

# Agricultural Resources Element: Table of Contents

Agricultural Resources Element .....	2
Introduction .....	2
Purpose.....	2
Relationship to Other Elements .....	2
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	2
Section 30222.5 Oceanfront lands; aquaculture facilities; priority .....	2
Section 30241 Prime agricultural land; maintenance in agricultural production .....	3
Section 30241.5 Agricultural land; determination of viability of uses; economic feasibility evaluation .....	3
Section 30242 Lands suitable for agricultural use; conversion .....	4
Section 30250 Location; existing developed area .....	4
1. Protection of Agricultural Lands .....	4
Farmland in the Coastal Zone .....	5
Impacts of Climate Change.....	6
1.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies.....	7
1.2 Program.....	10
1.3 Initiatives .....	10
2. Agricultural Support Uses.....	11
Agricultural Processing and Agricultural Services.....	11
Agricultural Visitor-Serving Uses (Agricultural Tourism) .....	11
2.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies.....	12
3. Farmworker Housing .....	14
3.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies.....	14
4. Aquaculture and Fishing.....	15
4.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies.....	15

# Agricultural Resources Element

## INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Agricultural Resources Element is to establish policies to ensure the protection and maintenance of agriculture for its economic, environmental, and social values. The Element is intended to provide clear guidelines for decisions in the two agricultural zones within the Coastal Zone—Diverse Agriculture (DA) and Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA)—as well as areas where agricultural land uses exist in the Resources and Rural Development (RRD) and Agricultural Residential (AR) zones.

The California Coastal Act protects productive resource lands, including agricultural lands, and, establishes agriculture as a priority use while emphasizing the retention of agricultural land in production.

In this Local Coastal Plan, agriculture is defined as the production and processing of food, fiber, and plant materials; and includes the raising and maintaining of farm animals including horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock.

### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

General policy direction for land use decisions in agricultural areas is expressed in the Land Use Element under the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories. Other policies related to resource values for Biotic Resources and Scenic Resources are found in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element. The Public Facilities Element includes policy that protects commercial fishing facilities. The Water Resources Element includes policies related to water quality and quantity, and the impact that sea level rise and climate change will have on groundwater resources.

### RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

The following California Coastal Act policies inform and guide goals, objectives, policies, programs, and initiatives of the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan Agricultural Resources Element:

#### **Section 30222.5 Oceanfront lands; aquaculture facilities; priority**

Oceanfront land that is suitable for coastal dependent aquaculture shall be protected for that use, and proposals for aquaculture facilities located on those sites shall be given priority, except over other coastal dependent developments or uses.

## **Section 3024I Prime agricultural land; maintenance in agricultural production**

The maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production to assure the protection of the areas' agricultural economy, and conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through all of the following:

- (a) By establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses.
- (b) By limiting conversions of agricultural lands around the periphery of urban areas to the lands where the viability of existing agricultural use is already severely limited by conflicts with urban uses or where the conversion of the lands would complete a logical and viable neighborhood and contribute to the establishment of a stable limit to urban development.
- (c) By permitting the conversion of agricultural land surrounded by urban uses where the conversion of the land would be consistent with Section 30250.
- (d) By developing available lands not suited for agriculture prior to the conversion of agricultural lands.
- (e) By assuring that public service and facility expansions and nonagricultural development do not impair agricultural viability, either through increased assessment costs or degraded air and water quality.
- (f) By assuring that all divisions of prime agricultural lands, except those conversions approved pursuant to subdivision (b), and all development adjacent to prime agricultural lands shall not diminish the productivity of such prime agricultural lands.

## **Section 3024I.5 Agricultural land; determination of viability of uses; economic feasibility evaluation**

(a) If the viability of existing agricultural uses is an issue pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 3024I as to any local coastal program or amendment to any certified local coastal program submitted for review and approval under this division, the determination of "viability" shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of an economic feasibility evaluation containing at least both of the following elements:

- (1) An analysis of the gross revenue from the agricultural products grown in the area for the five years immediately preceding the date of the filing of a proposed local coastal program or an amendment to any local coastal program.
- (2) An analysis of the operational expenses, excluding the cost of land, associated with the production of the agricultural products grown in the area for the five years immediately preceding the date of the filing of a proposed local coastal program or an amendment to any local coastal program.

