

Urban Farm Code Update

Sustainable Food Policy Board
Code & Metrics Working Group
June 24th, 2013



Project Overview

- **Code and Metrics Working group -**
Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board
 - First task : **Urban Farms Code Update**
 - Formed to update the City of Austin's urban farm code to improve upon existing code in a way that meets the needs of communities, farmers, and regulators in the interest of a healthy, safe, sustainable, and just food system for all of Austin.
- **Context Sensitive Solutions and Public Involvement Approach**



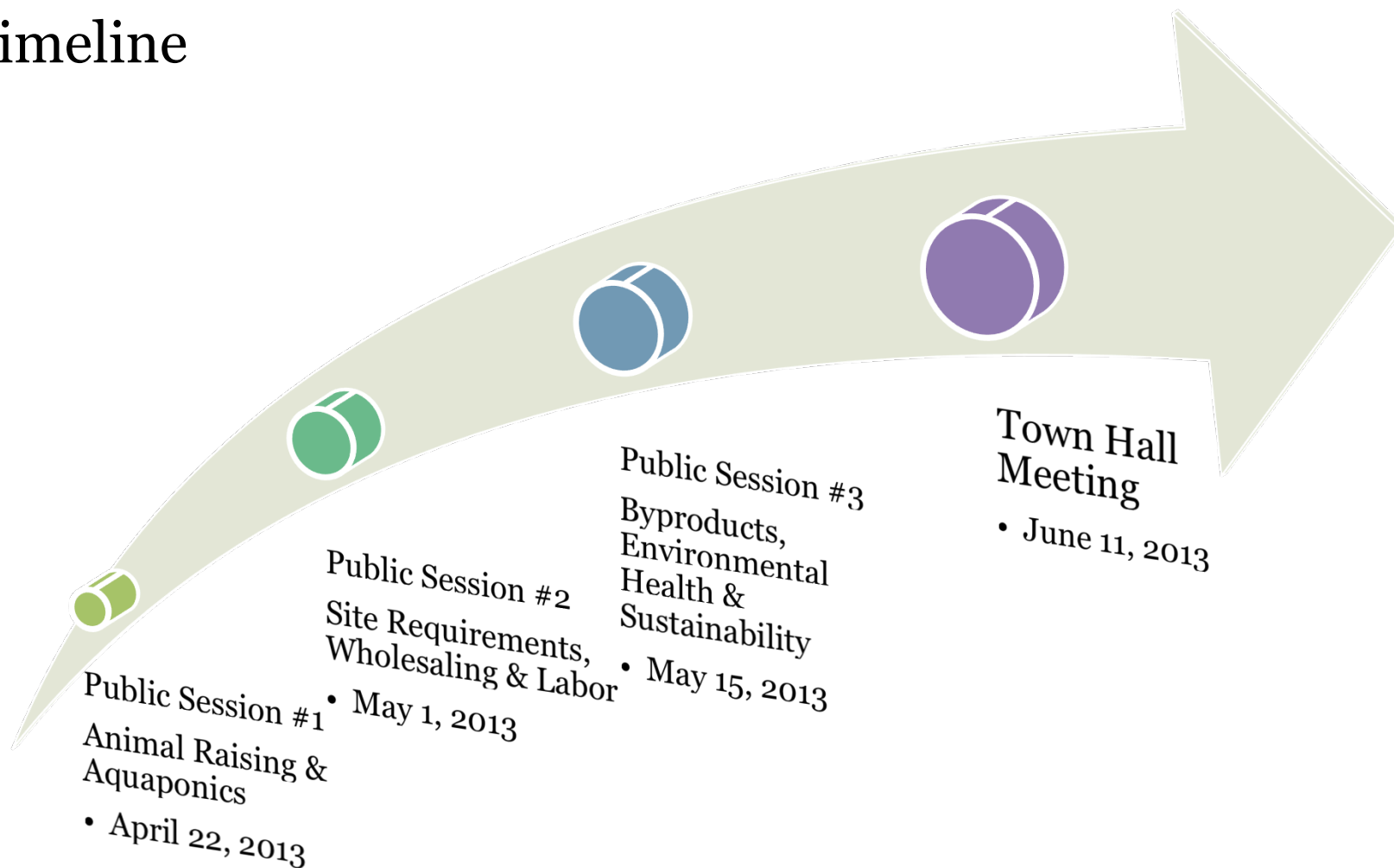
Project Overview

Public Participation for the code coordination of Urban Farms process in two phases

