

AGRICULTURAL SPECIAL USE VALUATION GUIDELINES

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BASIC AGRICULTURAL ("AG") INFORMATION

Any property owner hoping to enjoy the benefits of "special use valuation" for producing agricultural products needs to be aware of the following:

Open Space, 1-d-1, & Agricultural Use are all terms used simultaneously and referring to a "special valuation" method for land taxation in Texas. This "special valuation" was enacted by the legislature as a tax relief for farmers and ranchers.

The laws for this "special valuation" have changed over the years and will likely continue changing. 1-d was the original "special valuation" method for farmers and ranchers. At that time, at least 50% of your income had to be derived from the agricultural product raised from the land. After 1-d-1 was initiated almost no one filed for the 1-d special valuation.

1-d-1 stated, "Qualified open-space land" means land that is currently devoted principally to agricultural use to the degree of intensity generally accepted in the area and that has been devoted principally to agricultural use for five of the preceding seven years.

There is no simple answer to, "What do I have to do to get the agricultural special use valuation?" It all depends on your operation and the following:

1. How much acreage do you have?
2. What is the agricultural product you are producing?
3. Are you utilizing all the available land to produce your product?
4. Is this being utilized to the degree of intensity generally accepted in our area? (Degree of intensity includes time + labor + equipment + management + capital) This test is intended to exclude land on which token agricultural use occurs in an effort to obtain tax relief.
5. Is it being used as a typical prudent manager would use it?
6. Is there a history of qualified land use for five of the last seven years?

The property owner must decide how the land will be used. It is also the responsibility of the property owner to apply for, and to meet the qualifications for this "special valuation".

The appraisal district's responsibility is to either approve or deny the application, based on whether the guidelines have been met, and the application has been filled out correctly and filed in a timely manner.

Applications are available in the lobby or online at our website, www.bancad.org . (Under Agriculture Use tab) Additionally, the Bandera Central Appraisal District has Agricultural Intensity Standards available for review.

It is the property owner's responsibility to notify the Chief Appraiser, in writing, if they:

1. Stop using the property for ag; or
2. Change the category of use or change the level of use; or
3. Change the nature of the use; or
4. Enter – leave – or change the governmental program; or
5. Begin using the land for something other than agriculture

If you fail to notify the Chief Appraiser prior to April 30th, you may be charged a penalty.

Determining the history of qualified land use for the previous seven years is also the property owner's responsibility. **If you are a new owner, determining the history is still your responsibility. The actual land usage is the information necessary, not whether the property previously had the special use valuation from the appraisal district or not.** (It would be impossible for the district to inspect and have knowledge of every single parcel of land's agricultural usage and determine whether there are non-qualifying uses (or non-uses) of the land in every year.) Before purchasing this land to use for production of income, prudent purchasers would factor in the current agricultural activity and value they hope to obtain.

SPECIAL VALUATION

Once the property has been approved for agricultural use "special valuation", this special value is applied to the property. The property will still have a market value based on the true market value of the property; however, the property will be assessed taxes on the agricultural value, not the market value.

The agricultural value is based on a formula provided by the state, where the income the land can produce is capitalized into a value. This is determined through typical lease rate, less expenses, which is capitalized into a value using the state's required cap rate. This value is also known as a "productivity value".

Please note: The market value of the property can go up or down and it will not affect the agricultural value or the tax amount you will be charged. The agricultural value of "native pasture – average" etc. will be the same price per acre everywhere in the county but the taxes may vary owing to the tax rates passed by the taxing entities in which the property is located.

Central Appraisal District of Bandera County

Agricultural Use Land

Qualifications and Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Bandera Central Appraisal District uses the following agricultural land qualification guidelines for mass appraisal purposes. These are applied uniformly throughout Bandera County.

Two amendments to the Texas Constitution permit agricultural land to be taxed on its agricultural use (also referred to as "productivity value"). Taxes are based on the productive value of the land instead of the market value of the land. This is not an exemption, but is a ***special valuation*** referred to as "**Qualified open space land**".

