

STANDARDS FOR AGRICULTURAL TOURISM ATTRACTION GUIDE SIGNS

BACKGROUND

The Standards for Agricultural Tourism Guide Signs have been developed by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA). These guidelines govern all requests for agricultural tourism guide signs.

GENERAL

- ◆ All questions regarding these standards shall be directed to DDA.
- ◆ Installation of signs on state maintained roads is the responsibility of DelDOT who has the final authority for all sign related decisions.
- ◆ Eligibility for participation in this program shall be determined by DDA.
- ◆ To ensure uniformity, DelDOT will fabricate all signs regardless of the jurisdiction of the placement.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for agricultural tourism signs, agricultural tourism attractions must meet the following minimum requirements:

- ◆ Must be open to the general public at least eight (8) months per year, 5 days per week and 6 hours per day. Seasonal agricultural tourism attractions will be considered on a case by case basis.
- ◆ Must be of agricultural interest or an agricultural tourism activity. Agricultural interest means that the attraction or event is defined under Delaware statutes as agriculture. Agricultural tourism activity means any activity that allows members of the general public to view or enjoy rural activities, including: farming; ranching; wineries; historical, cultural or harvest-your-own activities; guided or self-guided tours; bed and breakfast accommodations (provided they are located on an operating farm).
- ◆ Must allow members of the general public to view or enjoy rural attractions, including farming, ranching, wineries, harvest-your-own activities, guided or self-guided tours, and bed and breakfast accommodations.
- ◆ Must be able to document that 51% of the product being sold is grown or produced on the farm vying for eligibility.
- ◆ Must be located outside of an urbanized area or small urban area boundary.
- ◆ Must be able to document that the business derives a major portion of their income or visitors from road users not residing in the area of the agricultural tourism attraction.

Any agricultural tourism attraction that displays signs that are not within the standards of this program will be ineligible for all facets of the program.

SIGN REQUEST APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

All requests for agricultural tourism guide signs must be submitted on the application form provided by the Delaware Department of Agriculture. To obtain an application, contact the Delaware Department of Agriculture at (302) 698-4500. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.

The approval process steps are as follows:

Step 1: The applicant will submit a completed Agricultural Tourism Guide Sign Application to the Delaware Department of Agriculture for approval.

Step 2: DDA will review the applications for completeness and determine if the applicant meets eligibility requirements. If eligibility requirements are met, DDA will forward the application to DelDOT. If eligibility requirements are not met, DDA will return the application to the applicant, stating the reason for denial.

Step 3: DelDOT will review the application to determine if the agricultural tourism attraction meets sign placement requirements per the DelDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (DelDOT MUTCD). If the request for signs is approved by DelDOT, the DelDOT Signing Section will prepare a cost estimate at no charge to the applicant.

Step 4: DDA will communicate the results of Step 3 to the applicant.

Step 5: The applicant will secure funding for all approved signs and submit a check for the full amount due or proof of funding to DDA.

Step 6: Following receipt of payment, DDA will submit the finalized request to DelDOT for sign fabrication and installation.

SIGN DESIGN AND PLACEMENT



Figure 1

Sign designs and placement will be determined by DeIDOT and shall be in compliance with the DeIDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (DeIDOT MUTCD).

Sign Design: Signs shall have a blue background and white legend and shall consist of, a 24" x 24" plaque containing the name of the agricultural tourism attraction or an approved logo, and a 24" x 9" directional arrow as shown in Figure 1.

Size of Signs: Logos and sign sizes will be determined by DeIDOT based on the DeIDOT MUTCD.

Placement: Sign placements shall meet minimum sign spacing requirements per the DeIDOT MUTCD and shall not conflict with existing regulatory, warning or guide signs. Signs shall be no more than three miles from the attraction. Trailblazer signs with arrows shall be placed at all decision points and may be placed at straight-through intersections and on a continuous road if there is no sign for more than 2 miles.

Signs shall be installed only on rural conventional roads and shall not be placed on conventional roads in urban areas nor at the interchanges or ramps on freeways or expressways.

If multiple requests for agricultural tourism attraction signs are made for installation at one location, decisions on their placement will be made based on the following guidelines in priority order:

- ◆ 1. Agricultural tourism attractions located nearest to the intersection where the sign is to be installed will be given priority.
- ◆ 2. Agricultural tourism attractions that are open year round will be given priority over seasonal agricultural tourism attractions.
- ◆ 3. Agricultural tourism attractions with a non-profit status will be given priority over for-profit agricultural tourism attractions.

There will be a maximum of six (6) signs permitted at any one location subject to the determination by DelDOT that they can be adequately accommodated and do not interfere with other traffic control devices. Existing program signs will not be removed to accommodate newly requested signs unless the existing entity no longer wishes to participate in the program.

PAYMENT FOR SIGNS

The agricultural tourism attraction(s) shall be responsible for providing the necessary funding. Signs will be fabricated and installed by DelDOT after approval and funding is obtained for all the signs.

MAINTENANCE OF SIGNS

Reporting the need for repairs or replacement: It is the responsibility of the agricultural tourism attraction to report any need for repairs to DDA. To apply for repairs or a replacement sign and/or post, the agricultural tourism attraction shall submit a completed application form to the DDA office. DelDOT will determine if repair or replacement is appropriate.

Repairs: If the sign and/or post can be repaired, DelDOT will repair it at no charge. If new materials are required, a cost estimate will be generated by DelDOT and forwarded to the agricultural tourism attraction prior to repair. Following receipt of payment, DelDOT will repair the sign and/or post. If funding is unavailable, the damaged sign will be removed from the state right of way.

Replacement: If the need for a replacement sign and/or post is due to a crash reported to the police, DelDOT will collect the cost from the appropriate party at no cost to the agricultural tourism attraction. If the need for a replacement sign or post is due to an unreported crash or any other cause including age, vandalism or theft, the agricultural tourism attraction will be responsible for providing funding to replace the sign and/or post.

Install/Removal: Seasonal attractions not meeting the 8 month minimum time open criteria will be responsible for the costs associated with their seasonal installation and removal. The signs can be stored at no charge at a DelDOT signing facility.