- **Phase 1**
 - Task 1 – Kick off meeting
 - Task 2 - Communications Tools Development
 - Task 3 – Stakeholder meetings
 - Task 4 - Public Sessions
- **Phase 2**
 - Task 6 – Update Public Information Tools
 - Task 7 - Draft of recommendations
 - Task 8 – Host a Community Town Hall Meeting
- **Phase 3**
 - **Task 9 - Present to SFPB**
 - Task 10 - Staff Review
 - Task 11 - Submit to Planning Commission
 - Task 12 - Submit to City Council



Public Process Timeline





Public Sessions Overview



Fowl

- not enough
- how do you keep # of chickens?
- limit should not be arbitrary
- 2' sq per chicken? some standard for chicken welfare
- difference between hens + roosters, not in raising chickens for laying vs slaughter.





Stickers

AQUAPONICS

WHEN TO ADDRESS?
WATER USE
SHOULD WE REGULATE TYPES OF FISH? **STATE REGULATED**

LOCATION
VOLUME? TANKS PER...
WEIGHT OF TANKS? 35'

TE REGS

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- FISH AREN'T ORGAINIC SO DEF. OF WHAT CAN BE SOLD FROM FARM NEEDS TO INCLUDE IT
- AQUAPONICS IS RAISING FISH & VEGETABLES IN A CLOSED LOOP WATER SYSTEM WITH NO WASTE
- LINGS/STRUCTURES
- TANKS
- DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS
- HOUSE
- T PRACTICES
- eried organic, but organic practices going

