

193.461 Agricultural lands; classification and assessment; mandated eradication or quarantine program.—

(1) The property appraiser shall, on an annual basis, classify for assessment purposes all lands within the county as either agricultural or nonagricultural.

(2) Any landowner whose land is denied agricultural classification by the property appraiser may appeal to the value adjustment board. The property appraiser shall notify the landowner in writing of the denial of agricultural classification on or before July 1 of the year for which the application was filed. The notification shall advise the landowner of his or her right to appeal to the value adjustment board and of the filing deadline. The board may also review all lands classified by the property appraiser upon its own motion. The property appraiser shall have available at his or her office a list by ownership of all applications received showing the acreage, the full valuation under s. 193.011, the valuation of the land under the provisions of this section, and whether or not the classification requested was granted.

(3)(a) No lands shall be classified as agricultural lands unless a return is filed on or before March 1 of each year. The property appraiser, before so classifying such lands, may require the taxpayer or the taxpayer's representative to furnish the property appraiser such information as may reasonably be required to establish that such lands were actually used for a bona fide agricultural purpose. Failure to make timely application by March 1 shall constitute a waiver for 1 year of the privilege herein granted for agricultural assessment. However, an applicant who is qualified to receive an agricultural classification who fails to file an application by March 1 may file an application for the classification and may file, pursuant to s. 194.011(3), a petition with the value adjustment board requesting that the classification be granted. The petition may be filed at any time during the taxable year on or before the 25th day following the mailing of the notice by the property appraiser as provided in s. 194.011(1). Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 194.013, the applicant must pay a nonrefundable fee of \$15 upon filing the petition. Upon reviewing the petition, if the person is qualified to receive the classification and demonstrates particular extenuating circumstances judged by the property appraiser or the value adjustment board to warrant granting the classification, the property appraiser or the value adjustment board may grant the classification. The owner of land that was classified agricultural in the previous year and whose ownership or use has not changed may reapply on a short form as provided by the department. The lessee of property may make original application or reapply using the short form if the lease, or an affidavit executed by the owner, provides that the lessee is empowered to make application for the agricultural classification on behalf of the owner and a copy of the lease or affidavit accompanies the application. A county may, at the request of the property appraiser and by a majority vote of its governing body, waive the requirement that an annual application or statement be made for classification of property within the county after an initial application is made and the classification

granted by the property appraiser. Such waiver may be revoked by a majority vote of the governing body of the county.

(b) Subject to the restrictions specified in this section, only lands that are used primarily for bona fide agricultural purposes shall be classified agricultural. The term “bona fide agricultural purposes” means good faith commercial agricultural use of the land.

1. In determining whether the use of the land for agricultural purposes is bona fide, the following factors may be taken into consideration:

- a. The length of time the land has been so used.
- b. Whether the use has been continuous.
- c. The purchase price paid.
- d. Size, as it relates to specific agricultural use, but a minimum acreage may not be required for agricultural assessment.
- e. Whether an indicated effort has been made to care sufficiently and adequately for the land in accordance with accepted commercial agricultural practices, including, without limitation, fertilizing, liming, tilling, mowing, reforestation, and other accepted agricultural practices.

f. Whether the land is under lease and, if so, the effective length, terms, and conditions of the lease.

g. Such other factors as may become applicable.

2. Offering property for sale does not constitute a primary use of land and may not be the basis for denying an agricultural classification if the land continues to be used primarily for bona fide agricultural purposes while it is being offered for sale.

(c) The maintenance of a dwelling on part of the lands used for agricultural purposes shall not in itself preclude an agricultural classification.

(d) When property receiving an agricultural classification contains a residence under the same ownership, the portion of the property consisting of the residence and curtilage must be assessed separately, pursuant to s. 193.011, to qualify for the assessment limitation set forth in s. 193.155. The remaining property may be classified under the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b).

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a), land that has received an agricultural classification from the value adjustment board or a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to this section is entitled to receive such classification in any subsequent year until such agricultural use of the land is abandoned or discontinued, the land is diverted to a nonagricultural use, or the land is reclassified as nonagricultural pursuant to subsection (4). The property appraiser must, no later than January 31 of each year, provide notice to the owner of land that was classified agricultural in the previous year informing the owner of the requirements of this paragraph and requiring the owner to certify that neither the ownership nor the use of the land has changed. The department shall, by administrative rule, prescribe the form of the notice to be used by the property appraiser under this

paragraph. If a county has waived the requirement that an annual application or statement be made for classification of property pursuant to paragraph (a), the county may, by a majority vote of its governing body, waive the notice and certification requirements of this paragraph and shall provide the property owner with the same notification provided to owners of land granted an agricultural classification by the property appraiser. Such waiver may be revoked by a majority vote of the county's governing body. This paragraph does not apply to any property if the agricultural classification of that property is the subject of current litigation.