The legal basis for special land appraisal is found in the Texas constitution in Article VIII, Sections 1-d and 1-d-1. The corresponding provisions of the Texas Property Tax Code are Sections 23.41 through 23.48 for 1-d and Section 23.51 through 23.60 for 1-d-1. The purpose of the two provisions is similar. Under both provisions, the land must be in agricultural use and is valued in the same manner. However, there are differences in the qualifications that must be met in order to receive productivity value. 1-d-1 qualifications are much easier to meet. Most applications are filed under the 1-d-1 provisions.

The Manual of the Appraisal of Agricultural Land, Property Tax Assistance Division, Comptroller of Public Accounts, 1990, addresses these guidelines. A copy of the manual can be viewed on the State website:
https://comptroller.texas.gov/search/?site=ctg_collection&q=Glenn+Hegar+Texas+Comptroller+of+Public+Accounts+Manual+for+the+Appraisal+of+Agricultural+Land

These guidelines are additionally supported by Section 183 of the I.R.S. Regulations.

It should be noted that these guidelines should be used as a general guide to qualifying agricultural land for special appraisal. Exceptions to general rules will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Bandera CAD staff.

PROPERTY OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. the property owner must determine how the land is to be used
2. the property owner must apply for this "special valuation"
3. it is up to the property owner to meet the qualifications for this "special valuation"; specific qualifications will differ depending on the use of the property and the type of ag-use selected

APPRAISAL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

- approve or deny the application, based solely on whether the guidelines have been met and the application has been filed correctly

REQUIREMENTS FOR 1-d-1

1. The land may be owned by an individual, corporation or partnership.
2. The land must be currently devoted principally to agricultural use to the degree of intensity generally accepted in the area, and the land must be used to produce an agricultural product either for food or fiber.
3. **The land must have been devoted to a qualified agricultural use for at least five (5) of the past seven (7) years.**
4. The land must usually be used for agricultural production for the bulk of the year.
5. The agricultural business need not be the principal business of the owner.
6. If the land is located within the boundaries of a city or town, additional special requirements must be met.

QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

The general policy of the Bandera Central Appraisal District is intended to comply with the Property Tax Assistance Division of the Texas Comptroller's Office qualification guidelines for agricultural use. The District's policy is that in order to qualify for Agricultural Use Valuation the land must:

1. Be utilized to the degree of intensity generally accepted in Bandera County. Degree of intensity is measured by local farming and ranching practices of a typical prudent manager.
2. Be managed in a typically prudent manner. A "typically prudent manner" may be determined by comparing the actual production of agricultural property located in Bandera County.
3. Be a substantial tract of land. Substantial means an identifiable tract of land of adequate size to support a typical prudent operation.

Definitions of Key Words or Phrases

Agricultural use to the degree of intensity generally accepted in the area:

Farming or ranching to the extent that the typically prudent manager in the area of the taxing unit would farm or ranch an identifiable and substantial tract of land when the tract is devoted principally to agricultural use. A better understanding of the definition can be gained by identifying the key elements of the definition and explaining each as follows:

1. Degree of intensity generally accepted in the area shall refer to farming and ranching practices. (i.e. cropping patterns, planting rates, fertilization methods, harvesting and marketing techniques, etc.)
2. Typically, prudent farm or ranch managers are ordinary farmers in terms of amount of acres farmed as well as management ability. Given that all other factors remain constant, the number of acres farmed determines the farmer's capital structure. Typically, prudent farm or ranch managers located in Bandera County are assumed to have similar equipment of similar value and utility.
3. Simply stated, a "substantial tract" is an identifiable tract of land that is large enough to be farmed by itself in a typically prudent manner.
4. Area is interpreted to be that land inside the jurisdictional boundaries of the Bandera Central Appraisal District.
5. Principally means the most important use in comparison with other uses to which the land may have.

Prudent – capable of making important management decisions; shrewd in the management of practical affairs. Specifically, the law requires that the agricultural land must be utilized, in the manner in which an ordinary and prudent manager in the area of the taxing unit would implement.

Substantial – ample to satisfy, considerable in quantity. Specifically, the law states that the Agricultural land must be an identifiable and substantial tract of land. This means that the tract must be of adequate size to be economically feasible to farm and ranch.

