



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

News Release

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Executive Gardner Announces Craft Beverages Agri-Tourism Legislative Proposal

FREDERICK, MD – County Executive Jan Gardner today announced [legislation](#) to allow farm-based craft beverage producers to hold special events that educate the public or to promote their products.

“This proposal is an excellent way to encourage emerging industries and provide options to ensure agriculture remains viable,” commented Executive Gardner. “At the same time, the legislation respects the rights of nearby property owners and addresses their concerns.”

Last year, Executive Gardner formed a workgroup to come up with a solution to strike a balance between the concerns of residents and the growing demand for agri-tourism activities. The work group included representatives from the Agriculture Business Council, the Farm Bureau, the craft beverage industry, County Council members, and county Planning & Permitting and Office of Economic Development employees.

The workgroup’s proposal would amend the County Zoning Ordinance to add a definition of agri-tourism enterprise for farm-based craft beverage events. Activities would be recognized as being accessory to an agricultural property’s normal use. Owners of the properties must have already obtained a special alcohol license from the state. It would limit outdoor amplified music, not allow overnight events and provide penalties for violations.

Farm-based craft beverage vendors must also meet minimum life safety and Health Department rules and regulations.

The draft legislation was approved by the Agricultural Business Council and the Frederick County Farm Bureau. The County Council is expected to introduce the proposal next month.

For more information, contact Agriculture Business Specialist Katie Albaugh Stevens, Office of Economic Development, at 301-600-3017 or via e-mail at kalbaugh@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

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