



**REPORT TO:** Co-Chairs and Members of the  
Integrated Community Planning and Public Works Committee

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Regional Policy Plan Amendment 6-2009  
Agricultural Value Added Activities Policies

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That this Committee recommend to Regional Council:

1. That the draft Agricultural Value Added Activities Policies (attached as Appendix I) be received.
2. That staff circulates the draft policies for comment to affected agencies, all local municipalities, the Agricultural Subcommittee and farm organizations represented in Niagara.
3. That at least one public meeting be held to receive comments and questions from the public in accordance with Planning Act requirements.
4. That Regional staff be authorized to enter into discussions with Provincial officials regarding fair tax issues related to agricultural value added activities on farms.
5. That Regional staff continue to work with Provincial staff as they proceed with the review of the Provincial Policy Statement as it relates to agricultural policy and value added activities.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Policy initiative supports and attempts to expand the ability of Niagara's farmers to develop agricultural value added activities in agricultural areas. The draft policies are consistent with Strategic Objective C – Economic Prosperity in Council's Business Plan. The intent of the draft policies is to encourage the growth of a diversified, profitable and sustainable agricultural industry in Niagara.

The Region has consistently recognized the importance of the agricultural industry to Niagara's economy and quality of life. The Region supported a number of initiatives developed through the Regional Chair's Agricultural Task Force including the development in 2004 of a comprehensive strategy to support agriculture. In 2006, the Region through

the Agricultural Task Force, prepared an Agricultural Action Plan, "Growing the Industry: Farm Economic Viability for the Long Term". The Action Plan among other recommendations spoke to the need to reduce land use and taxation policy restrictions on agricultural value added activities.

In 2008, the consulting firm Planscape was retained by the Region to examine land use policy and other measures that would support increased opportunities for the provision of agricultural value added activities. A final report entitled "Review of Land Use Policy and Related Implementation Measures Regarding Agricultural Value Added Activities – Summary Report and Recommendations" was completed in August 2009. The Report by Planscape set out a set of recommended policy changes to the Regional Policy Plan and contained a policy framework for local municipalities to use in their Official Plans.

The work of the consultant was overseen by a Working Group consisting of staff from the Region and from the Area Municipalities. The development of the Study and the recommended policies was a collaborative effort. Also represented on the Working Group were members of the Agricultural Task Force, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Niagara Economic Development Corporation.

A copy of the proposed Agricultural Value Added Activities policies is attached as Appendix I to this report and identified as Amendment 6-2009 to the Regional Official Plan. The proposed policies in the draft Amendment document reflect the recommendations of the consultant as reviewed and modified by area planners and Regional planning staff. .

Several of the proposed draft policies appear to exceed the intent of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Two of the proposed policies are included as Part III of the Amendment document as expressions of Council policy. It is intended that these two provisions would be incorporated as part of the Official Plan if and when the Province amended the PPS to permit the uses provided for or if the Province accepts the policies prior to the PPS review. The Province is expected to complete its review of the PPS document in 2010. The expectation is that there would then be no subsequent need to undertake a further Amendment review and approval process. In the interim, the policies would represent part of Regional Council's submission to the Province as part of its PPS review.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications flowing from the adoption of the recommendations in this report other than the normal and necessary costs associated with the public review of a Regional Policy Plan Amendment.

## **PURPOSE**

This report initiates the formal review process as prescribed under the Planning Act for the review of an Amendment to the Regional Policy Plan. The Amendment is intended to implement the policy recommendations contained in a Report prepared by Planscape Consultants entitled "Review of Land Use Policy and Related Implementation Measures

Regarding Agricultural Value Added Activities – Summary Report and Recommendations”. The Amendment proposes changes to the Agricultural and Rural Area policies to encourage agricultural value added activities in order to encourage and assist with the long term viability of the agricultural industry in Niagara. The policies represent a component of a much broader objective of encouraging local food, supporting enhanced food security and providing additional opportunities for farmer control of food marketing and processing.

