

# Agricultural Buildings

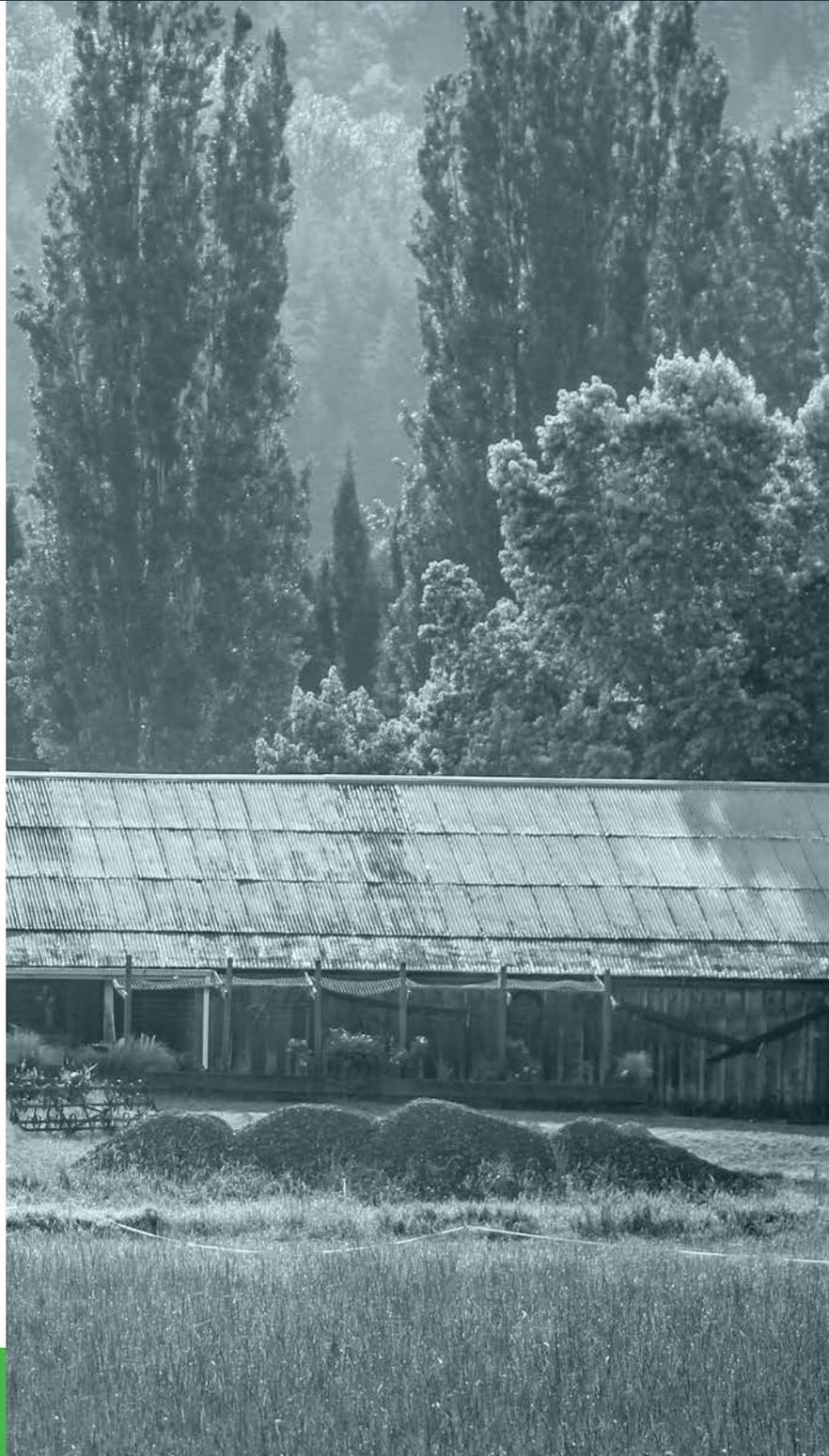
Agricultural buildings are designed for agricultural practices, such as growing and harvesting crops, raising livestock, or storing equipment. These structures are not for human habitation or to be used by the public.

If an agricultural structure, such as a riding arena, is used by the public the permitting is under commercial building standards.

Agricultural buildings are accessory to the primary agricultural land use. An accessory structure is allowed without a primary residence on a parcel provided that an agricultural use is established on the property.

Specific permit requirements for accessory structures depend on size, use, and location. The King County Agricultural Program can assist with completing this step.

