

§ 303-a. Agricultural districts; review.

1. The county legislative

body shall review any district created under this section eight, twelve or twenty years after the date of its creation, consistent with the review period set forth in the plan creating such district and at the end of every eight, twelve or twenty year period thereafter, whichever may apply. In counties with multiple districts with review dates in any twelve month period, the commissioner, on petition of the county legislative body, may, for good cause shown, approve an extension of up to four years for a district review. Thereafter, the extended review date shall be deemed the creation date for purposes of subsequent reviews by the county legislative body in accordance with this section. The review date of a district may not be extended more than four years. The petition of the county legislative body for an extension shall be submitted to the commissioner at least six months prior to the review date.

2. In conducting a district review the county legislative body shall:

a. provide notice of such district review by publishing a notice in a newspaper having general circulation within the district and by posting such notice in at least five conspicuous places within the district. The notice shall identify the municipalities in which the district is found and the district's total area; indicate that a map of the district will be on file and open to public inspection in the office of the county clerk and such other places as the legislative body deems appropriate; and notify municipalities and land owners within the district that they may propose a modification of the district by filing such proposal with the county clerk of the county legislature within thirty days after the publication of such notice;

b. direct the county agricultural and farmland protection board to prepare a report concerning the following:

- (1) the nature and status of farming and farm resources within such district, including the total number of acres of land and the total number of acres of land in farm operations in the district;
- (2) the extent to which the district has achieved its original objectives;
- (3) the extent to which county and local comprehensive plans, policies and objectives are consistent with and support the district;
- (4) the degree of coordination between local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations that apply to farm operations in such district and their influence on farming; and
- (5) recommendations to continue, terminate or modify such district.

c. hold a public hearing at least one hundred twenty days prior to the district review date and not more than one hundred eighty days prior to such date, in the following manner:

- (1) the hearing shall be held at a place within the district or otherwise readily accessible to the proposed district;
- (2) a notice of public hearing shall be published in a newspaper having a general circulation within the district and shall be given in writing to those municipalities whose territories encompass the district and any proposed modifications to the district; to persons, as listed on the most recent assessment roll, whose land is the subject of a proposed modification; and to the commissioner;
- (3) the notice of hearing shall contain the following information:
 - (a) a statement of the time, date and place of the public hearing; and
 - (b) a description of the district, any proposed modifications and any recommendations of the county agricultural and farmland protection board.