

Vermont Agri-Tourism Survey

Vermont Farms! Association and the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics at the University of Vermont surveyed a sample of 32 farms in order to study the operation, management, marketing, and finance issues for Vermont farmers offering tourism products and/or services.

- **25% of farmers earned under \$5,000 from agri-tourism; 25% earned from \$5,000 to \$20,000; 25% earned from \$20,000 to \$70,000; and 25% earned over \$70,000.**
- **In 2002, 51.6% of farmers surveyed had over 500 visitors; 9.6% had between 201 and 500 visitors; 16.1% had between 100 and 200 visitors; 22.6% had less than 100 visitors.**
- **67.7% of farmers surveyed were sole proprietors; 22.6% were in a corporation; 3.2% were in a partnership.**
- **86.6% of farmers surveyed had college or post-college degrees.**

Demographics and Farm Structure

- 83.9% of respondents were between the ages of 36 and 65.
- 32.3% of farm owners were female; 38.7% were male, and 29.0% were couples.
- 83.9% were married with children.
- 70.3% had one to five family members involved in the farm.
- 46.9% of farms were less than 100 acres; 34.4% were between 100 and 300 acres; and 18.8% were over 300 acres.
- 41.9% had operating costs from \$10,000 to \$49,999; 19.4% had costs from \$50,000 to \$99,000; 19.4% had costs from \$100,000 to \$249,999; and 19.4% had costs over \$250,000.
- 69.2% of farmers used family cash reserves as a major funding source.
- 78.1% had operated farms less than 50 years.

Agri-Tourism Information

- 69.2% of respondents started agri-tourism business activities after 1990; 30.8% started before 1990.
- 87.5% of respondents said they offered agri-tourism activities in order to increase farm revenue; 68.8% said they offered agri-tourism activities in order to promote Vermont products.
- 66.7% of farmers reported that the total number of tourists visiting their farms increased from 2001 to 2002, 23.3% reported a decrease; and 20.0% reported no change.
- 58.6% of farmers ranked fall as the most popular season for visitors; 41.4% ranked summer as most popular.
- 81.3% of respondents relied on Vermont Farms! Association for advertising tourism activities; 78.1% used brochures or pamphlets; 62.5% used their website; 59.4% used newspapers and road signs.

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