

**Senator Scott D. Sandall** proposes the following substitute bill:

**AGRICULTURAL NUISANCE AMENDMENTS**

2019 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall**

House Sponsor: Joel Ferry

---

---

**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill addresses nuisances.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ addresses agricultural operations areas;
- ▶ enacts the Agricultural Operations Nuisances Act, including:
  - defining terms;
  - addressing nuisance actions; and
  - providing for the relationship with other statutes;
- ▶ repeals redundant language; and
- ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**17-41-403**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2009, Chapter 376



26 23-28-303, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2009, Chapter 273  
27 76-10-803, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2009, Chapter 21  
28 78B-6-1101, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2010, Chapter 193

29 ENACTS:

30 4-44-101, Utah Code Annotated 1953  
31 4-44-102, Utah Code Annotated 1953  
32 4-44-201, Utah Code Annotated 1953  
33 4-44-202, Utah Code Annotated 1953

34 REPEALS:

35 78B-6-1104, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2009, Chapter 21



37 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

38 Section 1. Section 4-44-101 is enacted to read:

39 **CHAPTER 44. AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS NUISANCES ACT**

40 **Part 1. General Provisions**

41 **4-44-101. Title.**

42 This chapter is known as "Agricultural Operations Nuisances Act."

43 Section 2. Section 4-44-102 is enacted to read:

44 **4-44-102. Definitions.**

45 As used in this chapter:

46 (1) (a) "Agricultural operation" means an activity engaged in the production for  
47 commercial purposes of crops, orchards, livestock, poultry, aquaculture, livestock products, or  
48 poultry products and the facilities, equipment, and property used to facilitate the activity.

49 (b) "Agricultural operation" includes an agricultural protection area established under  
50 Title 17, Chapter 41, Agriculture and Industrial Protection Areas.

51 (2) "Fundamental change to the operation" does not include:

- 52 (a) a change in ownership or size;
- 53 (b) an interruption of farming for a period of no more than three years;
- 54 (c) participation in a government-sponsored agricultural program;
- 55 (d) employment of new technology; or
- 56 (e) a change in the type of agricultural product produced.

57 (3) "Nuisance" means anything that is injurious to health, indecent, offensive to the  
58 senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable  
59 enjoyment of life or property.

60 Section 3. Section **4-44-201** is enacted to read:

61 **Part 2. Nuisance Actions**

62 **4-44-201. Defenses in nuisance actions.**

63 (1) It is a defense in a civil action for nuisance against an agricultural operation that:

64 (a) the plaintiff is not a legal possessor of the real property affected by the conditions  
65 alleged to be the nuisance;

66 (b) the real property affected by the conditions alleged to be the nuisance is located  
67 outside one-half mile of the source of the activity or structure alleged to be the nuisance; or

68 (c) the action is filed more than one year after:

69 (i) the establishment of the agricultural operation; or

70 (ii) the agricultural operation undergoes a fundamental change.

71 (2) This section may not be construed to invalidate any contract made before May 14,  
72 2019.

73 (3) In a nuisance action against an agricultural operation, the court shall award costs  
74 and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, to:

75 (a) the agricultural operation when the court finds the agricultural operation is not a  
76 nuisance and the nuisance action is frivolous or malicious; or

77 (b) the plaintiff when the court finds the agricultural operation is a nuisance and the  
78 agricultural operation asserts an affirmative defense in the nuisance action that is frivolous and  
79 malicious.

80 (4) A person who knowingly violates a judgment or order abating or otherwise  
81 enjoining a nuisance is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

82 Section 4. Section **4-44-202** is enacted to read:

83 **4-44-202. Application of other statutes -- Ordinances.**

84 (1) (a) In a civil action for nuisance or a criminal action for public nuisance under  
85 Section [76-10-803](#), it is a defense if the action involves agricultural operations and those  
86 agricultural operations are conducted in the normal and ordinary course of agricultural  
87 operations or conducted in accordance with sound agricultural practices.

88 (b) Agricultural operations undertaken in conformity with federal, state, and local laws  
89 and regulations, including zoning ordinances, are presumed to be operating within sound  
90 agricultural practices.

91 (2) If the agricultural operations occur in an agricultural protection area, as defined in  
92 Section 17-41-101, Section 17-41-403 governs the action for nuisance.

93 (3) (a) An ordinance of a political subdivision that would make the operation of an  
94 agricultural operation or appurtenances to an agricultural operation a nuisance or that provide  
95 for abatement of the agricultural operation as a nuisance does not apply to an agricultural  
96 operation that is conducted in the normal and ordinary course of agricultural operations or  
97 conducted in accordance with sound agricultural practices.

98 (b) An agricultural operation undertaken in conformity with federal, state, and local  
99 laws and regulations, including zoning ordinances, are presumed to be operating within sound  
100 agricultural practices.

