF FINGERLINGS AND RECORDS OF RECEIPTS SHOWING SALES.
2. EACH APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.

BEEKEEPING IS AN AGRICULTURAL USE AND SHALL QUALIFY FOR AGRICULTURAL USE PRODUCTIVITY VALUATION IF USED FOR POLLINATION OR FOR THE PRODUCTION OF HUMAN FOOD OR OTHER TANGIBLE PRODUCTS HAVING A COMMERCIAL VALUE (TEXAS TAX CODE SEC. 23.51(2)).

WHEN PROPERTY OWNERS INITIALLY QUALIFY FOR AGRICULTURAL APPRAISAL, THEY MUST SHOW PROOF OF HISTORY FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OR BEEKEEPING FOR ANY FIVE OF THE PRECEEDING SEVEN YEARS. ONE WAY TO DO THIS IS TO ASK FOR EXPORT, IMPORT, OR INTRA-STATE PERMITS, WHICH ARE REQUIRED BY THE TEXAS APIARY INSPECTION SERVICE TO TRANSPORT HIVES.

TEXAS PROPERTY TAX CODE HAS SET A MINIMUM OF 5 ACRES AND A MAXIMUM OF 20 ACRES TO QUALIFY BEEKEEPING AS AN AGRICULTURAL USE. THE FOLLOWING DEGREE OF INTENSITY, AS FOUND IN TEXAS AGRICULTURE CODE SEC. 131.001, IS REQUIRED TO QUALIFY:

FIRST 5 ACRES

6 HIVES

EACH ADDITIONAL 2.5 ACRES

1 ADDITIONAL HIVE

EXAMPLES:

14.6 ACRES LAND

FIRST 5 ACRES	6 HIVES
ADDITIONAL 7.5 ACRES	3 HIVES
REMAINING 2.1 ACRES	0 HIVES
TOTAL HIVES REQUIRED = 9	

19 ACRES LAND

FIRST 5 ACRES	6 HIVES
ADDITIONAL 12.5 ACRES	5 HIVES
REMAINING 1.5 ACRES	0 HIVES
TOTAL HIVES REQUIRED = 11	

IF ADDITIONAL ACREAGE IS LESS THAN 2.5 ACRES, NO ADDITIONAL HIVES ARE REQUIRED. LAND MUST BE USED FOR BEE POLLINATION OR PRODUCTION OVER 50% OF THE YEAR. FLOWERING PLANTS MUST BE PLANTED TO SUPPORT HIVES IF HIVES ARE LOCATED IN AN AREA WHERE THERE IS LIMITED VEGETATION THAT REQUIRES POLLINATION. **AN ANNUAL BEEKEEPING INFORMATION REPORT WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN SPECIAL VALUATION STATUS.**