Typical – exhibiting the essential characteristics of a group. Specifically, the law states that Agricultural land will be utilized as a typically (ordinary) prudent manager would use it. Statistically, a typically prudent manger is the median farmer or rancher.

Animal Unit – a unit of measure indicating the ability of land to support range animals.

Principally – the most important use in comparison with other uses to which the land is put. If the land is used for more than one purpose, the most important use must be agricultural.

APPLICATION

Application must be made on an acceptable form after January 1st and by April 30th of the tax year for which the application for agricultural valuation is being sought. (If mailed, the postmark is considered to be the delivery date.) For your protection, we recommend you either mail the application by certified mail or include a self-addressed envelope so that the District can mail you a copy of the application with a received stamp. If hand delivered rather than mailed, please wait for the clerk to stamp the application received and request a copy for your records.

Applications received after the deadline will be accepted until the appraisal roll is certified. If approved, these late applications will be subject to a penalty of ten (10) percent of the difference between the taxes with the special valuation and the amount of taxes if the property were taxed at market value.

A new application is required any time there is a recorded name change in the deed records. Applications should be filed between **January 1st and April 30th.** **Applications received after the April 30th deadline and until the appraisal records are certified (July 25th) are subject to a 10% late-filing penalty calculated by the difference between the market taxes and the agricultural taxes.**

Applications turned in after the certification deadline cannot be considered for that tax year.

If the application is not completed in full, the application could be denied.

The application **must** have the **correct acreage & property use (Section 4)** filled out by the applicant. Land used for residential purposes should not be counted in the total acreage. The total acreage on the application should only reflect the acres that are used for agricultural purposes.

Please note: Once an application for 1-d-1 is filed and approved, a landowner is not required* to file again as long as the land qualifies unless the Chief Appraiser requests a new application or there is a change in the size of the land from the original application.

Currently the Chief Appraiser is requiring an updated application every five years

PRINCIPAL USE

For special valuation, qualified open space land must be currently devoted principally to agricultural use. The principal use of the land must be agricultural and may be verified by on-site inspection. Texas Property Tax Code Section 23.51 (2) defines the term "agricultural use" as including but not limited to the following activities:

1. Cultivating the soil
2. Producing crops for human food, animal feed, or planting seed or for the production of fibers
3. Cultivation and management of ornamental and flowering plants (floriculture)
4. Cultivation of grapes (viticulture)

5. Cultivation of fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs, or other plants (horticulture)
6. Raising or keeping livestock. "Livestock" means a domesticated animal that derives its primary nourishment from vegetation, supplemented as necessary with commercial feed. Livestock includes meat or dairy cattle, horses, goats, swine, poultry, and sheep. Wild animals are not livestock.
7. Raising exotic game for commercial use. Exotic game means a cloven-hoofed ruminant mammal that is not native to Texas and is not livestock. Raising such game may qualify but must meet the primary use test.
8. Participation in a government program and normal crop rotation. Land left idle to participate in a government program is used for agriculture. Land left idle for crop rotation qualifies until it is left idle for longer than the crop rotation period typical for the crop in the area.
9. Raising or keeping bees for pollination, or for the production of human food

Small tracts of land that have been developed and/or marketed for residential use and are of inadequate size to support an economically feasible agricultural activity would not normally qualify for Special Valuation. Land will not qualify simply because it is rural or has some connection with agriculture. Neither will it qualify because it is open land that has no other possible use. The law does not guarantee a tax break for everyone who owns acreage. Casual uses such as home vegetable gardens, raising a steer, goat or a sheep for FFA or 4H projects do not constitute agricultural use for property tax purposes.

Once a property is in the special valuation program it must meet the intensity of use test every year. The degree of intensity test measures what the property owner/operator is contributing to the agricultural operation (time, labor, equipment, management and capital), and compares it with typical levels of in-puts of the same type of operation in the area. In addition, a property owner/operator must be able to verify purchases and sales of livestock and/or farm products by bill of sale, sales receipts or other documentation.