For purposes of this subdivision, "area" means a geographic area of sufficient size to provide an accurate evaluation of the economic feasibility of agricultural uses for those lands included

in the local coastal program or in the proposed amendment to a certified local coastal program.

(b) The economic feasibility evaluation required by subdivision (a) shall be submitted to the commission, by the local government, as part of its submittal of a local coastal program or an amendment to any local coastal program. If the local government determines that it does not have the staff with the necessary expertise to conduct the economic feasibility evaluation, the evaluation may be conducted under agreement with the local government by a consultant selected jointly by local government and the executive director of the commission.

### **Section 30242 Lands suitable for agricultural use; conversion**

All other lands suitable for agricultural use shall not be converted to nonagricultural uses unless (1) continued or renewed agricultural use is not feasible, or (2) such conversion would preserve prime agricultural land or concentrate development consistent with Section 30250. Any such permitted conversion shall be compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding lands.

### **Section 30250 Location; existing developed area**

(a) New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of surrounding parcels.

(b) Where feasible, new hazardous industrial development shall be located away from existing developed areas.

(c) Visitor-serving facilities that cannot feasibly be located in existing developed areas shall be located in existing isolated developments or at selected points of attraction for visitors.

## **I. PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

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As with farmland around the State of California, agricultural lands in the Coastal Zone are subject to pressure to conversion to other uses.

While public access is the highest priority use in the Coastal Zone, agriculture is also a high-priority use (refer to the Land Use Element for a discussion of the priority of land uses in the Coastal Zone). Open space acquisitions by the California Coastal Conservancy, the Sonoma Land Trust, the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation have taken some agricultural lands out of production, but in many cases, land managers have demonstrated that working farms and ranches are compatible with recreational use and retaining the agricultural use on site can be a significant benefit for environmental resource management and cultural interpretation.

Economic pressure can also result in farmlands being taken out of production and converted to residential development or other urban uses. Reducing intrusion of urban uses into agricultural areas and providing economic incentives for farmers to keep land in agricultural protection is critical to preserving and protecting agricultural land.

Complaints about noise, odors, flies, spraying of pesticides, and similar nuisances related to agricultural practices may discourage and sometimes prevent farmers from managing their operations in an efficient and economic manner. Large lot sizes can reduce conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses by allowing for buffers between the two. Appendix C, the Right to Farm Ordinance (referenced below in **Policy C-AR-1h**), also reduces the potential for such conflicts by requiring property owners to acknowledge the agricultural use of land in the area.

Together with the Land Use Element, the Agricultural Resources Element establishes policies that maintain large parcel sizes in agricultural areas, and support the needs and practices of agriculture as the highest priority in areas designated for agricultural use.

### ***Farmland in the Coastal Zone***

There are about 28,000 acres of land with agricultural land use designations (Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture) in the Coastal Zone. The Land Use Element contains a detailed explanation of the agricultural land use designations.

The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program<sup>1</sup> establishes ratings for agricultural land based on soil quality and irrigation status. In the Coastal Zone, there is none of the highest-rated land, but there are lands designated as Grazing Land and Farmland of Local Importance<sup>2</sup>. Farmland of Local Importance is land that is not Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland but is important to the local agricultural economy due to its productivity or value. Authority to adopt or to recommend changes to the category of Farmland of Local Importance rests with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors.

Grazing Land makes up nearly half of all the land in the Coastal Zone (see **Table C-AR-1a**, below). Grazing Land means “land on which the existing vegetation, whether grown naturally or through management, is suitable for grazing or browsing of livestock” (Gov. Code Section 65560) and includes land used for sheep and cattle grazing and dairies. The cool, moist climate of western Sonoma County generally produces better rangeland than inland, reducing the need for supplemental feed and irrigated pasture. Grazing Land occurs in all subareas except The Sea Ranch North. The largest acreage and highest percentage of Grazing Land are in the Bodega Bay and Valley Ford Subareas, respectively. Grazing lands are mostly in the northern coast, while dairies are prevalent in the Valley Ford subarea.

