



## What is a farm stand or store?

A farm stand or store is a **permanent** or **temporary** structure used to display and sell agricultural goods.

## Permanent Structures

### Is a building permit required?

**Yes.** Permanent structures require a permit. The [Development Center](#) issues building permits and enforces standards for structures. Depending on the size and location of your structure, you may also need **a site development permit, a critical area review, or both.**

### Are health department permits required?

**Yes.** You'll need a Food Permit if you're selling products that need refrigerating or heating. Your water source and waste disposal will also need to be approved. This includes approved public water systems, approved on-site septic systems, or public sewer connections.

For more information about starting a food business, please call (253) 798-4711 or visit the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department [website](#).<sup>1</sup>

### Which zone classifications allow permanent stands or stores?

Your Community Plan area and Zone Classification determines whether a farm stand or store is allowed. Different zone classifications allow for different uses. Uses are organized into use categories, **use types**, and levels (intensities or characteristics of the use). Permanent farm stands or stores fall under the Agritourism Use Type.<sup>2</sup>

### To find out your Community Plan Area and zoning, you can:

1. Open Pierce County's [About My Property](#)<sup>3</sup>
  - Enter a parcel number or site address
  - Find your Community Plan area and zoning in the Results Box
2. Use [this form](#) to have Planning and Land Services staff help you
3. Call the Development Center at (253) 798-3739

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.tpchd.org/food/opening-food-business/>

<sup>2</sup> Section 18A.33.260 A – Agritourism; [Pierce County Code Title 18A](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://palsonline.co.pierce.wa.us/palsonline/AboutMyProperty>



## Temporary Structures

### Is a building permit required?

**Maybe.** Depending on the type of structure, you may not need a permit. Temporary farm stands typically fall under Temporary Uses in Pierce County Code [Title 18A](#).<sup>4</sup> Temporary uses are subject to other rules such as duration and frequency.<sup>5</sup> Depending on the size and location of your structure, you may need a **site development permit, a critical area review, or both**. Please email, call, or visit the [Development Center](#) for more information.

### Are health department permits required?

**Not usually.** Health Department permits aren't needed for a temporary stand without plumbing, or those that sell raw agricultural products that do not require temperature control for safety.

### Which zoning classifications allow temporary stands or stores?

Temporary farm stands or stores may be considered a temporary use. Most zone classifications allow temporary uses. The total number of days your temporary use is allowed depends on the use type and zone classification. Refer to Temporary Uses Table 18A.38.020-1 in Pierce County Code [Title 18A](#).<sup>6</sup>

### How do I get my building permit?

Because every property and situation is different, please contact the [Development Center](#). The Development Center is Pierce County's primary source for information and permit applications.

### What are the required setbacks for farm stands and stores?

Permanent farm stands or stores must be set back according to your underlying Zone Classification. To find the required setbacks either:

- Find your Zone Classification, then refer to Table 18A.15.040 in Pierce County Code [Title 18A](#), Setback and Height;<sup>7</sup> or
- Contact or visit the [Development Center](#) for assistance.

---

<sup>4</sup> Section 18A.38 – Temporary Uses; [Pierce County Code Title 18A](#)

<sup>5</sup> Section 18A.38.030 – Temporary Uses/Duration and Frequency; [Pierce County Code Title 18A](#)

<sup>6</sup> Section 18A.38.020-1 – Temporary Uses Allowed – Number of Days Allowed; [Pierce County Code Title 18A](#)

<sup>7</sup> Section 18A.15.040 – Setback and Height; [Pierce County Code Title 18A](#)



Farm stands, Christmas tree stands and associated parking in rural areas shall maintain a 50-foot minimum setback from State Routes and 25 feet from other roads.<sup>8</sup> Sites containing [critical areas](#) may require more restrictive setbacks.

### For help or more information:

- Submit an online question at [Ask the Development Center](#)
- Ask a question using [Live Chat](#)
- Call the Development Center at (253) 798-3739
- Visit the Development Center, Monday – Friday between 9 am and 2 pm, at 2401 South 35<sup>th</sup> Street, Tacoma, WA 98409

*Please have the parcel number or site address on hand. You can find your parcel number and additional site information by visiting [About My Property](#).*<sup>9</sup>

**This is a reference tool only, and is not a substitute for codes and zoning regulations. You must ensure that your project meets the requirements of all applicable codes and regulations.**

---

<sup>8</sup> Section 18A.15.040 B – Situational Setback and Height Provisions; [Pierce County Code Title 18A](#)

<sup>9</sup> <https://palsonline.co.pierce.wa.us/palsonline/AboutMyProperty>