

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE TEXT OF SEC. 206-1 (W-P WATERSHED PROTECTION DISTRICT) OF THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF ROCKDALE COUNTY, AS AMENDED, REGARDING ORGANIC FARMING; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING LAWS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, Title 2 the Unified Development Ordinance of Rockdale County (Subpart B – Planning and Development of The Code of Rockdale County, Georgia), as amended, governs land use and zoning; and

WHEREAS, provisions within the Unified Development Ordinance do not address organic farming, thus require revision in order to create standardized regulations and criteria governing organic farming so as to strengthen the health, safety, climate, and welfare;

WHEREAS, Rockdale County desires to increase access to healthy, local and affordable foods; encourage community-building and support local agriculture and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the northern area of Rockdale County with its large undeveloped area provides an opportunity for producers of locally grown and raised food to directly reach residents without requiring that such products be sold in fixed location storefronts; and

WHEREAS, if locations where local food producers are allowed to sell directly to residents are permitted in locations that are zoned watershed-non reservoir area, close regulation of the use would be necessary to prevent the sale of other types of goods that could change the character of the use into a type of commercial venture that is inappropriate for the W-P watershed protection zoning district; and

WHEREAS, public hearings were held following public notice and all other requirements of Sec. 238-4 of the Unified Development Ordinance;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Rockdale County, Georgia, and it is hereby ordained by the authority of same as follows:

Section I

That Sec. 206-1 entitled “W-P watershed protection district” subsection (b) entitled “Definitions” is hereby amended by enacting the following:

Organic Farming: Any primary use of a tract or parcel of land for the purpose of growing and harvesting, farming or any other use which contributes to the production of agricultural, floricultural or horticultural products for the purpose of beautification, education, outreach, agri-tourism, on-site sale or off-site-sales. All farming shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the USDA organic standards, codified in 7 CFR Part 205, Subpart C, including avoiding the use of prohibited pesticides, fertilizers, and/ or synthetic substances. USDA organic certification pursuant to 7 CFR Part 205, Subpart E is not required. In order to secure its annual business license from the County, the operator shall produce documentation evidencing farming practices for the preceding year consistent with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) organic standards, codified in 7 CFR Part 205, Subpart C. Greenhouses, hoop houses, trellises, raised beds, tool sheds, farm stands, and any other accessory structure used in the operation of an organic farm are permitted in the W-NR subzone. All structures, buildings or enclosed areas used for the operation shall be a minimum of 100 feet from all property lines. Equipment producing noise or sound in excess of 70 decibels shall be located no closer than 100 feet from the nearest residential structure.

Agri-tourism: An agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm for purposes of direct to consumer sales, agricultural education, hospitality, recreation or entertainment in order to generate supplemental income for the farmer.

Section II

That Sec. 206-1 entitled "W-P watershed protection district" subsection (e) entitled "Permitted uses" is hereby amended by enacting the following:

Table of Permitted Uses					
Specified Use	W-NR	W-RW	W-RR	W-RB	W-RP
Organic Farming	P				

Section III

If any conflicts occur between the terms of this amendment and the terms of any other section or ordinance of the Rockdale County Code of Ordinances, this amendment shall prevail.

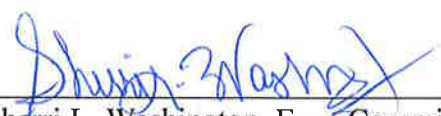
EFFECTIVE DATE: This Ordinance shall become effective as of the date hereof.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED THIS 9th **DAY OF** February, 2021.

**ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**



Oz Nesbitt, Sr., Chairman



Sherri L. Washington, Esq., Commissioner Post I



Dr. Doreen Williams, Commissioner Post II

Attest:

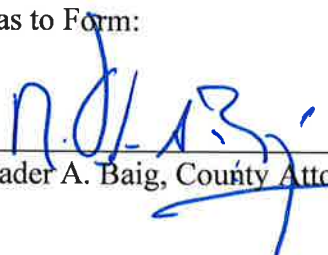
By: 

Jennifer Rutledge, County Clerk

Ordinance No. _____
TEXT Case No. 2021-04

Approved as to Form:

By: _____


M. Qader A. Baig, County Attorney

First Reading: December 8, 2020

Second Reading: February 9, 2021