The Chief Appraiser is required by law to develop "degree of intensity" standards for each type of agriculture production in a given county. These standards reflect the practices that are typical for producing various kinds of crops or livestock. Degree of intensity standards will vary from one type of agricultural operation to another. In most cases, property owners must prove that they are following all the common production steps for their type of operation and contributing typical amounts of labor, management and investment. The chief appraiser's decision on what constitutes an "area", (i.e.: soil type) will define "typical" agricultural intensity. The size of the area can vary depending on the commodity. For a common crop, the chief appraiser may be able to look to farming practices within the county. Less common crops may require the chief appraiser to consider a multi-county region to decide the typical agricultural inputs.

Small acreage that is not used as part of a larger operation and has a home built upon the tract is primarily residential in nature, with agricultural use secondary. Home sites will be considered a separate land segment on the appraisal roll.

Open-space land must have agricultural use as its primary use in order to qualify. In some instances, the principal use could be two different activities: part agriculture and part non-agriculture. (Example: hay meadow on part of the property with treed area not in use). When part of a parcel is not utilized for agricultural purposes the parcel will be split into separate land segments – the hay meadow could qualify for agricultural use, while the treed area would not.

INTENSITY GUIDELINES FOR AGRICULTURAL USE

CATTLE

This type of operation is commonly found in the District. The operators of cow/calf grazing operations are in the business of raising beef for sale to either processors or other operators as breeding stock. These include purebred operations as well as commercial breeders who sell calves to the local livestock market.

Cow/Calf Grazing Operation – minimum of 3 animal units; usually not less than 20 acres but carrying capacity of land to be determined by soil type(s)

Stocker or Feeder Calf Operation – minimum of 5 stocker or feeder calves to qualify; carrying capacity of land to be determined by soil type(s)

Both operations should have adequate fencing suitable for livestock containment; water supply suitable for number of stock, a fertilization and weed control program, receipts for purchases and sales of animals, breeding receipts for offsite breeding, and property management of land for long-run forage. Larger tracts of land may be required to have more than 3 animal units depending on the carrying capacity of the soil type(s).

SHEEP OR GOAT

These operations are in the business of providing wool, mohair, milk, and meat. Sheep and goat operations may be purebred or commercial in nature. Commercial operations usually do not require any particular breed and may be in the business of meat production only.

Sheep Operations – minimum of 3 animal units which is equal to 15 head of grown breeding ewes without lambs; ewes must be bred and should lamb each year; carrying capacity of land to be determined by soil type(s)

Goat Operations - minimum of 3 animal units; generally, 18 head of breeding age does without kids are required; these operations are commonly in the business of producing milk, meat or mohair; does must be bred and should kid each year; carrying capacity of land to be determined by soil type(s)

Both operations should have adequate fencing suitable for livestock containment; water supply suitable for number of stock, a fertilization and weed control program, receipts for purchases and sales of animals, breeding receipts for offsite breeding, and property management of land for long-run forage. Larger tracts of land may be required to have more than 3 animal units depending on the carrying capacity of the soil type(s).

HORSES OR DONKEYS

This type of operation is limited to breeding operations. A breeding operation involves having brood mares and either a stud on location or using artificial insemination for breeding the mares. This type of operation may include some training of colts or fillies and any number of breeds.

Horse Operation – minimum of 3 breeding age mares (should be 3yrs or older to qualify). Animals must be raised and sold to the public (horse breeding facilities) to qualify for agricultural use. These operations' may be on large pastures or in high intensity situations. These operations should have adequate fencing suitable for livestock containment; water supply suitable for number of stock, a fertilization and weed control program, receipts for purchases and sales of animals, breeding receipts for offsite breeding, and property management of land for long-run forage.

Horses stabled, trained or used for recreational purposes **DO NOT QUALIFY** for agricultural use.

Donkey Operation – the qualifications are similar to Horse Operations.

EXOTIC ANIMALS

This type of operation involves the raising of deer, antelope, emus, ostriches, and any other breed of animal not native to Texas. Some exotic animal operations are raised for consumption; others may supply leather or plumage for clothing or industrial use.

Exotic Animal Operations – these are animals not native to the state of Texas (antelope, exotic deer, emus, etc.). Minimum of 3 animal units; an animal unit for this type of operation depends on the type of animals being raised; property should have adequate fencing suitable for livestock containment; water supply suitable for number of stock, a fertilization and weed control program, receipts for purchases and sales of animals, breeding receipts for offsite breeding, and property management of land for long range forage.