101 Section 5. Section **17-41-403** is amended to read:

102 **17-41-403. Nuisances.**

103 (1) Each political subdivision shall ensure that any of its laws or ordinances that define  
104 or prohibit a public nuisance exclude from the definition or prohibition:

105 (a) for an agriculture protection area, any agricultural activity or operation within an  
106 agriculture protection area conducted using sound agricultural practices unless that activity or  
107 operation bears a direct relationship to public health or safety; or

108 (b) for an industrial protection area, any industrial use of the land within the industrial  
109 protection area that is consistent with sound practices applicable to the industrial use, unless  
110 that use bears a direct relationship to public health or safety.

111 (2) In a civil action for nuisance or a criminal action for public nuisance under Section  
112 76-10-803, it is a complete defense if the action involves agricultural activities and:

113 (a) those agricultural activities were:

114 ~~(a)~~ (i) conducted within an agriculture protection area; and

115 ~~(b)~~ (ii) not in violation of any federal, state, or local law or regulation relating to the  
116 alleged nuisance or were conducted according to sound agricultural practices~~[-];~~ or

117 (b) a defense under Section 4-44-201 applies.

118 (3) (a) A vested mining use undertaken in conformity with applicable federal and state

119 law and regulations is presumed to be operating within sound mining practices.

120 (b) A vested mining use that is consistent with sound mining practices:

121 (i) is presumed to be reasonable; and

122 (ii) may not constitute a private or public nuisance under Section 76-10-803.

123 (c) A vested mining use in operation for more than three years may not be considered  
124 to have become a private or public nuisance because of a subsequent change in the condition of  
125 land within the vicinity of the vested mining use.

126 (4) (a) For any new subdivision development located in whole or in part within 300  
127 feet of the boundary of an agriculture protection area, the owner of the development shall  
128 provide notice on any plat filed with the county recorder the following notice:

129 "Agriculture Protection Area

130 This property is located in the vicinity of an established agriculture protection area in  
131 which normal agricultural uses and activities have been afforded the highest priority use  
132 status. It can be anticipated that such agricultural uses and activities may now or in the  
133 future be conducted on property included in the agriculture protection area. The use  
134 and enjoyment of this property is expressly conditioned on acceptance of any  
135 annoyance or inconvenience which may result from such normal agricultural uses and  
136 activities."

137 (b) For any new subdivision development located in whole or in part within 1,000 feet  
138 of the boundary of an industrial protection area, the owner of the development shall provide  
139 notice on any plat filed with the county recorder the following notice:

140 "Industrial Protection Area

141 This property is located in the vicinity of an established industrial protection area in  
142 which normal industrial uses and activities have been afforded the highest priority use  
143 status. It can be anticipated that such industrial uses and activities may now or in the  
144 future be conducted on property included in the industrial protection area. The use and  
145 enjoyment of this property is expressly conditioned on acceptance of any annoyance or  
146 inconvenience which may result from such normal industrial uses and activities."

147 (c) For any new subdivision development located in whole or in part within 1,000 feet  
148 of the boundary of a mining protection area, the owner of the development shall provide notice  
149 on any plat filed with the county recorder the following notice:

150 "This property is located within the vicinity of an established mining protection area in  
151 which normal mining uses and activities have been afforded the highest priority use status. It  
152 can be anticipated that the mining uses and activities may now or in the future be conducted on  
153 property included in the mining protection area. The use and enjoyment of this property is  
154 expressly conditioned on acceptance of any annoyance or inconvenience that may result from  
155 the normal mining uses and activities."

156 Section 6. Section **23-28-303** is amended to read:

157 **23-28-303. Nuisances.**

158 (1) (a) A county shall exclude the activities described in Subsection (1)(b) from the  
159 definition of public nuisance in a county law or ordinance regulating a public nuisance.

160 (b) An activity or occurrence normally associated with a migratory bird production area  
161 is not a nuisance, including:

162 (i) hunting;

163 (ii) discharging a firearm;

164 (iii) improving habitat;

165 (iv) trapping;

166 (v) eradicating weeds;

167 (vi) discing;

168 (vii) planting;

169 (viii) impounding water;

170 (ix) raising a bird or other domestic animal;

171 (x) grazing;

172 (xi) an activity conducted in the normal course of an agricultural operation as defined  
173 in Section [~~78B-6-1101~~] [4-44-102](#); and

174 (xii) an odor.

175 (2) In a civil action for nuisance or a criminal action for public nuisance under Section  
176 [76-10-803](#), it is a complete defense if the action is:

177 (a) normally associated with a migratory bird production area;

178 (b) conducted within a migratory bird production area; and

179 (c) not in violation of any federal or state law.

