Growing the Global Agritourism Network: Findings from Evaluations of Webinars and Conferences

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Claire Whitehouse
Research Specialist
Center for Rural Studies
The University of Vermont

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

About this Grant

- NSF EAGER Project
- Collaboration between University of Vermont and Clemson University
- Team Science
- Virtual vs. In-Person experiences
    - Virtual Gatherings
    - International Workshop on Agritourism

NSF Project Goals

- Strengthen international collaboration on agritourism
- Evaluate effectiveness of different forms of engagement
- Develop interdisciplinary scholarship on agritourism and involve students
- Assess transferability of findings to other fields

Other Goals

- Grow and strengthen the international agritourism community
- Produce educational events and resources that are useful for agritourism operators and supporters
- Get your feedback on events
- Solicit your ideas of what we should do in the future

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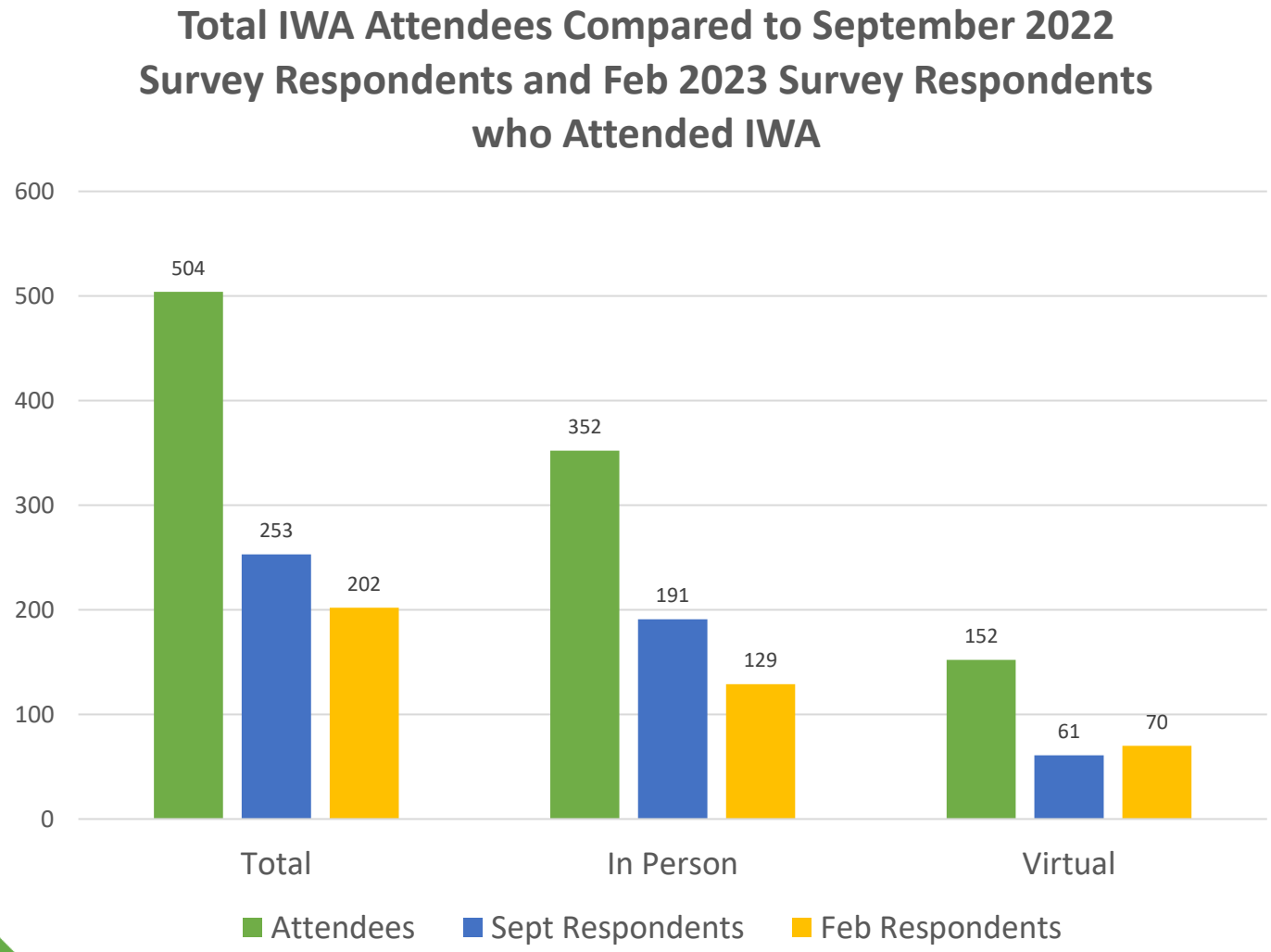
Data Sources