FARMING

This will be categorized as either irrigated crop land or crop land. This land is used to grow perennial, improved grasses, which are cut and baled for livestock consumption. The most common type of grasses includes Coastal Bermuda and Klein grass. These grasses are usually bailed in the spring and early summer if irrigation is not available. Hay operations in the District require supplemental fertilization and are usually a part of the typical operation. Row crop farming is done on a very limited basis within the district.

Cropland Operations - minimum of field size of 5 acres with the other 15 acres devoted to approved agricultural use.

Hay Operations – minimum of field size of 5 acres with the other 15 acres devoted to approved agricultural use.

Both operations should have a fertilization and weed control program, insect control schedule, receipts for purchase of seed or sprigs and sale of crops, hay rotation schedule, property management of land in a workman-like manner, and harvest.

OTHER AGRICULTURAL ENDEAVORS

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 that have a commercial value. The State of Texas has set a minimum of 5 acres and a maximum of 20 acres to qualify beekeeping as an agricultural use. There should be a minimum of 3 colonies on the property. A colony is the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, hone, pollen and brood. The colonies must be maintained.

Orchards are not common in Bandera County. However, there are some pecan orchards in the county. Orchards are designed, planted, harvested and the product is sold in a business manner. Trees are planted in rows or in an organized way in accordance with the type of orchard and type of trees. The minimum number of trees per acre is 20, in order to qualify for the special valuation. All acres under the valuation must be actively used.

Vineyards (Viticulture) are either for table grape or wine production. Typical minimum acreage for this operation is 3 acres. Most vineyards in the county are planted in organized rows with high fencing to prevent predator destruction of vines.

Truck Farming operations are in the business of cultivating the soil for the planting and production of vegetables. This type of operation depends on a good source of water for irrigation purposes and will utilize some type of irrigation system. There are some types of crops, such as okra, that do well in dry land areas and may not require irrigation. Each operation should be considered separately. A minimum of 3 acres is required for this type of operation.

Standard practices for orchards, vineyards and truck farming operations are written production plan, fertilization and weed control program, irrigation system, pest management plan, pruning trees, receipts for purchase of root stock and harvest records. Proper management of land should be in a workman-like manner.

High Intensity Operations are generally small acreage with a large number of animal similar to a feedlot situation. These operations may include several types of livestock kept in small pastures or pens and are fed a much higher amount of supplemental feed than a regular ranching operation.

Participation in Government Programs where the land is set aside – verified through FSA (Farm Service Agency) office. CRP (Crop Rotation Program), Soil Conservation Plan, or other arrangements should be noted. It is the property owner's responsibility to notify the BCAD and provide copies of such arrangements. Just having a plan on file does not qualify the land for special valuation. The owner must be actively following the directions of the plan.

Other agricultural endeavors' minimum standards will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis, specifically to determine if the endeavor is economically feasible.

AGRICULTURAL LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

Soil Type – The soil types for the specific property have been identified and will be sub-classified as "**Fair – Average – or Good**" based on the range productivity for each of the uses listed below.

Cropland – Land that is dedicated to crop production (hay production or row crops) that is not irrigated.

Irrigated Cropland – Land planted in row or broadcast crops or permanent pasture (hay production) that are grown for sale or used for feed, that are watered on a regular basis.

Improved Pasture – Land that is serving as a pasture for some type of livestock where the land has been improved and has perennial grasses (Bluestem, Klein, Bermuda, etc.).

Native Pasture – Land that is serving as a pasture for some type of livestock where the land is partially cleared of brush and trees and has native grasses.

Mountains – Land that is serving as a pasture for some type of livestock, but the land is so heavily timbered that the grass production is almost non-existent. This category could also include land with deep ravines where the grass production is non-existent. This must be an integral part of a grazing operation, using one or more of the other land types.

Orchards/Vineyards – Land that has trees or grapevines planted for the specific purpose of producing fruit or nut crops, or grapes for wine production.