PRACTICES

- F... PRACTICES
- WATER CONSERVATION

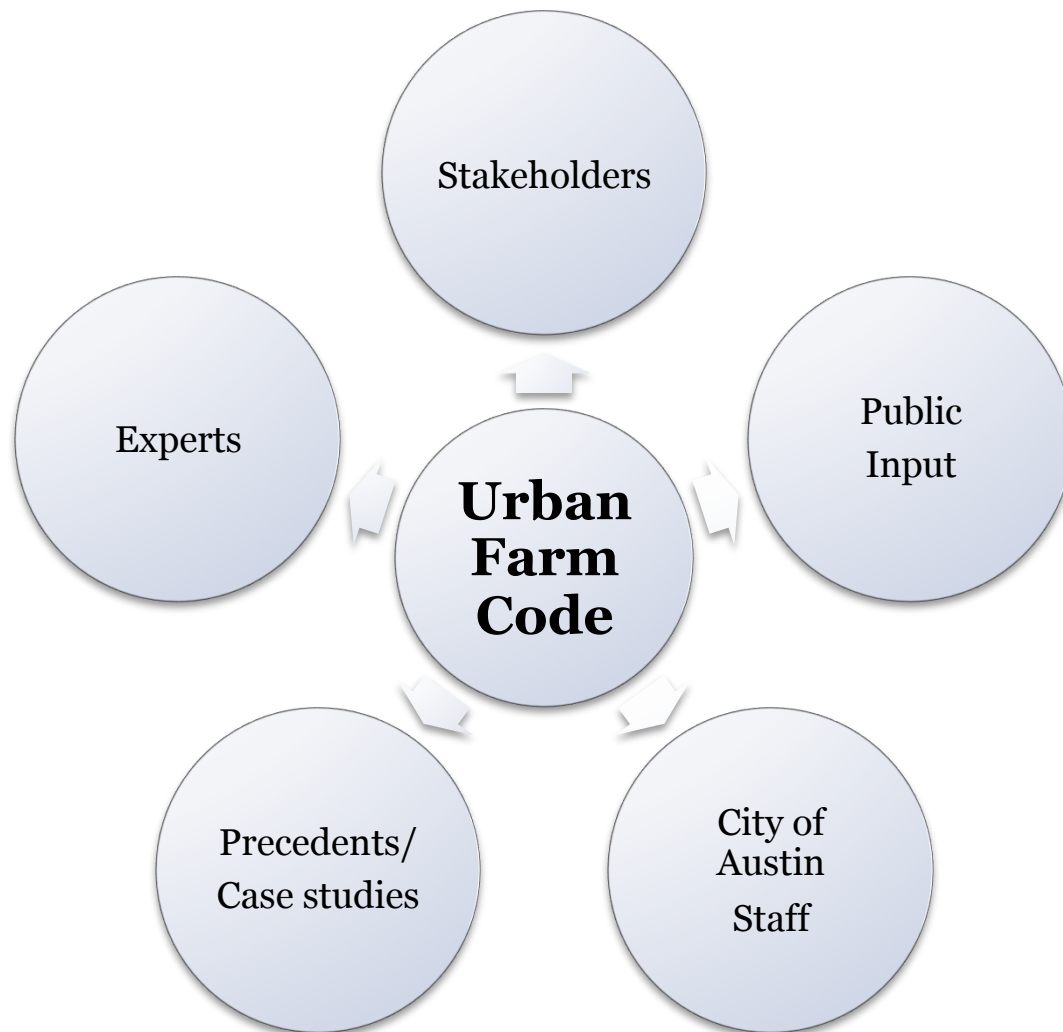








Resources





Recommendations overview

- **Creation of two new uses, for three uses total**
 - Urban farm use (existing)
 - Urban farm with livestock use (conditional in all zones)
 - Neighborhood farm use (less than one acre, permitted in all zones)
- **Topics**
 - Definitions
 - Dwellings
 - Employees
 - Environmental Protection
 - Animal Raising
 - Events
 - Sale of products

Definition

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
URBAN FARM means a parcel of land between 1 and 5 acres that is agriculturally cultivated by a person solely for the production of organic produce to be sold for profit.	URBAN FARM use is the use of a site that can consist of multiple contiguous parcels that is <u>at least one acre</u> in size cultivated primarily for the sustainable production of agricultural products to be sold for profit and may provide agricultural education activities and other special events, as permitted by section 25-2-863(3). Agricultural education activities include volunteer programs, farm tours, cooking classes, youth programs and farming classes.	SAME AS URBAN FARM, <u>EXCEPT LESS THAN ONE ACRE IN SIZE</u>

Dwellings

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
Exactly one dwelling is permitted and required for an urban farm.	The maximum number of dwellings allowed depends on the base zoning of a lot. For SF-1 and SF-2, that means one dwelling. For SF-3, that means two dwellings. A farm doesn't need a dwelling, but you cannot raise animals if there is no dwelling on site. Auxiliary structures (such as greenhouses and sheds) are allowed regardless of whether there is a home on site. The residential character of the lot and dwelling must be maintained.	SAME AS URBAN FARM