Farmland of Local Importance makes up only about four percent of all land in the Coastal Zone, and is located in nine of the ten subareas. The largest acreage and highest percentage of Farmland of Local Importance are in the Salt Point and The Sea Ranch North subareas, respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp>

<sup>2</sup> As defined in Government Code Section 65560.

**Table C-AR-1a: Acreage of Important Farmlands by subarea on the Sonoma County Coast**

<i>Subarea</i>	<i>Grazing Land (acres)</i>	<i>Farmland of Local Importance (acres)</i>	<i>Total Land (acres)</i>
1 – The Sea Ranch North	0	381	2,962
2 – The Sea Ranch South	40	323	2,792
3 – Stewarts Point/Horse-shoe Cove	775	83	3,158
4 – Salt Point	88	492	5,859
5 – Timber Cove/Fort Ross	2,595	159	7,659
6 – High Cliffs/ Muniz-Jenner	2,081	143	3,401
7 – Duncans Mills	780	32	1,290
8 – Pacific View/Willow Creek	7,164	99	11,875
9 – Bodega Bay	7,519	0	10,156
10 – Valley Ford	4,871	485	5,465
Total	25,913	2,196	54,617
<b>Percent of Total</b>	47%	4%	100%

Figures C-AR-1a through C-AR-1k show the Agricultural Resources in the ten subareas of the Sonoma County coast.

***Impacts of Climate Change***

Climate change will impact agriculture on the Sonoma County coast. Agriculture is highly dependent on specific climate conditions, and understanding the overall effect of climate change on agriculture can be difficult. Changes in the frequency and severity of droughts and floods could pose challenges for farmers and ranchers. Changes in temperature, amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather could have significant impacts on crop yields.

Agriculture in the coastal zone is dependent on rainfall and local groundwater supplies. The location of water-bearing bedrock is difficult to predict, so water availability is uncertain as rainwater often runs off into creeks and streams and then to the ocean for lack of storage space in most of the underlying rock. Additionally, groundwater will become increasingly brackish as sea level rise forces salt water into coastal aquifers. Policies addressing groundwater impacts due to sea level rise and climate change are found in the Water Resources Element.

Climate change could affect animals both directly and indirectly. Extreme heat events, which are projected to increase under climate change, could directly threaten livestock. Drought may threaten pasture and feed supplies and reduce water availability for livestock. Climate change may increase the prevalence of parasites and diseases that affect livestock. Increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide may increase the productivity of pastures, but may also decrease their quality.

Overall, climate change and the impact of sea level rise are likely to make it more difficult to grow crops and raise animals in the same ways and same places as in the past. The effects of climate change, especially impacts to groundwater supplies as a consequence of sea level rise and changes in rainfall must be considered along with other evolving factors that affect agricultural production, such as changes in farming practices and technology.

## I.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-AR-1:** Preserve agriculture as a long term economically viable land use by protecting agricultural production from intrusion of urban development on agricultural land, and allowing farmers to manage their operations without conflict from non-agricultural land uses, consistent with protection of coastal resources. Maintain the maximum amount of agricultural land in parcel sizes that are large enough to sustain a viable commercial agricultural operation.

**Objective C-AR-1.1:** Avoid the conversion of agricultural lands to residential or non-agricultural commercial uses.

**Objective C-AR-1.2:** In the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories, maintain the largest land area for agricultural use. Limit the number of cluster lots in any one area to avoid the potential conflicts associated with residential intrusion.

**Objective C-AR-1.3:** Limit intrusion of urban development in agricultural areas.

**Objective C-AR-1.4:** Maintain the Bodega Bay Urban Service Area Boundary and Rural Community Boundaries to protect agricultural land for continued agricultural production.