High Intensity – Operations like, but not limited to, land that is used to house bee hives (colonies) for pollination, production of honey and other products; or properties used in a feedlot situation to house large number of animals on a small property.

Wildlife Management – convert from the qualified land category prior to wildlife management designation.

Non-Agriculture Use – Land that is not being utilized in an agricultural endeavor (providing food or fiber). An example is the one acre used to support a house.

CATEGORIES OF LAND

BANDERA APPRAISAL DISTRICT LAND VALUES 2024*

TYPE	AG CODE	VALUE PER ACRE
Cropland	CR1	$ 65.92
	CR2	$ 65.92
Irrigated Cropland	IC	$ 214.00
Improved Pasture	IP1	$ 62.79
	IP2	$ 62.79
Native Pasture	NP1 (Good)	$ 62.06
	NP2 (Fair)	$ 62.06
	NP3 (Poor)	$ 62.06
Mountains	M (Wasteland)	$ 39.00
Orchard	O	$ 535.00
High Intensity **	HI	$ 1,000.00

***These land values are subject to change each year**

**** Pen raised livestock, truck farms, feedlots, beekeeping facilities, questionable or new agricultural use, or pastureland when use exceeds carrying capacity of the land.**

MINIMUM ACREAGE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THREE ANIMAL UNITS

(Under Optimum Conditions*)

Land Type	Stocking Rate (Acres per Animal Unit)	Minimum Acreage to support 3 Animal Units
Improved Grasses (i.e. Coastal/Klein grass)	3.33	10
Native Range - Good Soils	5.0	15
Native Range – Average Soils	8.0	24
Mountains – Poor Soils	13.33	40

*These stocking rates were developed from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) data for excellent condition pasture and rainfall. This Guideline is designed to illustrate the ***very minimum*** amount of acreage capable of sustaining three animal units as required in the Herd Size Test. These stocking ratios may be adjusted based on pasture condition, rainfall and management. Parcels may be considered on an individual basis.

Please note: The above are not recommended stocking rates - consult with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Texas AgriLife Extension Service personnel for recommendations specific to your property.

ANIMAL UNITS CHART

ANIMAL TYPE	ANIMAL UNIT EQUIVALENT	MIN. No. TO QUALIFY
Cow or Cow/Calf pair	1.00 Animal Units	3
Mature Bull	1.25 Animal Units	3
Weaned Calf (to 1 year old)	0.60 Animal Units	5
Steer (1-year-old)	0.70 Animal Units	5
Horse / Mule	1.25 Animal Units	3
Donkey / Burro	0.75 Animal Units	4
Ewes (with or without lambs)	0.20 Animal Units	15
Rams or Buck Sheep	0.25 Animal Units	12
Lambs (weaned to 1 year)	0.125 Animal Units	24
Nanny Goats (with or without kids)	0.167 Animal Units	18
Billy Goats	0.20 Animal Units	15
Kid Goats (weaned to 1 year)	0.10 Animal Units	30
Axis or Fallow Deer	0.20 Animal Units	15
Aoudad or Mouflon Sheep	0.20 Animal Units	15
Blackbuck Antelope	0.11 Animal Units	28
Sika Deer	0.143 Animal Units	21
Red Deer	0.4 Animal Units	8
Eland	1.00 Animal Units	1
Emus	0.333 Animal Units	3
Ostriches	0.5 Animal Units	6
Whitetail Deer	0.143 Animal Units	21



Frequently Asked Questions



Q: The application says "open space" and that is what my land is "just open spaces".

A: If the land is not used in accordance with Texas law, it does not qualify. Open space is not a land use. This term is used for describing ranch land characteristics.

Q: The application wants me to list the prior seven years of agricultural use. I just purchased the property and have no idea what the land was used for in the past. Do I just leave that part blank?

A: By law, in order to qualify for the agricultural valuation, you must have a history. It is your obligation to obtain that information if you want to qualify.

Q: Can we get the history of agricultural use from the Appraisal District?

A: No. The Appraisal District will only have a record on the land when the original application was submitted. District staff will only know if the agricultural valuation was granted, they will not know the specific use or even if it would have qualified for that year. The property may have been receiving the agricultural valuation in error.

