



This guide covers zoning rules, tiny home and RV laws, livestock limits, grants, off-grid systems, and local resources across Josephine and Jackson Counties. Useful whether you are searching for land or already own it.

ZONING: WHAT THE CATEGORIES MEAN

Josephine County [JO](#)

RR-5 (Rural Residential, 5 acres+)

Best for residential homesteading.
Allows most home-based uses.

WF / FC (Woodlot-Forest / Forest Commercial)

Remote parcels, looser density rules.
Great for privacy and timber.

EFU (Exclusive Farm Use)

Ideal for production farming, but strict on dwellings. Must show farm activity to build.

Jackson County [JK](#)

RR / WR (Rural Residential / Wooded Residential)

Most common for homesteaders.
Flexible for residential use with land.

EFU

Strictest category. Requires proof of farm income to build a residence.

TINY HOMES AND RVS

Josephine County [JO](#)

- RVs allowed up to 120 days/year with limited hookups
- Permanent RV living requires a hardship permit or temporary use approval
- Tiny homes on wheels are classified as RVs
- Tiny homes on foundation must meet Oregon Residential Specialty Code

Jackson County [JK](#)

- RVs are not allowed for permanent use
- Temporary RV use only with a permit
- Tiny homes on wheels are classified as RVs
- Tiny homes on foundation must meet building code

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)

- Josephine County:** Allowed in RR zones (typically under 900 sq ft). Not allowed in EFU zones unless tied to an agricultural operation.
- Jackson County:** Allowed on RR or UR parcels (max 900 sq ft). Not allowed for vacation rental use. Septic and setback compliance required.

LIVESTOCK LIMITS

Josephine County [JO](#)

- No strict county-wide limits; follows nuisance and sanitation rules
- Best practice: 1 animal unit per acre
- No exotic animal bans unless in a residential subdivision
- Check CC&Rs for parcel-specific restrictions

Jackson County [JK](#)

Defined by animal units per acre:

- 1 horse or cow = 1 unit
- 5 goats or sheep = 1 unit
- 20 chickens = 1 unit
- Most RR zones: 1 unit per acre

Commercial livestock (dairies, pig farms) require conditional use permits in EFU.

GRANTS AND FARM FUNDING

- USDA Microloan Program** (farmers.gov/loans) -- up to \$50,000 for beginning farmers
- SARE Farmer Rancher Grants** (sare.org) -- research and education grants for sustainable ag
- Oregon Tilth Farm Viability Grant Programs** (tilth.org)
- Rogue Farm Corps** (roguefarmcorps.org) -- educational programs and small grant partner

OFF-GRID SYSTEMS AND RESOURCES

- Water Rights Search** -- Oregon Water Resources Dept: apps.wrd.state.or.us
- Well Driller License Lookup** -- oregon.gov/owrd
- DEQ Septic Approval Map** -- oregon.gov/deq
- Solar Design Tool** -- NREL PVWatts: pvwatts.nrel.gov
- Composting Toilets** -- Oregon DEQ approval info at oregon.gov/deq

LOCAL COMMUNITY AND RESOURCES

- Rogue Valley Permaculture (Facebook Group)
- Grants Pass Homesteaders Network (Meetup)
- Rogue Produce CSA and Farm Hubs -- rogueproduce.com
- OSU Extension Southern Oregon -- extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec

FIRST-YEAR SETUP CHECKLIST

- Choose a property with confirmed zoning for your intended use
- Contact the Planning Department before making an offer
- Verify water rights and septic feasibility
- Secure a site plan covering driveways, setbacks, and utilities
- Apply for ag or farm grants if eligible
- Source local trades for site prep
- Build out infrastructure in phases: water, power, fencing
- Develop a long-term income or sustainability plan

Before you buy: Zoning determines what is possible on a property. I review zoning and land use details with every rural buyer before we write an offer. Ask me anything.