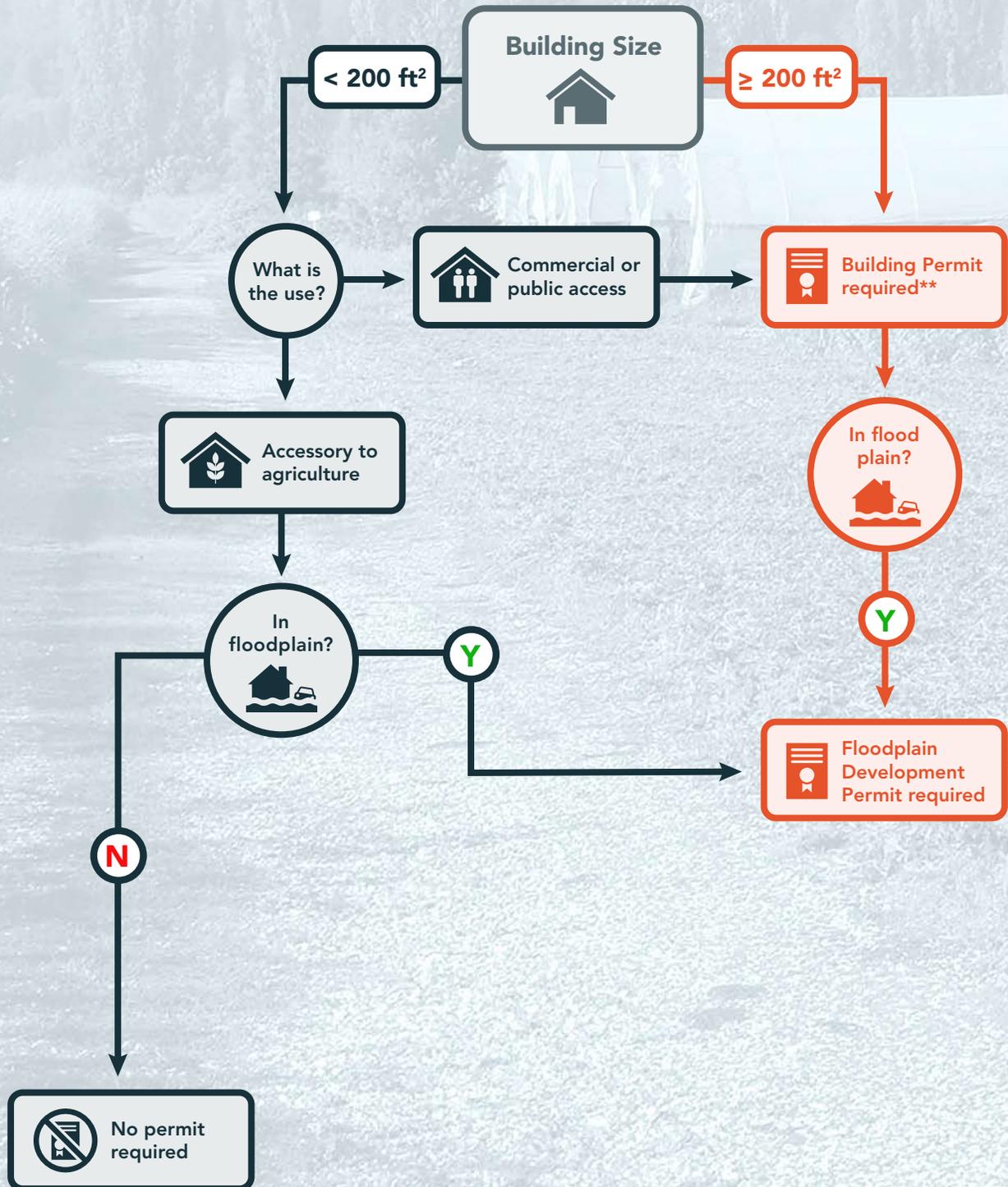
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# Does My Project Require a Permit?

Your project requires a permit if:

- > The structure is over 200 ft<sup>2</sup> in floor area
- > The structure is used by the public
- > The structure is permanent\* and located in the floodplain
  - Please see information about Floodplain Development Permits in Section 3



\*The International Building Code defines "temporary" as in place for less than 180 days.

\*\*A clearing and grading permit is required if site development requires clearing more than > 7000 ft<sup>2</sup> or installation of > 2000 ft<sup>2</sup> of impervious surface.

# Types of Agricultural Buildings

## BUILDING TYPE

## REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

### Green Houses and High Tunnels



Green houses with a foundation require a permit if over 200ft<sup>2</sup> or if in the floodplain (see Flow Chart on page 2).

Washington state law exempts temporary growing structures constructed of a flexible membrane (high tunnels) used for commercial horticulture from needing a building permit.