180 (3) An owner of a new development located in whole or in part within 1,000 feet of a

181 migratory bird production area shall provide the following notice on any plat filed with the  
182 county recorder:

183 "Migratory Bird Production Area

184 This property is located in the vicinity of an established migratory bird production area  
185 in which hunting and activities related to the management and operation of land for the benefit  
186 of migratory birds have been afforded the highest priority use status. It can be anticipated that  
187 these uses and activities may now or in the future be conducted on land within the migratory  
188 bird production area. The use and enjoyment of this property is expressly conditioned on  
189 acceptance of any annoyance or inconvenience that may result from activities normally  
190 associated with a migratory bird production area."

191 Section 7. Section **76-10-803** is amended to read:

192 **76-10-803. "Public nuisance" defined -- Agricultural operations.**

193 (1) A public nuisance is a crime against the order and economy of the state and consists  
194 in unlawfully doing any act or omitting to perform any duty, which act or omission:

195 (a) annoys, injures, or endangers the comfort, repose, health, or safety of three or more  
196 persons;

197 (b) offends public decency;

198 (c) unlawfully interferes with, obstructs, or tends to obstruct, or renders dangerous for  
199 passage, any lake, stream, canal, or basin, or any public park, square, street, or highway;

200 (d) is a nuisance as defined in Section [78B-6-1107](#); or

201 (e) in any way renders three or more persons insecure in life or the use of property.

202 (2) An act which affects three or more persons in any of the ways specified in this  
203 section is still a nuisance regardless of the extent to which the annoyance or damage inflicted  
204 on individuals is unequal.

205 (3) (a) Activities conducted in the normal and ordinary course of agricultural  
206 operations, as defined in [~~Subsection [78B-6-1101](#)(7)] [Section 4-44-102](#), and conducted in  
207 accordance with sound agricultural practices are presumed to be reasonable and not constitute a  
208 public nuisance under Subsection (1).~~

209 (b) Agricultural operations undertaken in conformity with federal, state, and local laws  
210 and regulations, including zoning ordinances, are presumed to be operating within sound  
211 agricultural practices.

212 Section 8. Section **78B-6-1101** is amended to read:

213 **78B-6-1101. Definitions -- Nuisance -- Right of action -- Agriculture operations.**

214 (1) A nuisance is anything [~~which~~] that is injurious to health, indecent, offensive to the  
215 senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable  
216 enjoyment of life or property. A nuisance may be the subject of an action.

217 (2) A nuisance may include the following:

218 (a) drug houses and drug dealing as provided in Section [78B-6-1107](#);

219 (b) gambling as provided in Title 76, Chapter 10, Part 11, Gambling;

220 (c) criminal activity committed in concert with two or more persons as provided in  
221 Section [76-3-203.1](#);

222 (d) criminal activity committed for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association  
223 with any criminal street gang as defined in Section [76-9-802](#);

224 (e) criminal activity committed to gain recognition, acceptance, membership, or  
225 increased status with a criminal street gang as defined in Section [76-9-802](#);

226 (f) party houses [~~which~~] that frequently create conditions defined in Subsection (1);  
227 and

228 (g) prostitution as provided in Title 76, Chapter 10, Part 13, Prostitution.

229 (3) A nuisance under this part includes tobacco smoke that drifts into [~~any~~] a  
230 residential unit a person rents, leases, or owns, from another residential or commercial unit and  
231 the smoke:

232 (a) drifts in more than once in each of two or more consecutive seven-day periods; and

233 (b) creates any of the conditions under Subsection (1).

234 (4) Subsection (3) does not apply to:

235 (a) a residential rental [~~units~~] unit available for temporary rental, such as for  
236 [~~vacations~~] a vacation, or available for only 30 or fewer days at a time; or

237 (b) a hotel or motel [~~rooms~~] room.

238 (5) Subsection (3) does not apply to [~~any~~] a unit that is part of a timeshare  
239 development, as defined in Section [57-19-2](#), or subject to a timeshare interest as defined in  
240 Section [57-19-2](#).

241 (6) An action may be brought by [~~any~~] a person whose property is injuriously affected,  
242 or whose personal enjoyment is lessened by the nuisance.



243           ~~[(7) "Agricultural operation" means any activity engaged in the commercial production~~  
244 ~~of crops, orchards, aquaculture, livestock, poultry, livestock products, poultry products, and the~~  
245 ~~facilities, equipment, and property used to facilitate the activity.]~~

246           (7) An action for nuisance against an agricultural operation is governed by Title 4,  
247 Chapter 44, Agricultural Operations Nuisances Act.

248           (8) "Manufacturing facility" means ~~[any]~~ a factory, plant, or other facility including its  
249 appurtenances, where the form of raw materials, processed materials, commodities, or other  
250 physical objects is converted or otherwise changed into other materials, commodities, or  
251 physical objects or where such materials, commodities, or physical objects are combined to  
252 form a new material, commodity, or physical object.

253           Section 9. **Repealer.**

254           This bill repeals:

255           Section **78B-6-1104, Agricultural operations -- Nuisance liability.**