



Development Services

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Matthew Taylor, AICP, Planning Manager
FOR: Christine McLachlan, AICP, Director
SUBJECT: SU25-28 (Fawn Ranch Road Agricultural Processing Setback)
DATE: November 12, 2025

Docket SU25-28 (Fawn Ranch Road Agricultural Processing Setback)

A Special Use Authorization request to allow agricultural processing with less than a 300' minimum setback.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES

Applicant: Joseph Monks
Location: 3465 E. Fawn Ranch Road (Pearce)
APN: 114-01-073
Property Size: 40 acres
Zoning: RU-4
Plan Designation: Rural
Growth Area: D – Rural Areas
Existing Use: Vineyard, Farm Winery
Proposed Use: Vineyard, Farm Winery

Surrounding Zoning and Uses

North	RU-4	Single Family Residences
South	RU-4	Single Family Residences
East	RU-4	Single Family Residences
West	RU-4	Single Family Residences

II. SITE HISTORY

- 2023-2025: shed/garage (CP23-000170); well and electric (CP24-000005) agriculture exemption for vineyard (AE24-01); multi-use building with dwelling (BP25-000418); septic system (SEP24-000167).
- 2025: Board of Supervisor approval of Series 013 Farm Winery liquor license (Saint Isidore Vineyards).

III. SPECIAL USE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

A Special Use Authorization request to allow agricultural processing with less than a 300' minimum setback.

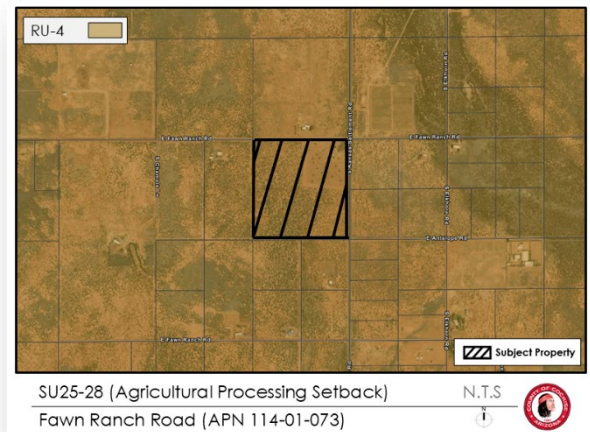
IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS – COMPLIANCE WITH SPECIAL USE FACTORS

Section 2.48.160 of the Zoning Regulations identifies ten (10) factors to evaluate Special Use applications. These factors determine the suitability of a special use request, whether to recommend approval, and to determine if conditions and/or modifications are needed to mitigate potentially negative impacts on surrounding properties.

With the information provided, nine (9) factors apply to this special use request with all applicable factors complying with conditions:

1. Compliance with Duly Adopted Plans: Complies

The subject property is designated “Rural” by the Comprehensive Plan and falls within Growth Area D (Rural Areas). Existing RU-4 zoning is consistent with the existing rural land use designation and non-residential uses may be appropriate in rural districts if they are in character with existing development and/or provide a service that can be utilized by area residents. Viticulture is an increasingly popular agricultural venture in northcentral Cochise County, diversifying the county’s economic profile through commodity production and tourism.



2. Compliance with the Zoning District Purpose: Complies

Rural districts allow non-residential activities that provide services serving local needs, recreational support services, and are generally compatible with rural living. These zoning districts, which range in site area from 2 acres to 36 acres, allow residential and non-residential uses compatible with an area’s rural character. The applicant is not requesting special use for any specific existing or proposed agricultural use – Section 2.15.070 of the Zoning Regulations requires special use approval for agricultural processing activities that do not meet a minimum 300’ setback. Agricultural – Processing is defined by the zoning regulations as:

A facility that packages, sorts, or grades livestock or livestock products, agricultural commodities, or plants or plant products into goods for intermediate or final consumption, including goods for nonfood use. Agricultural processing services do not include slaughterhouses/meat packing plants, commercial feedlots, bone yards, or facilities for reducing animal matter.

The applicant intends to have winery/distillery activities within existing buildings that do not meet a minimum 300’ setback within property lines. The zoning regulations allow these activities, including a tasting rooms and incidental retail sales of wine and related products on the same site as vineyards and farm wineries.

3. Development Along Major Streets: Complies

The property is located at the intersection of Kansas Settlement and Fawn Ranch Roads, taking access from Fawn Ranch which is an unimproved road outside of county maintenance. Direct access to Kansas Settlement, a Rural Major Collector, would be subject to county review through the right-of-way (ROW) permitting process and would require a hard-surface apron. This is not proposed by the applicant. The intent of this factor is to consider limiting the number of access points on major thoroughfares, arterials, or collectors by using frontage roads, shared access, and no access easements. Incorporating such measures promotes fewer road cuts to avoid potentially unsafe traffic conflicts, hazardous traffic congestion, and roadway obstruction caused by traffic.

4. Traffic Circulation: Complies

This Special Use Authorization factor stipulates:

1. The request is consistent with the preservation of the functions of surrounding streets as defined in the County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The request does not result in the use of any residential street for non-residential traffic.
3. Consideration of future circulation needs in the surrounding area has been considered through right-of-way dedication and off-site improvements if warranted.

The property takes access from Fawn Ranch Road which is outside of county maintenance. The location of the property limits traffic impacts on other Fawn Ranch properties since the applicant’s property is located at the hard corner of Fawn Ranch and Kansas Settlement. Vehicular traffic would not impact other residential properties along Fawn Ranch and is unlikely to require off-site impacts.

5. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The site is served by private well and septic, falling within Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative’s (SSVEC) service area. The applicant has obtained multiple building permits to develop the site as shown on the site plan.

6. Significant Site Development Standards: Complies

Future site development, whether residential or non-residential, must comply with applicable standards identified in the Zoning Regulations, notably Section 2.15 (*Rural Zoning Districts*), and include development standards such as setbacks, height, distances between structures, and maximum lot coverage.

7. Public Input: Complies

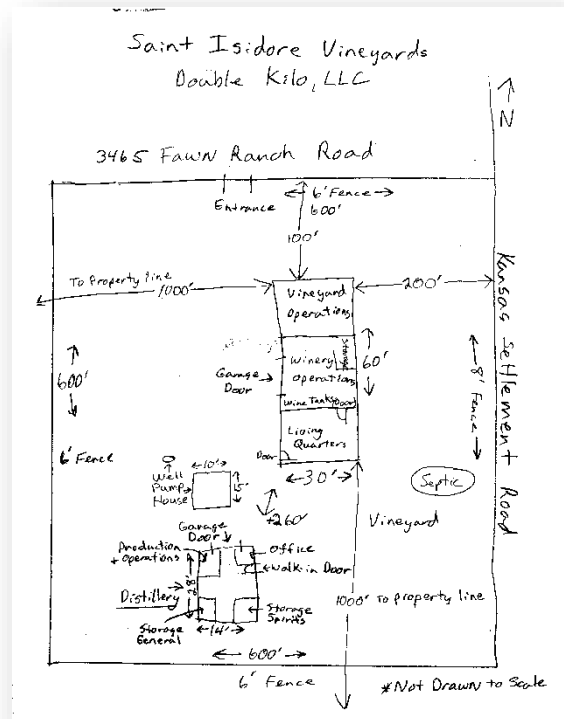
Section 2.48.160 of the Zoning Regulations states, “If public concerns have been raised, it is fair to ask if the applicant has made a reasonable effort to address these concerns through the Citizen Review Process.” The applicant mailed notices to property owners within 1,000’ on September 22, 2025, receiving two email responses in support of the farm winery.

8. Hazardous Materials: Not Applicable

Hazardous materials are not proposed for this special use.

9. Off-Site Impacts: Complies

This factor is intended to ensure adequate measures have been taken to mitigate off-site impacts such as noise, outdoor lighting, odors, smoke, traffic, and dust:



- Noise: Once vineyards are established, off-site impacts due to noise are minimal. Per the applicant submittal, loud equipment is not used and agricultural processing operations will occur within an existing building.
- Lighting: Outdoor lighting is subject to Section 2.45 of the Zoning Regulations relative to brightness and shielding.
- Odors and Smoke: Given the nature of the use, off-site impacts due to odors or smoke are unlikely.
- Parking: Two-inch gravel shall be applied to driveways and parking areas as needed to reduce dust and erosion when the tasting room becomes operational.
- Landscaping: Growth Area D does not require landscaping.
- Traffic: Current traffic is limited to the applicant which will increase when the winery becomes operational with supplemental tasting room and retail uses. Traffic impacts are unlikely to require off-site improvements given the limited size of future operations which may be subject to county review if they exceed allowances under the current agricultural exemption.

10. Water Conservation: Not Applicable

County water conservation requirements apply to non-residential uses and properties. Section 2.51.170 of the zoning regulations requires water saving strategies and applicable water conservation regulations and policies identified in the zoning regulations and comprehensive plan are typically identified at permitting. The site has an existing well (2023) and the applicant estimates about 1,000 gallons of annual water use to support current agricultural uses.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff mailed notices to property owners within 1000', published legal notice, and posted the property October 10-15, 2025.

VI. WAIVERS

None.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The applicant has an approved agricultural exemption from the county and requests agricultural processing activities with less than a 300' minimum setback within existing buildings. The Zoning Regulations require a minimum 300' setback for both animal and non-animal related processing, identifying the special use process as the remedy to allow a reduced distance. The property has an established vineyard and the applicant proposes a future tasting room and sales are within an existing 1,800 square foot building. Setback deficiencies were identified by the county when reviewing the applicant's request for a Series 013 farm winery license which was approved by the Board of Supervisors on October 21, 2025.



Factors in Favor of Approval

1. Complies with applicable factors.
2. No opposition from nearby property owners.

Factors Against Approval

None identified.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the factors in favor of approval, staff recommends approval of Docket SU25-28 to allow agricultural processing with less than a 300' minimum setback with the following conditions:

1. Agricultural processing activities exempt from minimum setbacks are limited to farm winery/distillery operations. Production wineries/distilleries and animal-related processing are not exempt.
2. Within 30-days of approval of the Special Use, the applicant shall provide the County a signed Acceptance of Conditions form and a Waiver of Claims form arising from ARS Section 12-1134. Prior to operation of the Special Use, the applicant shall apply for a building/use permit for the project within 12-months of approval. The building/use permit shall include a site plan in substantial conformance with the approved special use concept plan, the completed Special Use permit questionnaire and application, and appropriate fees. A permit must be issued within 12-months of the Special Use approval otherwise, the Special Use may be deemed void upon 30-day notification to the applicant.
3. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain any additional permits, or meet any additional Conditions, that may apply to the proposed use pursuant to other federal, state, or local laws or regulations.
4. Any changes to the approved Special Use will be considered a Modification to this Special Use and will require review and approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Sample Motion

I move to approve Docket SU25-28 with conditions recommended by staff, the factors in favor of approval constituting the findings of fact.