**Objective C-AR-1.5:** Limit extension of sewer and other urban services beyond the Bodega Bay Urban Service Area Boundary and Rural Community Boundaries.

**Objective C-AR-1.6:** Apply the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories only to areas or parcels capable of the commercial production of food, fiber, and plant material; or the raising and maintaining of farm animals. Establish agricultural production as the highest priority use in these areas or parcels.

**Objective C-AR-1.7:** Continue participation in the Land Conservation Act and Farmland Security Zone programs under the Williamson Act.

**Objective C-AR-1.8:** Formulate programs and evaluate alternative funding sources which offer financial incentives to the farm owner to reduce reliance on subdivision and sale of land to raise operating capital.

**Policy C-AR-1a:** The following criteria shall be used for approval of subdivisions on land within the Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture land use:

- (1) Shall be consistent with California Coastal Act which requires that:
  - (a) The maximum amount of agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production,
  - (b) Agricultural conversions shall be limited and evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and
- (2) It does not diminish the productivity of the agricultural land.

- (3) The resulting parcels for agricultural use shall each be of a size that can support a viable agricultural operation per California Coastal Act Section 30241.5.
- (4) Local Coastal Plan land use designation shall not be changed to facilitate subdivision of agricultural lands.

**Policy C-AR-1b:** Subdivisions on designated resource and agricultural lands shall be permitted only for development related to the pursuit of either agriculture or forestry, as appropriate; and only with mechanisms such as open space or agricultural easements to ensure the long-term protection of agriculture and resource production.

**Policy C-AR-1c:** Agricultural compatibility and productivity shall be the primary considerations in parcel design and siting of development for subdivisions on lands designated Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture.

**Policy C-AR-1d:** Amendments of the Land Use Map from an agricultural to a non-agricultural use category for the purpose of allowing increased residential density which may conflict with agricultural production are prohibited.

**Policy C-AR-1e:** Implement minimum parcel sizes and other zoning standards to promote the productive and wise use of resources in Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture Zones, as shown in **Table C-AR-1b**. Minimum Parcel Size and Maximum Residential Density by Agricultural Land Use Category.

**Table C-AR-1b: Minimum Parcel Size and Maximum Residential Density by Agricultural Land Use Category**

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Applicable Land Use Category</i>	<i>Minimum Parcel Size</i>	<i>Maximum No. of Dwelling Units per Parcel<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Maximum Permitted Residential Density (ac/unit)<sup>2</sup></i>
LEA	Land Extensive Agriculture	640 acres	4	160
DA	Diverse Agriculture	160 acres	4	40

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Applies to all types of dwelling units including single-family dwellings consistent with the residential density, farm family dwellings, full-time agricultural employee units, seasonal and year-round farmworker housing, and accessory dwelling units.

<sup>2</sup> Density does not apply to farm family dwellings, (LEA only), full-time agricultural employee units, seasonal and year-round farmworker housing, and accessory dwelling units

**Policy C-AR-1f:** Agricultural production shall be defined as the production of food, fiber, and plant materials including, but not limited to, growing, harvesting, crop storage, milking, etc.; and the raising and maintaining of farm animals for the purpose of farm operations. Commercial agricultural support uses, commercial equestrian uses, and commercial cannabis cultivation are not considered agricultural production uses in this context.

**Policy C-AR-1g:** The Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories shall be applied based on the capability of the land to produce agricultural products.



**Policy C-AR-1h:** The primary use of any parcel designated Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture shall be agricultural operations. Residential uses in these zoning districts shall record a “Declaration Acknowledging Right to Farm” consistent with the Sonoma County Right to Farm Ordinance found in Appendix C acknowledging that properly conducted agricultural operation on agricultural land will not be considered a nuisance for purposes of the Sonoma County Code or County regulations, and that residents or users of nearby property should be prepared to accept such inconvenience or discomfort as a normal and necessary aspect of living in a county with a strong rural character and an active agricultural sector.