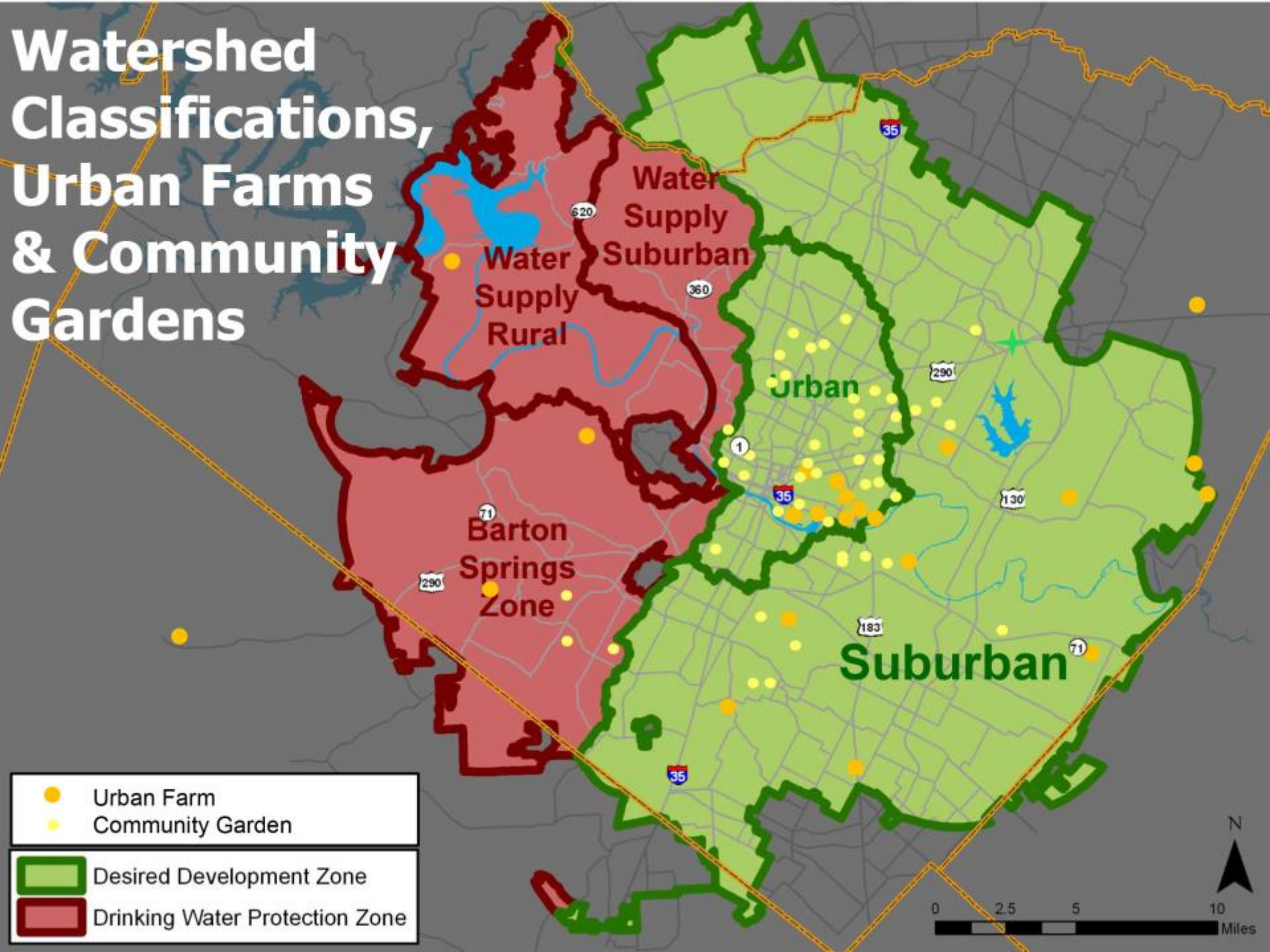
Employees

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
Urban farms can have one employee per acre and one employee for each partial acre. So, someone with 2.5 acres can have 3 employees.	If an urban farm has more than 2 paid employees per acre + 2 employees for any partial acre, the farm must provide 1 parking space per additional employee. A 2.4 acre farm could have 6 employees on site at a given time. A 1.9 acre farm could have 4 paid employees at a given time.	A neighborhood farm can have 1 paid employee working at a given time. The owners of the property are not considered employees.

Environmental Protection

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
No non-organic fertilizer may be used. If manure is used, it must be composted first. Urban farms are a conditional use in the Drinking Water Protection Zone and in the 25-year floodplain. Otherwise, they are permitted. Organic agriculture must be practiced.	No synthetic inputs may be used. Sustainable practices are required, defined by the City's Integrated Pest Management Plan. Urban Farms are allowed within the Critical Water Quality Zone (a buffer around creeks) if farm operations are located at least 25 ft from creek centerline [add'l limitations for suburban watersheds]. Within CWQZ, uses are limited to vegetable plots, fruit trees and pathways (e.g. no animal raising or processing), and no structures (dwelling, sheds, large compost piles, etc) are allowed, except of limited fencing (with WPD consent).	SAME AS URBAN FARM