## **REPORT**

### **Basis for the Proposed Agricultural Value Added Activities Policies**

In May 2004, Regional Council endorsed a report prepared by Planscape consultants for the Region’s Agricultural Task Force entitled *Securing a Legacy for Niagara’s Agricultural Land: A Vision from One Voice*”. A number of strategic initiatives were identified in the Discussion Paper that collectively were intended to protect agricultural land and provide for a sustainable agricultural industry over the long term.

Subsequently, the Region’s Agricultural Task Force undertook the preparation of an Agricultural Action Plan entitled, *“Growing the Industry: Farm Economic Viability for the Long Term”*. Several of the tasks identified that related directly and indirectly to agricultural value added activities. In 2008, the Region, through the Region’s Agricultural Task Force retained the consulting firm Planscape to carry out an Agricultural Value Added Activities study. The purpose of the study was to examine ways in which land use policy could be used to facilitate and encourage increased opportunities for Agricultural Value Added Activities.

A final Summary and Recommendations Study entitled, *“Review of Land Use Policy and Related Implementation Measures Regarding Agricultural Value Added Activities”* was completed in August 2009. Included in the Study is a set of recommended objectives and land use policies intended for inclusion by amendment in the Regional Policy Plan. Also, included, is a policy template for local municipalities to use for the preparation of local Official Plan policies on agricultural value added activities.

There are a number of fundamental principles that form the basis for the recommended policies. These principles as set out in the Study include:

- The right to farm is paramount.
- The protection of the agricultural land base is fundamental
- The purpose of allowing farm diversification and value added uses is to improve financial returns for farmers.
- The integrity of the agricultural area for farming must be protected.
- Policies should enhance the ability to farm successfully without conflicts.
- Value retention is an intrinsic part of production and addresses the requirement for “market ready” products and is part of the primary agricultural use.

- Value added activities should add value to a product without detracting from the primary agricultural function.
- Secondary uses and diversification is desirable to enhance income but must not detract from the primary agricultural function.
- Creative re-use of properties and buildings permits retention of elements of the rural countryside without detracting from production.
- Lot creation for non agricultural uses should be prohibited but use of existing undersized lots for agriculturally related functions should be considered in controlled circumstances.
- Value added uses include accessory, farm related uses and secondary uses.
- Controls on scale and impact are important to protecting primary production but can vary depending on the nature of the area and the municipality.

### **How were the Policies Developed?**

The policies were prepared by Planscape consultants under the overall direction of the Region's Agricultural Task Force. A Working Group was formed to provide input and direction to the consultant during the course of the Study preparation. The Working Group consisted of Planning Staff from the Region and from five of the Area Municipalities including: the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the City of St. Catharines, the Town of Lincoln, the Town of Grimsby, and the Township of West Lincoln. Also included were five representatives of the Agricultural Task Force. Staff from the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs as well as from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing was also represented. The Niagara Economic Development Corporation was also represented. The Study preparation process was intended to be a collaborative effort involving representatives of the farm community, the local area planners, and Regional staff.

During the Study preparation, there was consultation with the Niagara North and Niagara South Federation of Agriculture, the Regional Agricultural Subcommittee, Area Planners, and the Agricultural Task Force.

A facilitated workshop to discuss policy options for agricultural value added activities was held in April at Hernder's Estate Winery with about 50 participants including farmers, local Planning staff, Provincial Planning staff, owners of agriculturally related businesses, representatives from the Greenbelt Foundation, and interested members of the public.

A draft of the Study was presented to the Agricultural Task Force (ATF) in July 2009 and a Final Draft Study Report was completed on August 24, 2009. The ATF has also endorsed this report, when it was presented as 'Draft' on October 16, 2009.

### **A Brief Overview of the Major Components of the Propose Policy Plan Amendment**

The Amendment document is divided into a number of components. Some of the major or more significant components of the proposed Amendment policy are highlighted below.

