

YO Landowners Association Exotics Production Cooperative Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why was the YOLA Exotics Production Cooperative (the CO-OP) formed?
Prior to 2004, the Ranchlands was taxed under Agricultural Appraisal/Valuation, because we had a grazing lease with the YO Ranch. In 2004 the YO Ranch was unable to continue to fulfill the lease terms, so the YOLA decided not to renew that lease, and the landowners had to find another way to maintain Agricultural Appraisal/Valuation. Rather than continue cattle grazing through finding a new grazing lessee, the landowners decided to establish the Exotics Production Cooperative. By forming an agricultural enterprise, we continue to have Agricultural Appraisal/Valuation for our properties.
2. How do I join the CO-OP?
Go to the YO Ranchlands website (YOranchlands.org). On the menu hit “Exotic CO-OP”, then “Join the CO-OP”. Print the 2 page form, fill it in according to the instructions, sign the form, and have it notarized. Take (or mail) the notarized form to the Kerr County Court House – Records Office. The address is 700 Main Street, Kerrville, TX 78028. They will record and file the agreement, then they will return to you the original document, with a file stamp on it, for you to keep in your records. Send a copy of the file-stamped agreement either by e-mail or regular mail to the CO-OP Manager. When the county Appraisal District receives the paperwork from your closing on the purchase of your property, they should send you a copy of the form: “Application for 1-d-1 (Open Space) Agricultural Appraisal”. If they don’t you can download the form on the Kerr County website (www.co.kerr.tx.us). It is form # 50-129. You can also get this form from (comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax). DO NOT use the application form from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for a “Wildlife Management Plan”, we are doing “Exotics Production”.
3. How do I complete the Application for 1-d-1 (Open Space) Agricultural Appraisal form?
This is a 4 page form. Complete Section 1 to identify the property owner. Complete Section 2 if the owner is an LLC or business. Complete Section 3 to identify the property according to the Property Description on the Kerr County tax statement. In Section 4, question 1, write: “Exotics Production through YOLA Exotics Production Cooperative”. On question 2a, you can write in some of the exotic species, such as Axis, Sika, Fallow, Blackbuck, Aoudad. Do not bother writing in 2b regarding the numbers of livestock, and skip questions 3, 4 and 5. Skip Section 5 – Wildlife Management Use, and skip Section 6 – Timber. Sign Section 7. This form does NOT have to be notarized. Take (or mail) this

application form to the Kerr County Appraisal District. The CO-OP Manager does not need a copy of this form. You should receive a letter from the Appraisal District that your application DOES MEET the necessary requirements for Agricultural Appraisal/Valuation. The Appraisal District DOES NOT need a copy of the YO Exotics Production Cooperative Agreement that was filed in the County Records Office.

4. Are we filing for Agricultural Appraisal/Valuation on the basis of Wildlife Management?
No. We are filing on the basis of exotics production, similar to cattle or sheep production. The CO-OP is an agricultural enterprise, in the business of raising exotic animals for human consumption.
5. Why should I join the CO-OP?
By joining the CO-OP, you are joining an agricultural enterprise, which qualifies your land to be appraised by Agricultural Valuation, rather than Residential. Your taxable value is dramatically reduced, thus your tax burden is dramatically reduced. This does not reduce the resale market value of your land, and may actually increase it, as your annual carrying cost is reduced.
6. What is the downside of having a CO-OP?
As an agricultural enterprise, we must document for the county that we are investing in our exotic herd, such as through annual census, high fence maintenance, supplemental feed and water, etc., and that we are periodically harvesting some of the exotic animals for human consumption. This is done through a commercial harvesting company with USDA-certified meat inspectors, not through hunting. The timing, number, and species makeup of the harvest is controlled by the YOLA Wildlife Committee. Harvests must be done in 5 out of every 7 years, with rare exceptions.
7. Does having the CO-OP reduce my hunting quotas?
No, the hunting quotas for landowners are determined by the Wildlife Committee every year, and the harvest for the CO-OP is considered as a separate part of the overall wildlife management plan for the YOLA.
8. Can we satisfy the needs of the CO-OP by harvesting some animals through hunting?
No. Hunting is considered recreational use of the animals, not agricultural. This also includes selling a hunt or leasing hunting rights to a third party.
9. Do I have to fill out the 1-d-1 application form every year?
No, usually just once, but on occasion the Appraisal District may ask you to re-apply by filling out another 1-d-1 form. If the land ever changes ownership, such as purchasing it through an LLC, or passing it on to your heirs through inheritance, the county will require that the application be completed again. The new owner will also have to

complete the YO Exotics Production Cooperative Agreement again as well. If the county is concerned about a change of management, they may request that the forms be completed again.

10. How do I know if the county has accepted my application for agricultural appraisal/valuation?

The county should send you a letter notifying you once the application has been reviewed and approved. It will say that your application DOES MEET the necessary requirements. Another indication is on your annual tax statement. If you have no improvements on the land (house, barn, etc.), the only value assigned will be the "Ag/Timber Value" which in 2022 is about \$79 per acre. If you have improvements, then they will add the value of the improvements, plus the non-agricultural value of the land under your improvements, plus the Ag/Timber value of the remaining unimproved land to get your total assessed value.

11. How do I withdraw from the CO-OP?

Go to the YO Ranchlands website, and under "Exotic Co-op" and "Quit the Co-op". Print the one page form, have it notarized, file it in the Kerr County Records Office, just like the agreement to join the COOP. Give a copy of the file-stamped document to the CO-OP Manager.

12. What other alternatives are there for keeping agricultural appraisal/valuation for my land?

The best option is a Wildlife Management Plan through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This plan requires development and submission for approval of a long term range management program, and substantial annual paperwork. You will have to actively manage your land for the benefit of native wildlife, much of which you are probably already doing. You will have to document thoroughly every year and undertake various management activities regularly. TPWD can provide some advice and consultation, and there are professional biologists, such as Plateau Land & Wildlife Management, who can assist you preparing and implementing a plan.