

Farm Determination & Structures

Farm Definitions and Determinations

All types of farms must adhere to Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs), which are required management strategies that reduce the impact of agricultural activities on water quality. These standards are intended to improve the quality of Vermont's waters by reducing and eliminating cropland erosion, sediment losses, and nutrient losses through improved farm management techniques, technical and compliance assistance, and where appropriate, enforcement. The RAPs establish nutrient, manure, and waste storage standards, make recommendations for soil health, and establish requirements for vegetated buffer zones and livestock exclusion from surface water. The RAPs also establish standards for nutrient management planning and soil conservation.

Necessary Information for a Farm Determination

Check with your local town clerk or zoning administrator if you need a farm or structure determination letter from the Agency.

Prior to beginning to fill in the [online determination form](#), please have the following information prepared:

- The zoning district the property is located in
- Name and contact information for the zoning administrator in the town, if the town has local zoning
- Any letters concerning your operation from adjacent landowners
- For new and beginning operations the Agency suggests that a farm operator work with a technical service provider for guidance in developing a business plan prior to submission for approval by the Secretary.

If you are building a "farm structure"

- Information on the required setbacks in the district where the property is located, and whether the proposed structure complies with setbacks as determined by the zoning administrator
- In the case of a request for an alternative setback, the name(s) and address(es) of the nearest affected adjoining property owner(s)
- A site plan of your property including:

- Entire parcel boundary
- Wetlands, Open Water, and Associated Buffers (indicate Class)
- Existing development
- Proposed development
- Distance of proposed farm structure to all properties
- All neighboring land uses
- Location of the Special Flood Hazard Area, if applicable
- Location of River Corridor, if applicable

Supporting Documents

Farm Determination Form 373.34 KB

Zoning for Ag uses.pdf 7.44 MB

Farm Size Classification 258.6 KB

Farm Structure Fact Sheet 585.49 KB

Related Links

- [State of Vermont Farm Determination](#)
- [Vermont Farm Determination Form](#)