The definition of “**Agricultural Uses**” includes a reference to certain “value retention uses” such as corn dryers, product washing, sorting, and packing. This definition reflects the views of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture who believe that the definition of agriculture should reflect not just the growing and raising of product but also those on farm activities, processes and structures required to get a product from the farm to market. The existing definition in the PPS for “agricultural uses” does not refer to “value retention uses”.

The definition for “**Secondary Uses**” provides for uses on the farm such as home occupations, home industries, and other uses that produce value added products from farm operations. The existing definition in the PPS provides only for uses that produce value added agricultural products from the farm operation on the property. The effect of the new definition is to permit farmers to produce value added products from not just that farm but from other farmers.

**Proposed Policies 6.A.23 and 6.A.24** provide for value added processing and marketing uses on farms that would not only involve product from that farm but from other surrounding local farms. The existing PPS does not define value added activities but does define agriculture-related uses as farm related commercial and farm related industrial uses that are small scale and directly related to the farm operation. Agriculture related uses must now be located on a farm and serve only that farm. Staff believe that the proposed new policy while not entirely consistent with the existing PPS provisions does reflect the cooperative character of farming in Niagara where smaller farmers take advantage of processing and often marketing facilities on larger farms. For example, many existing wineries in Niagara process product from properties other than from the one on which they are situated.

**Proposed Policy 6.A.35** provides for the “**adaptive reuse**” of existing farm buildings and structures with cultural heritage significance for uses that are not directly related to agriculture subject to a number of restrictions. Such uses would only be permitted through site specific zoning amendments. The proposed policy puts no restriction on the types of adaptive reuse uses that could be permitted subject to them being small scale, not extending outside the existing surplus building or structure, and having minimal impact on surrounding agricultural activities and other uses. The PPS does not refer to adaptive reuse of existing farm buildings but does have policies restricting non-farm uses in agricultural areas.

**Proposed Policy 6.A.36** provides for **farm diversification activities** on existing undersized lots subject to a site specific zoning amendment and a list of conditions. The uses among other conditions would need to be agriculture related to the surrounding farm operations and limited in scale, have minimal impact on agricultural and rural land uses and not include residential uses. The PPS requires that agriculture related uses be located on existing farms.

**Proposed Policies 6.A.35 and 6.A.36** referenced above are included in the Amendment but are not intended to take effect until the Provincial Policy Statement has been amended by the Province unless they are endorsed by the Province prior to the update of the PPS. Indeed, the expectation is that this amendment can help inform the PPS update scheduled

for 2010 and Provincial officials from the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs have contributed positively to this work. All of the proposed policies in Amendment 6-2009 are intended to be interpreted broadly and it is expected that local official plans will provide more detailed provisions on such matters as the size and location of permitted uses. Policies in local official plans may vary depending on the nature of that municipality, the type of agriculture being practiced, and the degree to which they are impacted by Provincial Plans such as the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. It will however be required that local Official Plans to be in conformity with the intent and direction of the Region's agricultural value added policies.

### **The Amendment Review Process**

The Planning Act requires that all Official Plan Amendment applications be circulated to affected agencies including the Province for comment before a decision is made by Council. Also required is the holding of at least one public meeting to permit the public to ask questions, offer comments and receive information. Planning staff propose to circulate this report and the attached draft policies to affected agencies, all local municipalities, the Agricultural Subcommittee and to major farm groups represented in Niagara for comment. At least one public meeting will be held as set out in the Planning Act requirements and the policies and Study will be posted on the Regional website for the information of the public.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

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Patrick Robson  
Commissioner  
Integrated Community Planning

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Mike Trojan  
Chief Administrative Officer

*This report was prepared by Drew Semple, MCIP, RPP, Senior Planner.*

### **APPENDIX**

## **Amendment 6-2009 To the Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area**

The Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area is amended as follows:

### **Part I Section 3: Regional Strategy for Development and Conservation**

Strategic Objective 3:6 is modified by the addition of the following:

"

- *Recognize the changing nature of agriculture and support farm diversification activities that contribute to the long term economic sustainability of the agricultural industry.*
- *Establish a positive framework for facilitating sustainable development that supports traditional land based activities and supports diverse, profitable, and sustainable farming activities. "*

### **Part II Section 6: Agriculture and Rural Area Policies**

The Objectives to Section 6, Agriculture and Rural Area Policies are modified by adding the following new objectives:

*" Objective 6.7 To support activities that enable farming and farmers to:*

- *Become more competitive, sustainable and environmentally friendly;*
- *Adapt to new and changing markets;*
- *Diversify into and take advantage of new agricultural opportunities;*
- *Improve the understanding of agriculture by the general public;*  
*and*
- *Broaden operations to diversify economic activities and add value to their primary products.*

*Objective 6.8 To encourage a large range of farm diversification activities in appropriate locations and at a scale suitable to the farm and the*

*agricultural area where they contribute to profitable and economically sustainable agriculture.*

*Objective 6.9 To recognize the role of the Region to establish flexible, performance based criteria for use by the local municipalities, and recognize variations in the range of diversification activities within individual municipalities.*

*Objective 6.10 To recognize the range of impacts that different types of value added activities may have on the farm and on surrounding farms, and provide for different regulatory provisions.*

*Objective 6.11 To support development of fair tax policies that address value added activities and economic diversification on farms. "*

## **6. A Policies for Agriculture**

Policy 6.A.3 is modified by the addition of the following two bullet points:

- support for a large range of farm diversification activities in appropriate locations and at a scale suitable to the farm and the agricultural area where they contribute to economically sustainable agriculture.*
- recognition of opportunities for on-farm alternative and/or renewable energy systems.*

Policy 6.A.6 is modified by the addition of the following phrase at the end of the first sentence:

*"as well as associated value retention activities."*

Policy 6.A.7 is deleted and the subsequent policies renumbered accordingly.

The existing Policy 6.A.18 Secondary Uses is deleted and replaced by the following policies:

### **" Farm Diversification Activities**

**6.A.17** *Farm diversification activities are recognized and may be permitted in accordance with the provisions of this Section. On-farm diversification is a potentially significant contributor to economically sustainable*

*agriculture in Niagara, contributing to more access to local food and VQA wines, contributing toward the preservation of the agricultural land base and the scenic quality of the agricultural landscape.*

- 6.A.18** *Farm Diversification refers to those farm related value added and secondary uses that complement farming activities and provide for increasing the economic value and consumer appeal of an agricultural product or activity. Farm diversification activities shall complement the principal agricultural uses on the property and in the surrounding area, and shall contribute to the sustainability and viability of the farming operation.*
- 6.A.19** *Farm diversification activities shall be consistent with the applicable provisions of the Provincial Policy Statement (2005), and conform to the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Greenbelt Plan.*
- 6.A.20** *Local municipalities through their Official Plans and Zoning By-laws may define and categorize farm diversification activities and provide specific performance criteria for various types of activities, in accordance with the provisions of the Regional Plan. Some activities may be permitted “as of right” through local documents; other activities may be recognized through a process that involves site specific zoning. “As of Right” activities may include such agriculture related uses that are small scale and directly related to the farm operation, or secondary uses that are also small scale and are compatible with the principal agricultural operation on the property and surrounding agricultural lands. Uses that have potential to generate off site impacts will be evaluated and assessed for compatibility with the principal agricultural operation and surrounding agricultural lands through a rezoning process that will also impose controls to mitigate the impacts. Larger scale agriculture related uses or secondary uses may require site specific zoning amendment, where their impact is evaluated and determined to be compatible with the principal agricultural operation and surrounding agricultural lands.*
- 6.A.21** *The following criteria shall be considered when identifying whether or not diversification activities should be permitted in the Zoning By-law:*
- *Whether the proposed activity is more appropriately located in a nearby settlement area or in the Rural Area;*
  - *Whether the use is required on or in close proximity to the agricultural operation for it to support and complement the agricultural activity;*