Watershed Classifications, Urban Farms & Community Gardens



Animal Raising

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
An enclosure used to keep 2 or more fowl must be kept 50 feet from the nearest residential structure. Raising [and processing] fowl is permitted.	An enclosure used to keep 2-10 fowl must be kept at least 20 ft from the nearest residential structure. An enclosure to keep more than 10 fowl must be at least 40 ft from nearest residential structure. Farmers can raise, process, and compost 1 animal (fowl, rabbits, or a combo) per week per 1/10th of an acre. Farmers can raise, process, and compost fish as using aquaponics systems only. Animal composting must be at least 50 ft from the nearest residential structure that isn't yours. Animal processing must take place out of public view.	An enclosure used to keep 2-10 fowl must be kept at least 20 feet from the nearest residential structure. An enclosure to keep more than 10 fowl must be at least 40 feet from nearest residential structure. Raising of fowl, rabbits, and aquatic foods (using aquaponics systems) is permitted. On-site processing or composting of animals is not permitted. A dwelling is required for the raising of animals.

Events

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
<i>No clear restrictions within the Urban Farm Ordinance.</i>	<u>Agricultural education</u> activities are permitted and include volunteer programs, farm tours, cooking classes, youth programs and farming classes. <u>Large events (50+ attendees)</u> Large events or non-educational events that of any size that charge a fee require a Temporary Use Permit administered by Planning and Development Review. TUPs should be renewed once every 6 months. <u>Medium events (26-49 attendees)</u> Small educational or non-educational events are limited to 12 per 6-month period. <u>Small events (0-25 attendees)</u> Small educational or non-educational events are permitted.	Agricultural education activities and special events are permitted. <u>Agricultural education</u> activities include volunteer programs, farm tours, cooking classes, youth programs and farming classes. <u>Small events (0-25 attendees)</u> Small educational or non-educational events are permitted an average of once per month. <u>All other events</u> require a Temporary Use Permit administered by Planning and Development Review.

Events, cont'd

URBAN FARM EVENTS TABLE

Attendees	Educational (fee or no-fee)	Non-educational (fee)	Non-educational (no-fee)
0-25	n/a	TUP	n/a
26-49	12 per 6mo period	TUP	12 per 6mo period
50+	TUP	TUP	TUP

NEIGHBORHOOD FARM EVENTS TABLE

Attendees	Educational (fee or no-fee)	Non-educational (fee)	Non-educational (no-fee)
0-25	Avg of 1/month	Avg of 1/month	Avg 1/month
26-49	TUP	TUP	TUP
50+	TUP	TUP	TUP

Sale of Products

Current Code	Urban Farm	Neighborhood Farm
Only agricultural products raised on the property are allowed to be sold on site.	Farmers are allowed to sell any agricultural products produced on their farm or another farm that they own at their own farm stand. Products produced on someone else's farm may be sold as long as the products don't take up more than 10% of the farm stand's area and are produced in the state of Texas. <u>Agricultural Products</u> are produce, meat, fish, honey, dairy, seeds, live plants intended for food production and compost products produced by a farmer. A non-electrified sign no larger than 4 square feet is permitted.	Agricultural products raised by the farmer or produced within the state of Texas may be sold from the site or distributed off-site to buyers. On-site farm stands are not permitted. Sales must be conducted out of sight of the general public on the property, and no more than three customer-related trips per day are permitted (this requirement is in accordance with the Home Occupation ordinance of code). A non-electrified sign no larger than 4 square feet is permitted.

Next Steps Timeline

**Sustainable
Food Policy
Board**

June 24th
12:30-2:30

**City
Council**

August
8th/22nd/
29th
10:00am

**Planning
Commission**

July 23rd
6:00pm

**Adopted
Code**





Looking Ahead

- Next milestone
 - Go through approval process
- Expected deliverables:
 - **Final recommendations**
 - Full document that includes:
 - Public Session outcomes
 - History of Urban Farms in Austin
 - Appendices
- Keep up with the process
 - Recommendations will be posted on SUACG website

<http://austintexas.gov/departments/sustainable-urban-agriculture>