

<b>B</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS</b>
<p>This section describes the permit processes for constructing an agricultural building such as a barn or run-in shed.</p>	
<p><b><u>Contacts:</u></b></p> <p><b>Zoning Permits</b> Jeremy Camp, Zoning Administrator Clarke County Department of Planning Berryville-Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, Second Floor (540) 955-5131, <a href="mailto:jcamp@clarkecounty.gov">jcamp@clarkecounty.gov</a></p> <p><b>Building Permits and Agriculture Exemptions</b> Clarke County Building Department Berryville-Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, First Floor (540) 955-5112</p>	

**What is an agricultural building?**

An agricultural building is a structure under roof that is accessory to an agricultural or forestry use located on the same lot. In order to qualify as a forestry use agricultural building, the forestry use must be subject to a “pre-harvest plan.” The rules for pre-harvest plans may be found in [Article I, Zoning Ordinance, Section 6.2.7 \(Pre-Harvest Plan\)](#). Agricultural buildings differ from other accessory structures because they are commonly determined to be exempt from building permit requirements (in whole or in part) by the Clarke County Building Official.

**What permits do I need to construct an agricultural building?**

There is a two-step permitting process for agricultural buildings:

- **STEP 1 -- Obtain a determination from the Building Official that your structure is exempt from building permit requirements:**

File a completed agriculture exemption application with Planning Department staff who will route it to the Building Official for review. The proposed structure must be used for one or more of the following uses in order for the Building Official to approve the application:

- Storage, handling, production, display, sampling, or sale of agricultural, horticultural, floricultural, or silvicultural products produced on the farm.
- Sheltering, raising, handling, processing, or sale of agricultural animals or agricultural animal products.
- Business or office uses relating to the farm operations.

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- Use of farm machinery or equipment or maintenance or storage of vehicles, machinery, or equipment used on the farm.
- Storage or use of supplies and materials used on the farm.
- Implementation of best management practices associated with farm operations.

In addition to reviewing the application form, the Building Official may ask additional questions to determine whether the proposed structure will be used for one or more of the six uses listed above, or if portions of the proposed project will require building permits of any kind. Approval of an Agriculture Exemption is at the sole discretion of the Building Official.

➤ **STEP 2 -- Obtain a zoning permit from the Clarke County Planning Department.**

File a completed zoning permit application with the Planning Department. The zoning permit application must be filed containing the location of the property where the project will take place, the dimensions and floor area of the proposed structure, and its proposed use. A site sketch containing the following site features and distances to the closest point on the proposed structure shall also be provided:

- Lot lines, adjacent public roads, and adjacent private access easements
- Any existing structures (dimensions, floor area, and use information may also be required)
- Any existing and proposed septic systems (including tanks and drain lines), reserve areas, and wells
- Existing and proposed driveways
- Existing or proposed utility, drainage, or other easements
- Sinkholes, springs, perennial streams, and intermittent streams
- Any other site features or information required by the Zoning Administrator

Measurements of required distances must comply with the minimum setback distances required by the Zoning Ordinance. Tables showing minimum required setback distances are found in the zoning district descriptions set forth in [Section 4 of the Zoning Ordinance \(Article I\)](#).

After providing a complete zoning permit application, the Zoning Administrator will review the zoning permit application and will notify you if it is approved, denied, or requires additional information. Once the Building Official has approved the agricultural/farm use exemption waiver and the zoning permit has been issued, your project is approved and can proceed to construction. If the Building Official does not approve the agricultural/farm use exemption waiver, the zoning permit will be for an accessory structure and you must obtain a building permit prior to starting construction.

For questions or assistance in completing the zoning permit application, please contact the Zoning Administrator to schedule an appointment.