**Policy C-AR-1i:** Protect agricultural operations by establishing a buffer between an agricultural use on land in the Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture land use categories and residential development, except for caretaker, agricultural employee, and farm related units. The buffer shall occur on the parcel to be occupied by the residential development and may include one or more of the following: a physical separation of 100 to 200 feet, landscaped berm, topographic feature, substantial tree stand, water course, or similar feature. The type, design, and location of the buffer shall be based on the type, size, and characteristics of the adjacent agricultural operations so as to protect the maximum feasible amount of agricultural land.

**Policy C-AR-1j:** Development on properties that are under a Land Conservation (“Williamson Act”) contract is limited to those listed as compatible uses under the most recent “Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones”.

**Policy C-AR-1k:** Subdivision of any Land Conservation Act contracted lands shall not result in creation of a parcel or designated remainder that is inconsistent with the most recent revision of the “Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones”. Recording individual contracts for new parcels and, if applicable, the designated remainder shall be required as a condition of approval to be met prior to recording the map.

**Policy C-AR-1l:** Encourage and support owners of farms, ranches, and public lands with agricultural operations that are seeking to implement programs that increase the sustainability of resources, improve climate change resiliency, reduce carbon emissions,

#### **Land Conservation Contracts**

Many landowners on the Sonoma County coast have demonstrated a commitment to agriculture by entering into Land Conservation contracts. The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (also known as the Williamson Act) allows counties to establish agricultural preserves and thereby give tax reductions to landowners engaged in commercial agricultural operations. About 78 parcels totaling over 18,400 acres in the Coastal Zone are under Land Conservation contracts, primarily in the Bodega Bay and Valley Ford subareas. The Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones establish limits for non-agricultural use on contracted lands.

protect water and soil, increase the viability of diverse family farms, and improve housing opportunities for farmworkers.

## **I.2 Program**

**Program C-AR-1-1P:** Update the agricultural zoning districts to be consistent with the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element.

## **I.3 Initiatives**

**Initiative C-AR-1-I1:** Encourage the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and other agencies to sponsor a variety of ongoing educational programs that assist the farmer in financial planning and to provide technical assistance where appropriate.

**Initiative C-AR-1-I2:** Work with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma County Open Space and Agricultural Preservation, and other government non-profits, to take the following actions regarding managing agricultural land in State Park Units:

- (1) Prepare a long-term plan for managing grazing lands and use the plan as a basis for grazing leases;
- (2) Retain in agricultural production land not needed for public use that is compatible with and protective of the resource values and recreation uses;
- (3) Grant long-term grazing leases which are protective of sensitive habitats and include incentives to improve range quality; and
- (4) Monitor grazing and improve range management practices in cooperation with ranchers and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

**Initiative C-AR-1-I3:** Work with California State Parks and Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and other government and non-profit partners to minimize conversion of agricultural land to incompatible uses, and to address impacts to and protection of agricultural lands.

**Initiative C-AR-1-I4:** Work with local Resource Conservation Districts and agricultural associations to encourage and promote sustainable agricultural and land management practices that conserve energy and protect water and soil, reduce pesticide use, and supports locally grown and processed agricultural products, to help ensure the long-term use and conservation of coastal resources.

## 2. AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT USES

Agricultural support uses include agricultural processing and agricultural services, and agricultural visitor-serving uses (or agricultural tourism). This Agricultural Resources Element includes policies that promote the County's coastal agricultural industry by allowing limited visitor-serving uses that are directly related to agricultural production in the Coastal Zone.

### *Agricultural Processing and Agricultural Services*

Agricultural processing is the act of changing an agricultural product from its natural state to a different form, including bottling, canning, packaging, and storing agricultural products (e.g., grapes to wine, apples to juice or sauce, etc.). Agricultural services include the maintenance and repair of farm machinery and equipment, veterinary clinics, custom farming services, agricultural waste handling and disposal, and other similar related services.

The determination of which support uses belong on agricultural lands in the Coastal Zone involves their connection to agriculture; potential for conflicts; the size, scale, and adaptability of the use; and the amount of land lost to farming. Policies are needed to permit agricultural support uses without adversely affecting production of agricultural products in the area and impacting community character. Policies for agricultural support uses should also balance the need for such uses with the continued preservation of the rural character of the Coast, and should support agricultural products produced on the Sonoma County coast over those produced elsewhere.