- *The extent to which the activity is compatible with the existing farming operation and surrounding farming operations;*
- *Whether the scale of the activity is appropriate to the site and the farming operation;*
- *Whether the use is consistent with and maintains the character of the agricultural area;*
- *The activity does not generate potentially conflicting off-site impacts;*
- *The activity is limited to low water and low effluent producing uses, and the site is capable of accommodating the use on private water and private sewage treatment systems;*
- *The activity does not require significant improvements to utilities or infrastructure such as roads or hydro services; Compliance with applicable regulations.*

**6.A.22** *Farm diversification activities are small scale in relation to the principal farming operation. Preference is given to defining scale on the basis of size of the facilities and relationship to other activities rather than less enforceable criteria such as number of employees or value of product purchased. The appropriate scale for diversification activities may vary depending on the type of use and whether the activities are located in the Specialty Crop Areas (Tender Fruit or Grape Areas) or in the other Prime Agricultural Areas (Good General Agricultural Areas).*

**6.A.23** *Value Added Production activities are intended to primarily serve the farm operation and surrounding local operations, and remain accessory to the principal farming operation in relation to the scale of the operation, its footprint and the product being manipulated. Such facilities may be recognized "as of right" in local zoning by-laws. However, it is recognized that in order to extend the operating season of such facilities, some product may be obtained from surrounding local farm operations or from other parts of Ontario provided the majority of product is from the farm or from surrounding local operations, particularly in the "off seasons" to allow the efficient operation of the processing activities and contribute to the ongoing viability of the farm. Such facilities may require a site specific zoning amendment prior to expanding the operation to include product from other parts of Ontario.*

**6.A.24** *Value Added Marketing activities are intended to primarily serve the farm operation and surrounding local operations, and shall remain accessory to the principal farming operation, both in relation to the scale of the operation and its footprint. Local Official Plans shall establish limits on the scale of various types of marketing activities, within the following guidelines:*

- *Roadside stands and “pick your own” facilities are limited to distribution of product produced from the farm operation, with parking areas and structures limited in area;*
- *Agricultural retail facilities shall generally be small scale, and may be smaller in Specialty Crop Areas;*
- *Bed and breakfast facilities shall not exceed 6 bedrooms;*
- *Restaurant facilities shall be accessory to existing farming operations and shall be small scale, but may be smaller in Specialty Crop Areas.*

**6.A.25** *Agri-tourism activities that are directly related to agriculture may be recognized and regulated by the local municipality. The activities shall be subject to the following criteria:*

- *The scale of the operation is limited and appropriate to the site and the surrounding area;*
- *The activity has minimal impact on, does not interfere with and is compatible with the surrounding agricultural and rural land uses;*
- *The activity is limited to low water and low effluent producing uses and the site is capable of accommodating the use on private water and private sewage treatment systems;*
- *The activity does not cause off site impacts related to infrastructure or transportation/traffic;*
- *The activity does not generate potentially conflicting off-site impacts;*
- *The activity complies with all other applicable provisions of the Regional Policy Plan.*

**6.A.26** *Agri-tourism activities that are not directly related to agriculture but benefit from a farm location may be recognized and regulated by the*

*local municipality. The activities shall be subject to the following criteria:*

- The scale of the operation is limited and appropriate to the site and the surrounding area;*
- The activity has minimal impact on, does not interfere with and is compatible with the surrounding agricultural and rural land uses;*
- The activity is limited to low water and low effluent producing uses and the site is capable of accommodating the use on private water and private sewage treatment systems;*
- The activity does not cause off site impacts related to infrastructure or transportation/traffic;*
- The activity does not generate potentially conflicting off-site impacts;*
- For special events, the activity represents an occasional activity and is not a regular recurring activity;*
- The timing and duration of such activities does not hinder the agricultural operation on the site or on surrounding lands;*
- The activity complies with all other applicable provisions of the Regional Policy Plan.*

