

Agritourism

Regulations

Rules

Laws

Guidelines



"I think I will take a death nap now.." No, really, it is interesting!



Connecting kids and kids!



What are we going to cover?

- Public Policy and its impact on Agritourism
- Levels of governments who make laws/rules/regs
- How do they know what I need?
- How to effectively Communicate with Policy Makers
- Q&A and your ideas!



Straddling the Public Policy Fence

Are we Ag or Hospitality??? Answer is YES!

- **Public Policy is “siloed”**
 - Who writes laws/regs (committees)
 - How laws are written (chapters)
 - How they are enforced (regulating agencies)
- **Agritourism presents a complication to that structure by being a fairly new venture that is in at least two separate categories**
- ***Our job is to explain, clarify, work to streamline those bodies of law/regs***



Who Makes all These Rules? Why?

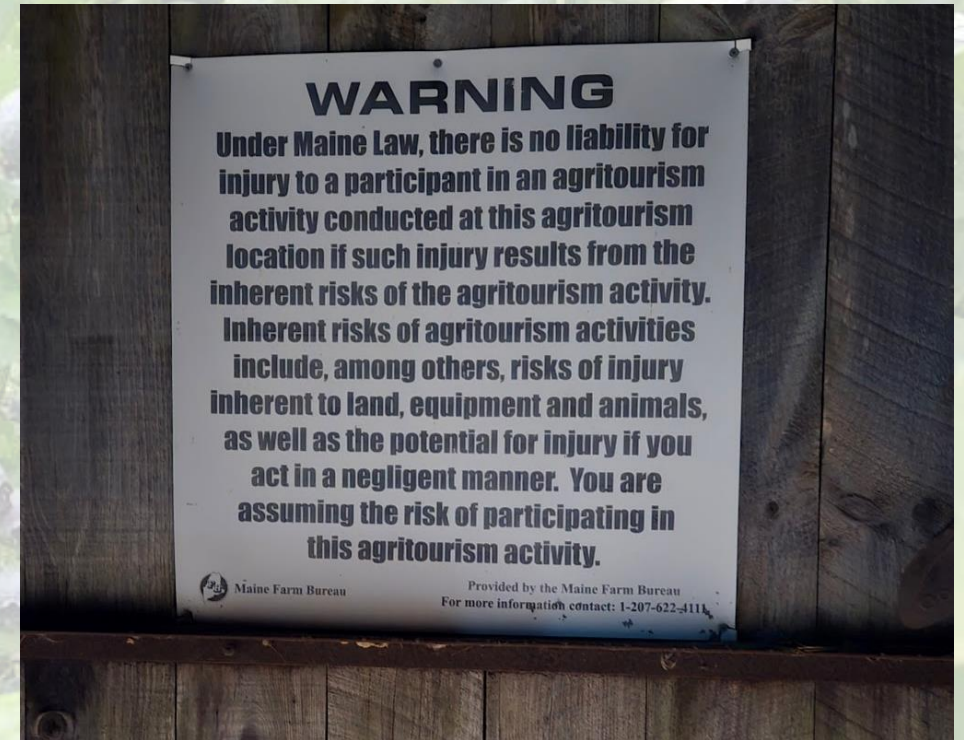
Federal
State/Province
Local
Regional

- Health and Safety
- Land Use
- Protects your industry from bad actors
- Provides guidance for good practices



Who Makes all These Rules? ...and why do I need to know?

- If there is a law/rule/reg impacting your business you must know its source
- Advocating that a local authority change a rule that is state or federal will not work
- Wastes your time – and you lose personal credibility
- Do your homework – know what needs to be changed and prepare some ideas
- PS-sometimes laws are really helpful!!!



How do they know what I need?

Or what I don't need!!!

They won't unless you tell them-



"Hey, I think you took most of the grain!"

- Elected people bring to office their own knowledge and skills.
- In Maine the Legislature has an average of 3,000 pieces of legislation every 2 years
- In Congress the issues range from roads and bridges to foreign aid and nuclear waste

We need to take responsibility to provide policy makers with solid facts to inform their decisions

Your Story: Why am I doing this???

There are days when that question will be your mantra...



- Is this an extension of your existing business i.e. selling ice cream from the dairy farm?
- Is it an entirely new venture?
- What experience do you/your team bring to it?
 - Ex- my son is a teacher and wants to teach ag experiences in the summer
 - My husband is no longer working off the farm and wants to bake bread
 - My apple orchard has fewer wholesale accounts and wants to do Pick your Own
- There is a growing interest in our area for farm based activities
- The additional income / exposure of our products will help our bottom line
- This business will add to the community by creating a new destination experience for visitors

Effective Communications with Policy Makers

It's not Rocket Science It's Relationships

Everything we do in Ag is about relationships

- Identify the people who represent you- at all levels
- Reach out to them before you have a problem-know the staff
- Tell your story...
- Offer to provide your “on the ground” insights on issues
- Be a resource
- Say Thank you!



Effective Communications with Policy Makers

The best way to communicate is to show folks what you are doing

- Invite people to your farm
- Host an Open House for Policy Makers
- Show them what you do and why.
- Show them Your Story!



Effective Communications with Policy Makers

Phone-Email-In-person-Testifying

Try not to weigh in at the last minute – but sometimes you have to

- What to say
 - Identify yourself (I am in your district/ met you at an event/ appreciate your support on XXX)
 - Know the number of the legislation/rule/reg
 - Why do I Support/Oppose
 - NEVER just say VOTE YES/NO on XXX- it means nothing
 - Offer to provide additional information
 - Be respectful and listen if the person has a different opinion-
 - Be prepared to offer mid ground solutions



Sometimes you just have to leave the Farm and go to the seat of power!



Agritourism is an essential aspect of Ag

- It provides opportunity for diversifying farm income
- It increases opportunity for rural development
- It educates the public (and policy makers) about the value and complexity of agriculture production
- In the United States less than 2% of the population is involved in Ag
- Most people are 5 generations away from growing their own food
- They learn about Ag in “Seasonless Supermarkets” where pumpkins and strawberries share the shelves at the same time
- They listen to influencers who often have unrealistic or untrue visions of farm life

Wherever you are across the globe – I believe that what we are doing is critical to the very future of agriculture – thank you for what you do and lets keep moving forward together!

Thank you!

