



Ohio Revised Code

Section 931.02 Enrollment of land in unincorporated area - application - criteria.

Effective: January 1, 2016

Legislation: House Bill 64 - 131st General Assembly

(A) Land that is located in the unincorporated area of a township or county may be enrolled in an agricultural security area through the submittal of an application to the board of township trustees of each township and to the board of county commissioners of each county in which the land is located requesting the establishment of such an area. Land that is located in a municipal corporation and land that is located in territory that is proposed to be annexed to a municipal corporation by a pending proceeding before the board of county commissioners or in any court of competent jurisdiction shall not be included in an agricultural security area.

If all of the land sought to be enrolled in the agricultural security area is owned by the same person, that person shall submit the application to the required boards. If the land sought to be enrolled consists of parcels owned by different persons who have aggregated their parcels, either each owner may submit a separate application to the required boards or all of the owners collectively may submit one application for the entire agricultural security area to the required boards.

An application shall be on the form that the director of agriculture prescribes. The director shall provide copies of the application form to county auditors.

An application shall be signed by each applicant who is submitting it and shall contain all of the following:

- (1) The first, middle, and last name of the applicant or applicants;
- (2) Information concerning any property interest in the land sought to be enrolled in an agricultural security area that is held by a person other than the applicant or applicants, including, without limitation, mineral rights or easements in the land that are held by a person other than the applicant or applicants and any other interest in the land that may not be conducive to agriculture and that is held by another person;



(3) A statement by each applicant who is submitting the application that the applicant will not initiate, approve, or finance any new development for nonagricultural purposes on the land that is proposed to be enrolled in an agricultural security area during the ten-year period of the enrollment, except as is otherwise authorized under division (A) of section 931.04 of the Revised Code. For purposes of division (A)(3) of this section, "new development" includes, without limitation, an applicant's transfer to another person of the ownership of a property interest in the land that occurs during the period beginning on the date that the application is submitted and ending on the date that the ten-year period of enrollment is scheduled to expire, except as otherwise provided in division (D) of this section. "New development" does not include taking any actions that are authorized under property rights in the land, such as mineral rights or easements, that were transferred to a person other than an applicant prior to the date that the application is submitted. In addition, "new development" does not include the construction, modification, or operation of wind energy-producing facilities, including windmills and wind turbines, the grant of easements for or the construction, modification, or operation of transmission or distribution lines for electricity, gas, or oil or of any gathering or production lines for oil or gas, or the grant of new mineral leases, or the drilling or operation of any oil or gas well on or in connection with the land, provided that such activities do not cause the land to become ineligible for valuation and assessment for real property tax purposes in accordance with its current agricultural use value under sections 5713.30 to 5713.38 of the Revised Code.

(4) A listing of all administrative enforcement orders issued to each applicant who is submitting the application, all civil actions in which an applicant was determined by the trier of fact to be liable in damages or was the subject of injunctive relief or another type of civil relief, and all criminal actions in which an applicant pleaded guilty or was convicted, during the ten years immediately preceding the date of submission of the application, in connection with any violation of environmental laws or similar laws of another state. As used in division (A)(4) of this section, "environmental laws" has the same meaning as in section 3745.70 of the Revised Code.

(5) A statement from the natural resources conservation service in the United States department of agriculture, a soil and water conservation district with jurisdiction over the land to which the application applies, or any other conservation professional approved by the director that, at the time of the application, each applicant who is submitting the application is complying with best management practices;



(6) A map that complies with all of the following:

(a) Is prepared by a regional or county planning commission established under section 713.21 of the Revised Code; a professional engineer, including a county engineer, or surveyor registered under Chapter 4733. of the Revised Code; a soil and water conservation district created pursuant to section 940.03 of the Revised Code; or the natural resources conservation service;

(b) Identifies the area of land to which the application applies and includes the corresponding parcel number that the county auditor has assigned under section 319.28 of the Revised Code to each parcel of land that comprises that area;

(c) Shows the boundaries of the land to be enrolled in an agricultural security area;

(d) Shows the names and locations of all streams, creeks, or other bodies of water, roads, rights-of-way, and railroads together with any existing residential, recreational, commercial, or industrial facilities that are situated on the land to be included in the area and within five hundred feet of the perimeter of the area. The map also shall show the location of all utility, water, and sewer lines that are situated on the land to be included in the area and within five hundred feet of the perimeter of the area unless the board of county commissioners of each county and the board of township trustees of each township in which the land is located exempts the application from that requirement because the information generally is not readily available.

