

**The Florida Senate**  
**PROFESSIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: Agriculture Committee

BILL: SB 2754

INTRODUCER: Senator Haridopolos

SUBJECT: Agritourism

DATE: March 29, 2007

REVISED: 03/29/2007

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Jones</u>	<u>Poole</u>	<u>AG</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u>CA</u>	<u></u>
3.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u>GA</u>	<u></u>
4.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
5.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
6.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

**I. Summary:**

This bill provides individuals and businesses operating in the agricultural sector access to a revenue generating enterprise known as agritourism. It allows the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to assist the various tourism related entities of Florida in the improvement of agritourism promotion in the state through the provision of marketing advice, technical expertise, promotional support, and product development related to agritourism. The efforts of improving agritourism will focus on both urban and rural communities.

The terms agritourism activity, agritourism professional, farm, and farm operation are defined for the purposes of this section. Farm operators and agritourism professionals are encouraged to engage in agritourism. The bill does not limit, restrict, or divest lands classified as “agricultural lands” pursuant to section 193.461, F.S., from that designation if agritourism activities occur on those lands. No permit, license, approval, or authorization from any governmental entity or jurisdiction is required on the part of the land owner to engage in the activity of agritourism. The bill does not affect the certification provisions regarding the Florida Farm Winery Program created under section 599.004, F.S.

This bill creates sections 570.96, 570.961, and 570.962 of the Florida Statutes.

**II. Present Situation:**

Due to rising costs and diminishing revenues, many agricultural operations have found solvency increasingly difficult to achieve. Gaining additional revenue from alternative sources such as agritourism could help alleviate some of these financial burdens. Agritourism seeks to allow the access of agricultural lands, including the intrinsic agricultural practices and culture of these

lands, to a segment of the population previously unaccustomed to such experiences. This type of tourism can include farm tours, festivals, rural businesses, historical recreations, workshops/educational activities, and harvest-your-own activities. The use of these resources can have a positive effect on both the agricultural enterprise and the surrounding community. Not only does this tourism have the potential to add value to the operations themselves, but it can also create awareness to the public about the importance of agriculture.

The practice of agritourism has met with success in other states such as California, Vermont, and Hawaii. Florida does not have an official policy regarding agritourism in place regarding any form of agricultural operation except for viticulture. Currently, Florida wineries must register with, and be certified by, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in order to be qualified as a tourist attraction.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

**Section 1** Allows the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to assist the various tourism related entities of Florida, including the Florida Commission on Tourism, convention and visitor bureaus, tourist development councils, economic development organizations, and local governments, in the improvement of agritourism promotion in the state through the provision of marketing advice, technical expertise, promotional support, and product development related to agritourism. It will require the department to focus its efforts on fostering agritourism in rural and urban communities, and regions encompassing rural communities.

Several terms are defined for the purposes of this section, including “Agritourism activity”, “Agritourism professional”, “Farm”, and “Farm operation.” The bill specifies that the conduct of agritourism activities on lands used primarily for bona fide agricultural purposes will not limit, restrict, or divest the agricultural land classification pursuant to section 193.461, F.S. A permit, license, approval, or authorization from any governmental entity or jurisdiction will not be required in order to engage in agritourism. The bill does not affect the certification provisions associated with the Florida Farm Winery Program created under section 599.004, F.S.

**Section 2** Stipulates that this act will take effect upon becoming law.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

#### B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

#### C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Indeterminate.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.



## **VIII. Summary of Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Professional Staff Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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