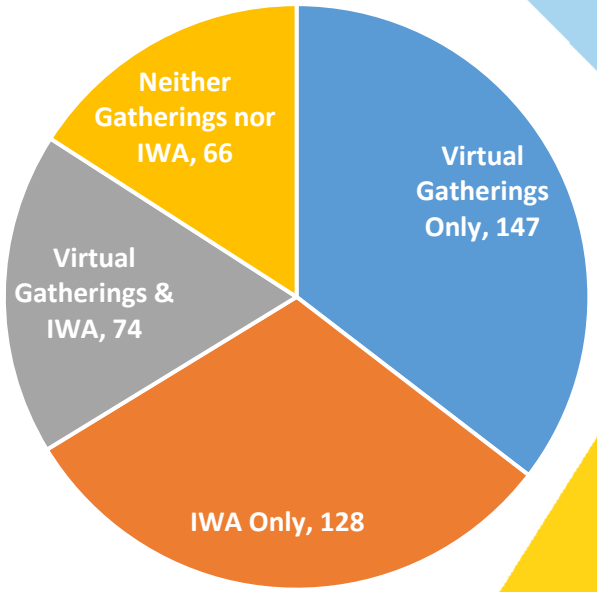
- Virtual Gatherings surveys: July 2021 and July 2022
- IWA post-event survey: September 2022
- Follow-up survey: February 2023

Survey Methodology

- Each survey open for ~1 month
- September 2022 Post-Conference Survey
    - IWA registration list (n=504)
    - 253 respondents (50% response rate)
- February 2023 Follow-up Survey
    - IWA registration list, Virtual Gatherings registrants, anyone who signed up for the email contact list (n=2890)
    - 415 respondents (14.4% response rate)
- Analysis
    - Quantitative: Descriptive statistics, bivariate tests, and multivariate regressions
    - Qualitative: 2-coder analysis of open response questions

Response breakout





Anticipated & Actual Results of the IWA and Virtual Gatherings

Binary Logistic Regression Results

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

Anticipated & Actual Results of Attending Programs: Researchers, Extension, Nonprofit, Government, Educator

September Survey Demographics (n = 154)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
In-Person	0.75	0	1
Researcher	0.43	0	1
Extension/Service	0.31	0	1
Nonprofit	0.25	0	1
Government	0.10	0	1
Educator	0.32	0	1
USA	0.62	0	1
Male	0.28	0	1
Postgrad degree	0.70	0	1
Age	46.30	21	74

February Survey Demographics (n = 214)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
In-Person at IWA	0.38	0	1
Researcher	0.38	0	1
Extension/Service	0.21	0	1
Nonprofit	0.22	0	1
Government	0.12	0	1
Educator	0.36	0	1
USA	0.51	0	1
Male	0.28	0	1
Postgrad degree	0.70	0	1
Age	50.64	25	83

Anticipated & Actual Results of Attending Programs: Researchers, Extension, Nonprofit, Government, Educator

September Survey Anticipated Results (n = 154)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
Develop publications	0.41	0	1
Develop grant proposal(s)	0.38	0	1
Receive funding	0.19	0	1
Create resources or tools to support agritourism	0.70	0	1
Develop new project collaboration(s)	0.77	0	1
Implement educational workshops or events	0.55	0	1
Find new job opportunities	0.22	0	1

February Survey Accomplished and Partially Accomplished Results (n = 214)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
Developed publications	0.34	0	1
Developed grant proposal(s)	0.19	0	1
Received funding	0.12	0	1
Created resources or tools to support agritourism	0.48	0	1
Developed new project collaboration(s)	0.42	0	1
Implemented educational workshops or events	0.35	0	1
Found new job opportunities	0.12	0	1

September Survey (n = 154)

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Result = ß0 + δ1inperson + δ2researcher + δ3extserv + δ4nonprofit + δ5gov + δ6educator + δ7USA + δ8Male + δ9Postgrad + ß1Age + ε