(e) Indicates the date on which the map was prepared;

(f) Identifies the person or persons who prepared the map.

(7) A list of the other boards of township trustees and boards of county commissioners to whom an application has been submitted.

An application submitted under this section is a public record.

A board of township trustees and a board of county commissioners each may establish a reasonable



fee or schedule of fees to be paid at the time that an application is submitted for the purpose of paying the costs of public notice and certified mail that are incurred in any proceedings conducted under this chapter. The clerk of the board shall maintain an accurate and detailed accounting of all money that is received and expended in the processing of an application and shall return to the applicant any unused portion of the fee or fees after the conclusion of the proceedings.

(B) An area shall be established as an agricultural security area when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

(1) The area consists of not less than five hundred acres of contiguous farmland that is located in the unincorporated area of a township or county. In order to satisfy this requirement, two or more owners of contiguous farmland may aggregate their land.

(2) The land forming the area is in an agricultural district or districts established under Chapter 929. of the Revised Code.

(3) The land forming the area is valued and assessed for real property tax purposes in accordance with its current agricultural use value under sections 5713.30 to 5713.38 of the Revised Code. Land forming the area that is a portion of a farm on which is located a dwelling house, a yard, or outbuildings such as a barn or garage shall be deemed to satisfy the criteria established in divisions (B)(1) and (3) of this section.

(4) Each application submitted by the owner or owners of the land forming the area is approved under section 931.03 of the Revised Code by the boards of township trustees of all of the townships in which the land is located.

(5) Each application submitted by the owner or owners of the land forming the area is approved under section 931.03 of the Revised Code by the boards of county commissioners of all of the counties in which the land is located.

(C) Additional contiguous farmland may be enrolled in an existing agricultural security area during a partially elapsed ten-year enrollment period either by a landowner who already has land enrolled in the agricultural security area or by a landowner who does not already have land enrolled in the



agricultural security area. To enroll additional contiguous land in an existing agricultural security area under this division, a landowner shall obtain permission from each owner of land that already is enrolled in the agricultural security area, submit an application in accordance with this section, and obtain approval of the application from all appropriate boards of township trustees and boards of county commissioners in accordance with section 931.03 of the Revised Code. Enrollment of the additional land in the existing agricultural security area shall continue until the expiration of the current, partially elapsed ten-year enrollment period and may be renewed in accordance with section 931.06 of the Revised Code.

(D) If an owner of land that is enrolled in an agricultural security area transfers the land to another person during a partially elapsed ten-year enrollment period, the land may remain in the agricultural security area until the expiration of that period, provided that both of the following apply:

(1) The transferee certifies and submits a statement, together with the transferee's first, middle, and last name and a description of the transferred land, to the appropriate boards of township trustees and boards of county commissioners specifying that, in accordance with division (A)(3) of this section, the transferee will not initiate, approve, or finance any new development for nonagricultural purposes on the transferred land during the remainder of the partially elapsed ten-year enrollment period. Upon receipt of the statement, the boards of township trustees and boards of county commissioners shall adopt a resolution acknowledging the receipt.

(2) The transferred land continues to satisfy the criteria established in divisions (B)(2) and (3) of this section during the remainder of the partially elapsed ten-year enrollment period.

Divisions (A), (B), and (C) of section 931.03 of the Revised Code do not apply to the continued inclusion of such transferred land in an agricultural security area. Upon the expiration of the partially elapsed ten-year enrollment period, enrollment in the agricultural security area may be renewed in accordance with section 931.06 of the Revised Code.