

# 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**

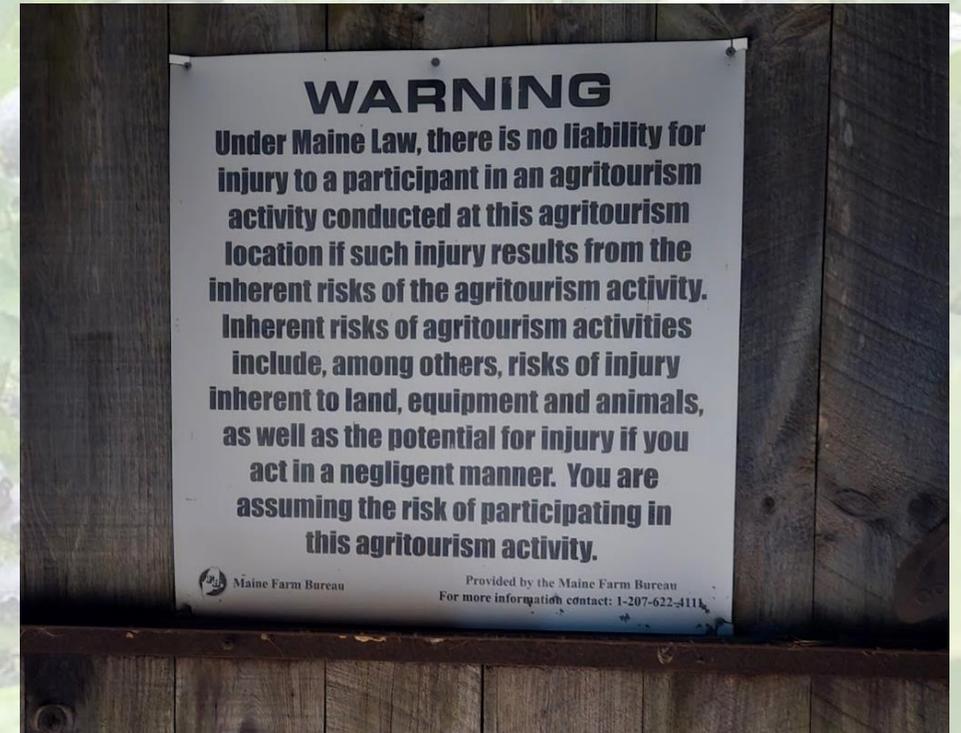
**Regional**

- 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!