Q: What if the land was in agricultural use, but the prior owner did not apply for or receive the agricultural valuation?

A: Again, the Appraisal District looks at the actual land use not the valuation. If the land was being used in a qualifying manner, then it would count toward the history of agricultural use.

Q: The appraiser came by and my fences were down and my cattle had been sold. The Appraisal District asked me to refile my agricultural application. I was letting the land lay out, but I can't find any information on that.

A: The land can "lay out" (not be used) for two years and still qualify for the history. However, if the land is not being used for more than 2 years, it does not qualify and will not receive the tax savings for the additional years it is laying out. Remember it is the taxpayer's obligation to inform the Appraisal District of any change of use on the land. The exception is when the land is in a government program.

Q: I purchased my property in February and immediately went down and filed my agricultural valuation application. It was granted. Then the next year, I received a letter asking me to resubmit the application again. I thought that once it was filed, I did not have to file it again.

A: Since you purchased the property in February, you were not the legal owner on January 1st of that tax year. It is in the following year that you are required to apply. If the previous owner was receiving the agricultural use valuation, you would have received their benefit. If they had not applied for agricultural use, you could apply for them that first year – but you will be asked to apply the next year under your name.

Q: I know I turned in my application for agricultural use, but it is not listed on my tax bill. How do I prove I turned in my application?

A: We would recommend keeping a copy of your application. The appraisal district will be happy to provide a copy with a dated stamp showing we received your application.

Q: Do you have any other suggestions on filling out my application?

A: Yes, please do the following:

1. Read the application
2. Answer all the questions to the best of your ability.
3. Do no leave anything blank.
4. Applications not completely filled out may be sent back denied or at least unapproved.
5. Turn in your application in a timely manner (by April 30th).
6. If there is anything specific the appraiser would need to know, please state it on your application or include an attachment that describes it in detail.

Q: How often do I have to fill out these agricultural use forms?

A: You must fill out a new agricultural use application when any of the following occurs:

1. Anytime you change the use of the land
2. Anytime you sell off part of the land
3. Anytime you buy additional land
4. Anytime you change the deed
5. Anytime you change the name to a trust
6. Anytime you change the un-divided interest percentages
7. Anytime the Chief Appraiser requests an updated application

Note: The appraiser will physically inspect your property to see if it is in agricultural use. If your land does not qualify for agricultural use you will receive a notice or letter. You will have an opportunity to discuss the denial with the appraiser and if no agreement is reached you can file a protest.

The most common mistakes people make when *wanting* to obtain an agricultural special use valuation are:

1. **The property should be in "active use" at the time the application is turned in to the Appraisal District.**
   - Do not expect the special use valuation to be approved when the property is not in current – active utilization.

2. **Asking the Appraisal District the minimum requirement to obtain ag valuation**
   - Property owners choose the land use and should have an idea of the type of prudent farmer or rancher they were hoping to become prior to the purchase.

3. **Waiting until the application is due before utilizing the land**
   - Property owners can make it difficult for themselves (time wise) if they wait until the last minute to put the land into an actual use.

4. **Working on other aspects of the property before utilizing the land**
   - Every aspect of the land does not need to be perfected before utilizing the land. Examples: painting the fence, making the pond/tank bigger, brush clearing. (These items can be accomplished later while the land is being utilized – thus meeting the active use qualification).

5. **Only utilizing part of the property**
   - **For Example:** When the land size is 50 acres and the land use is hay/crop – if the hay meadow is only 20 acres of the property and there is no other use, only 20 acres of the 50 acres would qualify for the special valuation. Be sure to look at the whole property utilization.

6. **Incomplete application & lack of information**
   - This is one application form where it is **necessary** to *fully explain* the aspects of your agricultural operation in order to be approved for the special valuation.

This manual has been reviewed and accepted by the Agricultural Advisory Board. This manual has also been reviewed and approved by the Bandera Central Appraisal District.

Robert Mazurek Date

Kevin Meier Date

Patrick Boyle Date

Casey Hauer 11/21/25 Date

Maria A. Garcia 11/21/25 Date

Maria A. Garcia (Chief Appraiser)