(4)(a) The property appraiser shall reclassify the following lands as nonagricultural:

1. Land diverted from an agricultural to a nonagricultural use.
2. Land no longer being utilized for agricultural purposes.
3. Land that has been zoned to a nonagricultural use at the request of the owner subsequent to the enactment of this law.

(b) The board of county commissioners may also reclassify lands classified as agricultural to nonagricultural when there is contiguous urban or metropolitan development and the board of county commissioners finds that the continued use of such lands for agricultural purposes will act as a deterrent to the timely and orderly expansion of the community.

(c) Sale of land for a purchase price which is three or more times the agricultural assessment placed on the land shall create a presumption that such land is not used primarily for bona fide agricultural purposes. Upon a showing of special circumstances by the landowner demonstrating that the land is to be continued in bona fide agriculture, this presumption may be rebutted.

(5) For the purpose of this section, "agricultural purposes" includes, but is not limited to, horticulture; floriculture; viticulture; forestry; dairy; livestock; poultry; bee; pisciculture, when the land is used principally for the production of tropical fish; aquaculture; sod farming; and all forms of farm products as defined in s. 823.14(3) and farm production.

(6)(a) In years in which proper application for agricultural assessment has been made and granted pursuant to this section, the assessment of land shall be based solely on its agricultural use. The property appraiser shall consider the following use factors only:

1. The quantity and size of the property;
2. The condition of the property;
3. The present market value of the property as agricultural land;
4. The income produced by the property;
5. The productivity of land in its present use;
6. The economic merchantability of the agricultural product; and
7. Such other agricultural factors as may from time to time become applicable, which are reflective of the standard present practices of agricultural use and production.

(b) Notwithstanding any provision relating to annual assessment found in s. 192.042, the property appraiser shall rely on 5-year moving average data when utilizing the income methodology approach in an assessment of property used for agricultural purposes.

(c)1. For purposes of the income methodology approach to assessment of property used for agricultural purposes, irrigation systems, including pumps and motors, physically attached to the land shall be considered a part of the average yields per acre and shall have no separately assessable contributory value.

2. Litter containment structures located on producing poultry farms and animal waste nutrient containment structures located on producing dairy farms shall be assessed by the methodology described in subparagraph 1.

3. Structures or improvements used in horticultural production for frost or freeze protection, which structures or improvements are consistent with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' interim measures or best management practices adopted pursuant to s. 570.085 or s. 403.067(7)(c), shall be assessed by the methodology described in subparagraph 1.

(d) In years in which proper application for agricultural assessment has not been made, the land shall be assessed under the provisions of s. 193.011.

(7) Lands classified for assessment purposes as agricultural lands which are taken out of production by any state or federal eradication or quarantine program shall continue to be classified as agricultural lands for the duration of such program or successor programs. Lands under these programs which are converted to fallow, or otherwise nonincome-producing uses shall continue to be classified as agricultural lands and shall be assessed at a de minimis value of no more than \$50 per acre, on a single year assessment methodology; however, lands converted to other income-producing agricultural uses permissible under such programs shall be assessed pursuant to this section. Land under a mandated eradication or quarantine program which is diverted from an agricultural to a nonagricultural use shall be assessed under s. 193.011.

History.—s. 1, ch. 59-226; s. 1, ch. 67-117; ss. 1, 2, ch. 69-55; s. 1, ch. 72-181; s. 4, ch. 74-234; s. 3, ch. 76-133; s. 15, ch. 82-208; ss. 10, 80, ch. 82-226; s. 1, ch. 85-77; s. 3, ch. 86-300; s. 23, ch. 90-217; ss. 132, 142, ch. 91-112; s. 63, ch. 94-353; s. 1468, ch. 95-147; s. 1, ch. 95-404; s. 1, ch. 98-313; s. 1, ch. 99-351; s. 3, ch. 2000-308; s. 4, ch. 2001-279; s. 15, ch. 2002-18; s. 2, ch. 2003-162; s. 43, ch. 2003-254; s. 1, ch. 2006-45; s. 2, ch. 2008-197; ss. 1, 11, ch. 2010-277; HJR 5-A, 2010 Special Session A; s. 2, ch. 2011-206; s. 15, ch. 2012-83.