### Barns and Silage Bunkers



Permitted like any other "U" (Utility and Miscellaneous) class building. May be allowed in Critical Area buffers.

### Riding Arenas



Covered riding arenas must be less than 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup>.<sup>\*</sup> Permit reviewed under commercial building standards if used by the public. For more information on commercial building permit requirements visit [www.kingcounty.gov/bldgpermitFAQ](http://www.kingcounty.gov/bldgpermitFAQ).

### Sheds, Shipping Containers, Loafing Sheds, and Poultry Coops



Permitted like any other "U" class buildings. May be allowed in Critical Area buffers with an approved Farm Plan (see page 5 for more info). No Permit needed if < 200ft<sup>2</sup> and separated by 6 ft between structures.

<sup>\*</sup>[KCC 21A30.03](#). There are minimum lots and limitations on number of animals.

# Regulatory Considerations in the Floodplain



## Development Standards and Regulations for FEMA mapped floodplains\*

### Agricultural Structures

Existing, lawfully established agricultural structures located within the FEMA floodway can be repaired, replaced, remodeled or altered if the work can meet applicable Development Standards and Regulations for FEMA mapped floodplains. Building a foundation in the floodplain will require a Floodplain Development Permit.

- > New construction, replacement and substantial improvements are generally not allowed in the FEMA floodway.
- > Projects for which the value of the improvement is less than 50% of the market value of the pre-improved building(s) are exempt from floodplain mitigation requirements. The analysis done as part of the floodplain development permit will describe options and mitigation for bringing fill (e.g. aggregate, dirt, concrete blocks, hog fuel) into the floodplain. Exceptions can be made for development in agricultural areas.

 To determine if your property is in the floodplain, visit <https://gismaps.kingcounty.gov/iMap>.

 Alternatively, the mapped floodplains of King County are available at [www.kingcounty.gov/floodmaps](http://www.kingcounty.gov/floodmaps)

 **A Floodplain Development Permit is required for any development in the floodplain in addition to a building permit.**

Visit **Flood Hazards** at <https://kingcounty.gov/local-services/permit-forms> to obtain forms. Agricultural buildings must be floodproofed if in the floodplain. Floodproofing means installing flood openings on the lowest floor of a structure designed to equalize hydrostatic flood forces. The areas below the first floor must be kept free of obstruction or constructed with non-supporting breakaway walls, open wood lattice work, or insect screening.

 FEMA guidance, which includes floodproofing requirements, can be found online at:

- > [www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/fema\\_floodplain-management\\_agriculture-accessory-structures\\_2020.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/fema_floodplain-management_agriculture-accessory-structures_2020.pdf)
- > [www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema\\_p-936\\_floodproofing\\_non-residential\\_buiildings\\_110618pdf.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_p-936_floodproofing_non-residential_buiildings_110618pdf.pdf)

\*Development standards and regulations for FEMA mapped floodplains can be found in King County Code 21A.24.230 through 21A.24.272: [https://kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc\\_code](https://kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc_code).

## Frequently Asked Questions



### How much will my permit cost?

 Current permit fees can be found at [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits).

Permit fees vary by the size of the building, proposed use and site specific conditions. Some agricultural structures may qualify for reduced fees.

 Contact Permitting at **206-296-6600** if you have questions or concerns.

### Is a farm management plan required?

A farm management plan is recommended although not required. A farm plan helps property owners determine the best site for the agricultural buildings and may offer additional benefits including reduction of critical area buffers. Some agricultural activities may be exempt from some permits when undertaken in accordance with an approved farm plan. Farm Plans are written by King Conservation District ([www.kingcd.org](http://www.kingcd.org)).

### Is cost-sharing available for my structure(s)?

The King Conservation District can assist landowners with questions regarding cost-share funding. **Email or call:**  [district@kingcd.org](mailto:district@kingcd.org)  **425-282-1900**

Cost-share for high tunnels are available through the National Resources Conservation Service, King Conservation District or the King County Agricultural Program. To learn more about cost-sharing through the NRCS, visit:

 [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/?cid=stelprdb1046250](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/?cid=stelprdb1046250)

### Contact Us

King County Agricultural Program

 [farmhelp@kingcounty.gov](mailto:farmhelp@kingcounty.gov)  **206-477-4800**  [www.kingcounty.gov/agprogram](http://www.kingcounty.gov/agprogram)

Farm King County

 For resources and information related to permitting and regulations, visit [www.farmkingcounty.org/permitting-regulations.html](http://www.farmkingcounty.org/permitting-regulations.html).