**6.A.27** *Home Occupations and Home Industries may be permitted as secondary uses provided they comply to the provisions of this Section.*

**6.A.28** *Small scale on-farm alternative and/or renewable energy systems are encouraged in association with agricultural operations, provided the majority of the energy produced is consumed on site, with limited production that would be added to the power grid. Notwithstanding the above, wind energy systems are subject to the provisions of Section 8 in this Plan.*

**6.A.29** *The local municipality may limit the number of farm diversification activities permitted in association with the farm operation.*

**6.A.30** *Local municipalities shall utilize site plan control to regulate the impact of farm diversification activities, in relation to entrances, parking and loading facilities, signage, grading and storm water drainage, buffering and landscaping and landscape protection.*

- 6.A.31** *Local municipalities, through their official plans, may provide for the implementation of farm diversification activities through the establishment of a development permit system, based on the degree of compatibility of specific uses in relation to the principal agricultural operation.*
- 6.A.32** *Lot creation to accommodate farm diversification activities is not permitted.*
- 6.A.33** *Within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, farm diversification activities shall be as permitted in the Niagara Escarpment Plan.*
- 6.A.34** *The scale of value added and diversification activities will vary depending on the scale and use of the principal farming activity. As such, local official plans will provide specific policy guidance geared to the characteristics of the specialty crop areas and good general agricultural uses generally located south of the Niagara Escarpment and Rural areas.*

### **Part III: Additional Policies**

The following additional policies are added after Policy 6.A.34

*“The following two policies are not part of the Regional Policy Plan and have no force or effect until the Provincial Policy Statement is amended by the Province to permit the uses provided for unless prior endorsement is given by the Province. In the mean time, the policies are supported by Regional Council as input to the Provincial Policy Statement review. Furthermore, it is intended that when and if the Provincial Policy Statement is amended to permit the uses provided for below, the policies will be incorporated as part of the Regional Policy Plan without the need for a further amendment to the Regional Policy Plan.*

- 6.A.35** *Uses that are not directly related to agriculture may be considered in special circumstances where the use would allow the ongoing adaptive re-use of existing buildings or structures that are designated under the Ontario Heritage Act as having cultural heritage significance and that would otherwise be surplus or fall into disrepair, provided such uses are small scale, would not expand outside of the existing structure or building and would not change the appearance of the farming operation, and their impacts (such as noise, odour, traffic and servicing) on surrounding land uses is minimal and will not hinder surrounding*

*agricultural uses. Such uses may only be considered in site specific zoning amendments by the local municipality.*

**6.A.36** *Local Official Plans may recognize certain farm diversification activities that include agriculturally related commercial and industrial activities on existing undersized lots provided:*

- *The uses are agriculturally related uses, are related to surrounding farm operations and require a location in close proximity to the farm operation;*
- *The scale of the operation is limited and appropriate to the site and the surrounding area;*
- *The agricultural character of the area continues to dominate;*
- *It has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Region and the local municipality that the proposed use is not more appropriately located on the same parcel as the farm operation, or in a designated settlement area;*
- *The activity has minimal impact on, does not interfere with and is compatible with the surrounding agricultural and rural land uses;*
- *The activity is limited to low water and low effluent producing uses and the site is capable of accommodating the use on private water and private sewage treatment systems;*
- *A residential use is not permitted;*
- *The activity complies with all other applicable provisions of the Regional Policy Plan;*
- *The use would be subject to a site specific zoning amendment and be limited to the specific use applied for.*
- *In Specialty Crop Areas additional limitations will be required.*

*Such uses may include production activities and marketing activities.*

*Where such uses are proposed, they are directed to existing commercial or industrial or other non-agriculturally zoned parcels of land, or parcels made unsuitable for agriculture by former land uses.*

#### **Part IV: Definitions**

The following "Definitions" are added to the "Definitions" section of the Plan.