### *Agricultural Visitor-Serving Uses (Agricultural Tourism)*

Agricultural visitor-serving uses, or agricultural tourism, are any visitor-serving uses on agricultural land that supports and enhances agricultural activity. Examples of these uses are farmstays, farmstands, and retail sales of products grown onsite. Wineries and tasting rooms are not considered visitor-serving uses and are instead considered agricultural processing or commercial activity, respectively. Special events are also limited to commercial areas of the Coastal Zone.

Tourism is a major economic driver in the Coastal Zone and agricultural tourism could support the Coastal agricultural industry economically, provided that agricultural tourism directly promotes the sale of agricultural products grown onsite. Agriculture is a higher-priority land use than visitor-serving uses of any kind; therefore, agricultural visitor-serving uses must supplement agricultural production, and not displace it, and the economic benefits of agricultural tourism must be balanced against existing constraints such as limited public services, water supply, sensitive resource areas, and the potential impacts of increased traffic on public safety.

### **Vineyards and Wineries in the Coastal Zone**

Vineyards dominate the agricultural landscape of the inland areas of the County, but grape production and processing in the Coastal Zone is limited due to the Coastal Zone's thin soils, steep slopes, and lack of year-round water supply. Vineyards require a Coastal Development permit, and are therefore more restricted than in the inland area. There are less than 5 acres of vineyards currently planted in the Coastal Zone.

A winery is considered to be an agricultural processing facility only if the facility is not open to the public, including by appointment, and does not include any visitor serving uses such as tasting rooms and events.

As of 2022, there are no wineries located in the Coastal Zone, although two are located within a mile of the inland Coastal Zone boundary.

In the Land Extensive Agricultural areas, some conflicts between visitors and agricultural practices would be less severe due to the larger lot sizes that serve to separate the activities. In these areas, small scale visitor-serving uses that are directly related to the agricultural operation, such as farmstays, hosted rentals, farm stands, farm retail sales, and some outdoor recreational uses, may be compatible with the agricultural operation. These small-scale uses may promote the agricultural activity and provide a secondary income source for the farmer or rancher without hindering the primary agricultural use of the land.

## 2.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-AR-2: Facilitate agricultural production by allowing related agricultural support uses (agricultural processing and agricultural services), to be conveniently and accessibly located in agricultural production areas when related to the primary agricultural production in the area.**

**Objective C-AR-2.1:** Facilitate local agricultural production by allowing, subject to a use permit, agricultural processing on agricultural lands where subordinate to and compatible with an existing agriculture use.

**Objective C-AR-2.2:** Facilitate local agricultural production by allowing with a use permit on agricultural lands limited agricultural support uses which support local agricultural activities and are not detrimental to the long-term agricultural uses in the area.

**Objective C-AR-2.3:** Ensure that agricultural support uses allowed on agricultural lands are only allowed when demonstrated to be necessary for, and proportional to, agricultural production on-site.

**Policy C-AR-2a:** Agricultural Resources Element **Table C-AR-2** establishes the agricultural uses allowed and planning permits required on agricultural lands in the Coastal Zone.

**Table C-AR-2: Agricultural Uses and Support Uses Allowed and Permit Thresholds**

<i>Use</i>	<i>Planning Permits Required</i>	<i>Permit Type</i>
<b>Allowed</b>		
Grazing, Row Crops	Principally Permitted <sup>3</sup> "By-Right"	none required
Vineyard, Orchard	Principally Permitted <sup>3</sup> Coastal Permit <sup>1</sup>	Discretionary
Commercial cannabis cultivation (e.g. cultivation exceeding personal cultivation limits of Sonoma County Code Section 26-88-258)	Prohibited: Commercial cannabis cultivation not allowed in agricultural land use	N/A
Aquaculture	Use Permit Coastal Permit	Discretionary <sup>2</sup>
Agricultural Processing (e.g., creamery, winery [no tasting or events])	Use Permit Coastal Permit See Policy C-AR-2c below	Discretionary <sup>2</sup>
Agricultural Services	Use Permit	Discretionary <sup>2</sup>