Variable	Publications	Grants	Funding	Tools	New Collabs	Ed Events	New Jobs
Intercept	-0.032	-0.349	-2.926**	1.624	2.617**	0.858	0.966
In-Person	0.057	-0.452	0.080	0.101	-0.768	-0.225	0.426
Researcher	**1.1236****	0.308	0.278	-0.092	-0.219	-0.121	**1.254***
Extension/Service	0.056	**0.932***	0.634	0.982	**1.1345***	**1.411****	0.235
Nonprofit	-0.438	0.300	0.861	0.263	0.688	0.470	-0.739
Government	-2.151	-0.908	-15.498	1.577	0.437	0.436	-0.380
Educator	-0.090	0.512	0.787	0.122	-0.158	0.308	-0.417
USA	**-1.178***	0.639	-0.206	0.045	-0.276	0.001	-0.282
Male	-0.581	0.817	0.707	0.096	-0.636	0.187	0.258
Postgrad degree	0.750	-0.129	-0.166	-0.086	0.759	0.125	-0.745
Age	0.009	-0.022	0.014	-0.028	-0.030	**-0.027***	**-0.053****
McFadden's Pseudo R^2	**0.194*****	0.088	0.111	0.060	0.099	0.068	**0.161****

February Survey (n = 214)

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Result = ß0 + δ1inperson + δ2researcher + δ3extserv + δ4nonprofit + δ5gov + δ6educator + δ7USA + δ8Male + δ9Postgrad + ß1Age + ε

Variable	Publications	Grants	Funding	Tools	New Collabs	Ed Events	New Jobs
Intercept	-1.850*	-1.850*	-2.762**	-0.281	-1.193	-1.112	-1.268
In-Person	0.104	0.251	0.072	**0.712***	**1.142*****	0.003	-0.357
Researcher	**1.608*****	-0.020	0.447	0.039	0.277	0.232	0.480
Extension/Service	-0.079	-0.352	0.298	-0.076	0.398	0.603	0.262
Nonprofit	0.367	0.124	0.701	-0.123	0.317	0.105	0.320
Government	-0.501	-0.259	0.028	0.231	-0.344	0.584	-0.231
Educator	0.333	-0.064	0.052	0.369	**0.700***	0.480	-0.377
USA	-0.186	0.295	0.835	-0.358	0.354	0.430	0.617
Male	0.487	0.076	**1.137***	-0.069	0.424	0.054	**1.257***
Postgrad degree	-0.341	0.769	0.172	-0.301	0.028	0.102	-0.523
Age	0.009	-0.007	-0.013	0.004	-0.008	-0.006	-0.025
McFadden's Pseudo R^2	**0.132*****	0.023	0.048	0.026	**0.100****	0.028	0.073

Anticipated & Actual Results of Attending Programs: Producers, Tourism Pros, Biz Owners/Managers

September Survey Demographics (n = 115)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
In-Person	0.77	0	1
Producer	0.50	0	1
Business Owner/Mgr	0.34	0	1
Tourism Professional	0.39	0	1
USA	0.65	0	1
Male	0.30	0	1
Postgrad degree	0.45	0	1
Age	48.37	21	73

February Survey Demographics (n = 178)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
In-Person at IWA	0.39	0	1
Producer	0.56	0	1
Business Owner/Mgr	0.41	0	1
Tourism Professional	0.35	0	1
USA	0.58	0	1
Male	0.29	0	1
Postgrad degree	0.49	0	1
Age	51.78	26	83

Anticipated & Actual Results of Attending Programs: Producers, Tourism Pros, Biz Owners/Managers

September Survey Anticipated Results (n = 115)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
Begin a new agritourism enterprise	0.32	0	1
Improve an existing agritourism enterprise	0.45	0	1
Implement safety and liability protocols	0.27	0	1
Develop or improve a marketing strategy	0.60	0	1
Develop new business partnership(s)	0.57	0	1
Attract new customers/visitors	0.47	0	1
Increase sales	0.34	0	1
Increase profitability	0.34	0	1

February Survey Accomplished and Partially Accomplished Results (n = 178)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
Began a new agritourism enterprise	0.24	0	1
Improved an existing agritourism enterprise	0.43	0	1
Implemented safety and liability protocols	0.27	0	1
Developed or improved a marketing strategy	0.42	0	1
Developed new business partnership(s)	0.33	0	1
Attracted new customers/visitors	0.37	0	1
Increased sales	0.29	0	1
Increased profitability	0.25	0	1

September Survey (n = 115)

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Result = ß0 + δ1inperson + δ2producer + δ3tourism + δ4biz + δ5USA + δ6Male + δ7Postgrad + ß1Age + ε