***"Agricultural uses:*** means the growing of crops, including nursery and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry, maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment. Agricultural uses include value retention activities required to make a commodity saleable (i.e. Corn dryer, washing, sorting, packing, and packaging).

***Prime Agricultural Area:*** means areas where prime agricultural lands predominate. This includes: areas of prime agricultural lands and associated Canada Land Inventory Classes 4-7 soils; and additional areas where there is local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. Prime agricultural areas may be identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food using evaluation procedures established by the Province as amended from time to time, or may also be identified through an alternative agricultural land evaluation system approved by the Province.

***Prime Agricultural Land:*** means land that includes specialty crop areas and/or Canada land Inventory Classes 1, 2 and 3 soils, in this order of priority for protection.

***Secondary Uses:*** means uses secondary to the principal use, including, but not limited to, home occupations, home industries, and uses that produce value added agricultural products from farm operations.

***Specialty crop areas:*** means areas designated using evaluation procedures established by the province, as amended from time to time, where specialty crops such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil lands are predominantly grown, usually resulting from:

- (a) Soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both; and/or
- (b) A combination of farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops, and of capital investment in related facilities and services to produce store or process specialty crops.

***Farm Diversification:*** means a range of use and activities that are designed to expand the range of economic opportunities available to farmers and is a generic reference to value added, agriculturally related and secondary agricultural uses that may not be directly related to the agricultural activity conducted on the farm property.

**Value Retention activities:** *Activities occurring on-farm (or off-farm under specific circumstances) to support production and to convert the raw agricultural products to “market ready” products. Such activities are considered an integral part of the agricultural operation. They are divided into activities that support production including research and maintenance and management of equipment, and activities required to produce market ready commodities including washing, sorting, drying, packing, packaging and similar activities.*

**Value Added activities:** *mean activities that generally occur on-farm (or off-farm under specific circumstances) which add value to agricultural products and their sale and distribution and are intended to promote and sustain the viability of farming operations. Such activities are generally considered agriculture-related uses, and are required to be small scale and related to the farm activity. Value Added Activities may be grouped into three major components: Support Activities, Production Activities and Marketing Activities:*

- **Production activities:** *mean value added farm related activities that include processing of agricultural products (including wineries, canneries, bakeries, cheese factories and similar uses); and distribution and warehousing of agricultural products.*
- **Marketing activities:** *mean value added farm related activities that include a variety of methods of increasing the sales of raw or finished farm products. Such activities may include road side produce stands and other retail facilities for the sale of products, pick your own facilities, agri-tourism activities, and “experiential activities” (such as “working farm vacations” or culinary schools), agri-recreation activities (such as farm mazes, special events facilities (e.g. farm weddings) and educational facilities).*
- **Support activities:** *means uses that support day to day farm operation and may include machinery repairs, veterinarians, seed suppliers, equipment dealers and other uses not more appropriately accommodated in settlement areas.*

**Agri-tourism activities related to agriculture:** *mean uses or activities that are considered secondary uses to a farm operation that involve tourist activities that have a direct relationship to the agricultural activities on the farm or surrounding farm activities. Such activities may include farm-mazes, seasonal festivals (for example, strawberry social, pumpkin festival, maple syrup events), equine training/boarding and showing,*

**Agri-tourism activities unrelated to agriculture:** *mean uses or activities that are considered secondary uses to a farm operation that involve tourism activities that are not directly related to agricultural activities but that benefit from a farm/rural location.*

*Such activities may include bed and breakfast accommodations, dining facilities, weddings, educational tours and similar uses.*

***Adaptive re-use:*** *means a change in use of surplus farm facilities on existing farms for approved non-farm uses that are compatible with the surrounding farming activities and are of a scale appropriate to the farm operation. Adaptive re-use is oriented to the preservation of heritage buildings and landscapes that would otherwise disappear as a result of their no longer being required for farm purposes. "*