<b>Use</b>	<b>Planning Permits Required</b>	<b>Permit Type</b>
(e.g., farm equipment, veterinarian)	Coastal Permit	
Small-Scale Farm Retail Sales	Coastal Permit	Discretionary
Farm Stand	Principally Permitted <sup>3</sup> "By-Right"	none required
<b>Non Agricultural Uses</b>		
Tasting Rooms	Discretionary, Only allowed in commercial zones	
Other Visitor-Serving Use (e.g., agricultural promotional event, restaurant)	Discretionary, Only allowed in commercial zones	
Notes: <sup>1</sup> VESCO permit also required from Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner <sup>2</sup> May be appealable to California Coastal Commission if within their jurisdiction or appealable area per map on file at Permit Sonoma <sup>3</sup> See Land Use Element for definition and description of Principally Permitted Use.		

**Policy C-AR-2b:** Storage facilities shall be permitted for agricultural products grown, prepared, or processed on-site. Facilities shall be sized to accommodate but not exceed the agricultural operation, and shall be designed to be compatible with and not adversely impact surrounding land uses.

**Policy C-AR-2c:** Only allow agricultural support uses, including agricultural processing and agricultural services uses that clearly support local agricultural production consistent with the specific requirements of each of the two agricultural land use categories. Ensure that such uses are clearly subordinate to on-site agricultural production and do not adversely affect agricultural production in the area. The following criteria shall be used for approval of agricultural processing or service uses:

- (1) The use is subordinate to on-site agricultural production based on the following considerations:
  - a. The area of the parcel devoted to the agricultural support use is not more than 10% of the parcel area in agricultural production.
  - b. The size and number of structures needed for the agricultural support use in relation to agricultural production.
  - c. The relative number of employees devoted to the agricultural support use in comparison to that needed for agricultural production.
  - d. The types of agricultural production on the site in the past and present.
  - e. The potential for the agricultural support use to be converted to non-agricultural uses due to its location and access.
  
- (2) The use will not require the extension of sewer or water.

- (3) The use would not convert agricultural lands inconsistent with Coastal Act Sections 30241 and 30242.
- (4) The use does not substantially detract from agricultural production on-site.
- (5) The use does not create a concentration of commercial uses in the immediate area.
- (6) The use is compatible with and does not adversely impact surrounding residential neighborhoods.

**Policy C-AR-2d:** Local concentrations of agricultural services or agricultural processing (e.g., cheese, wineries), that are detrimental to the primary use of the land for the agricultural production, rural character, traffic, or water resources shall be avoided, even if related to surrounding agricultural activities.

### **3. FARMWORKER HOUSING**

Successful agricultural production requires adequate numbers of seasonal and full-time farmworkers. A limited supply of expensive housing creates a serious barrier to attracting and retaining these essential workers. Providing adequate housing for seasonal employees, permanent employees, and the families of permanent employees is critical to the success of agriculture in the Coastal Zone. While housing is generally a low-priority use in the Coastal Zone, farmworker housing is integral to agriculture and shares the same high priority as agriculture.

#### **3.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-AR-3: Support efficient management of local agricultural production activities by the development of adequate amounts of housing for farmworkers and farm family members engaged in the farming operation in agricultural areas.**

**Objective C-AR-3.1:** Encourage farm operators to provide suitable on-site housing for seasonal and agricultural farmworkers and family members engaged in farming operations to maintain agricultural production activities, in accordance with allowable residential density.

**Policy C-AR-3a:** Agricultural worker housing shall be commensurate with the demonstrated need by an agricultural operation, or related nearby agricultural operations. Housing for agricultural workers and their households shall not be included in the calculation of residential density in the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture zoning districts. Approval of agricultural worker housing shall require recording a restrictive covenant running with the land for the benefit of the County ensuring that the agricultural worker housing will continuously be maintained as such as long as an agricultural use requiring agricultural workers exists on the parcel. In the event that the agricultural use is terminated, the agricultural worker housing shall become a legal nonconforming residential use subject to the nonconforming use provisions of the Coastal Zoning Code.

**Policy C-AR-3b:** Housing for seasonal workers as needed to serve the agricultural industries of the area shall be permitted if it does not necessitate the extension of sewer or water service inconsistent with the Public Facilities and Services Element. This housing may be constructed to the minimum standards acceptable under State law and as allowed under the Public Facilities and Services Element.

**Policy C-AR-3c:** Allow up to four residential units per agricultural parcel, consistent with the maximum residential density, for the purpose of housing farm family members. All housing units should be grouped together on the parcel to maximize environmental protections and promote efficient agricultural operations.

## **4. AQUACULTURE AND FISHING**

Aquaculture includes on-shore cultivation and subsequent harvesting of marine aquatic plants and animals, as well as off-shore cultivation of marine organisms for food and other products in the open ocean, or an enclosed section of the ocean. Examples of aquaculture include farming of marine fish, shellfish such as oysters, or seaweed in saltwater ponds. Production of non-food products such as fish meal, nutrient agar, jewelries (e.g. cultured pearls), and cosmetics is not considered aquaculture for the purpose of Local Coastal Plan policy.

Well-managed and operated aquaculture can serve as a resource-efficient food source, but aquaculture also has potential for adverse impacts to the marine environment, such as discharge of concentrated waste, escape of non-native species, transmission of disease outbreaks in aquaculture environments to wild fish stocks, genetic disruption of marine environments, and algae blooms. Because of the need for careful evaluation of aquaculture development, it is not considered a principally permitted use in agricultural land use categories, and requires a use permit and coastal development permit for approval.

Commercial fishing is the activity of catching fish and other seafood for commercial profit from wild fisheries. Commercial fishing is a coastal-dependent activity, requiring on-shore facilities such as processing, storage, and land transportation of fish, as well as marina facilities, storage of fishing gear, and boatyard services. While commercial fishing is a coastal-dependent use producing food, it is different from other forms of agriculture in that commercial fishing consists of harvesting and processing, but not cultivating food.

### **4.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal C-AR-4: Support development of sustainable aquaculture practices and provide adequate support facilities for marine-based food production, including commercial fishing.**

**Objective C-AR-4.1:** Allow aquaculture and related on-shore facilities and activities in agricultural areas, subject to a Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit.

**Objective C-AR-4.2:** Provide opportunities for development of support facilities for the fishing industry in Bodega Bay.

**Objective C-AR-4.3:** Promote products of the fishing industry and aquaculture in the same manner as agricultural products.

**Policy C-AR-4a:** Outdoor aquaculture shall be permitted in agricultural zoning subject to a Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit.

**Policy C-AR-4b:** Support facilities for the fishing industry, including but not limited to equipment storage, processing facilities, and canneries may be allowed on lands designated for agricultural land use adjacent to the Urban Service Boundary of Bodega Bay. If the facility or use requires urban services, extension of such services on lands adjacent to the Urban Service Boundary may only be permitted for that purpose.

**Policy C-AR-4c:** The following criteria shall be used for approval of aquaculture processing or service uses to ensure that such uses are clearly subordinate to on-site aquaculture production and do not adversely affect agricultural production in the area:

- (1) The use is subordinate to on-site aquaculture and agriculture production based on the following considerations:
  - a. The portion of the site devoted to the support use in relation to production.
  - b. The size and number of structures needed for the support use in relation to production.
  - c. The relative number of employees devoted to the support use in comparison to that needed for production.
  - d. The uses on the site in the past and present.
  - e. The potential for the support use to be converted to non-agricultural uses due to its location and access.
- (2) The use would not convert agricultural lands inconsistent with Coastal Act Sections 30241.5 and 30242.
- (3) The use does not substantially detract from agricultural production on-site.
- (4) The use does not create a concentration of commercial uses in the immediate area.
- (5) The use is compatible with and does not adversely impact surrounding residential neighborhoods.