Variable	New	Improved	Safety	Marketing	Partnerships	Customers	Sales	Profitability
Intercept	-0.844	-0.182	-0.960	1.090	1.672	0.043	-0.483	-0.305
In-Person	**-1.066***	0.583	-0.429	-0.381	0.263	-0.149	-0.410	**-1.113***
Producer	0.836	**1.342****	**1.493****	0.311	-0.210	**1.032***	**1.369****	**1.799*****
Tourism Professional	0.329	-0.077	0.076	-0.123	0.601	0.643	0.402	0.745
Business Owner/Manager	-0.420	0.528	0.142	0.006	0.829	0.315	0.425	0.505
USA	0.331	-0.067	0.317	0.372	-0.465	-0.034	0.942	0.669
Male	0.623	-0.471	-0.035	-0.119	-0.578	-0.131	-0.168	-0.382
Postgrad degree	0.602	-0.296	0.231	-0.147	0.502	-0.015	0.125	-0.071
Age	-0.005	-0.021	-0.020	-0.013	**-0.035***	-0.018	-0.033	-0.027
McFadden's Pseudo R^2	0.083	**0.116***	0.094	0.019	0.092	0.048	**0.114***	**0.145****

February Survey (n = 178)

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

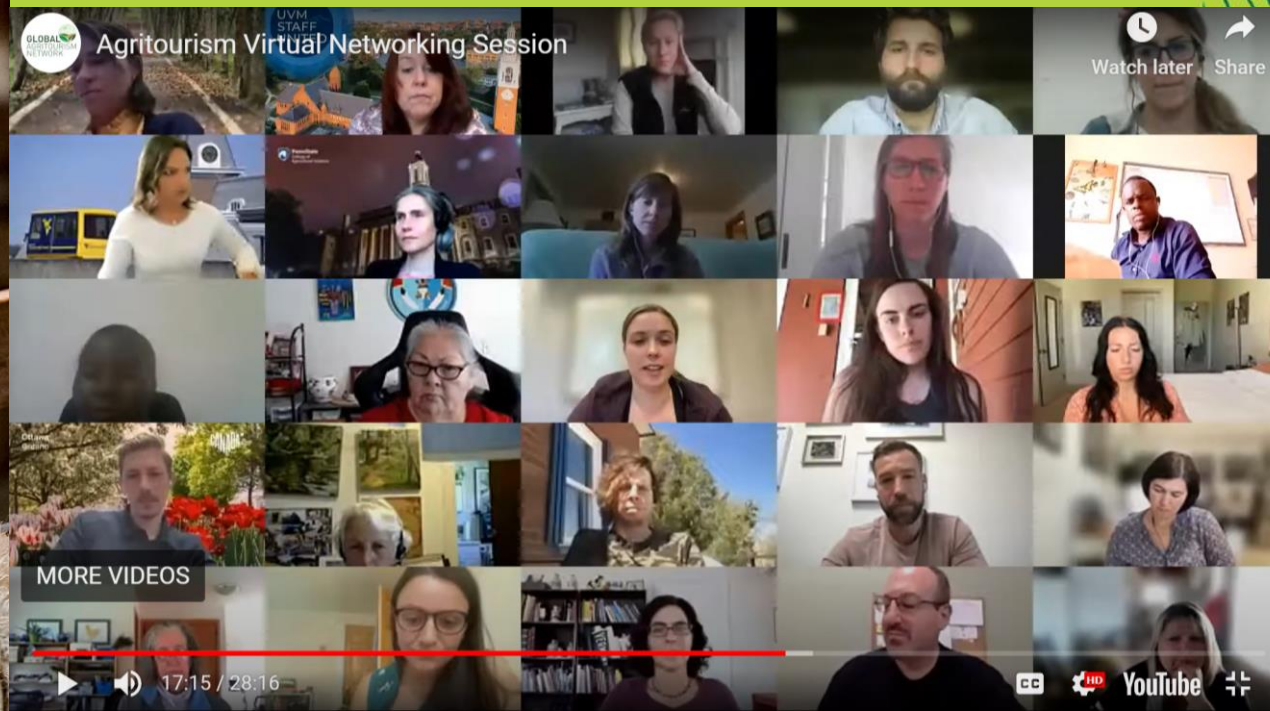
Result = ß0 + δ1inperson + δ2producer + δ3tourism + δ4biz + δ5USA + δ6Male + δ7Postgrad + ß1Age + ε

Variable	New	Improved	Safety	Marketing	Partnerships	Customers	Sales	Profitability
Intercept	-0.969	-1.907*	-1.016	-0.749	-1.497	-1.775*	-2.317**	-1.088
In-Person	-0.063	0.275	0.115	0.229	0.490	0.527	0.265	-0.136
Producer	0.447	**0.774***	0.764	-0.073	0.245	0.501	0.673	**0.892***
Tourism Professional	0.177	0.536	-0.161	**0.755***	**0.960***	0.262	0.257	0.058
Business Owner/Manager	0.108	0.411	-0.221	**0.929****	0.354	0.492	0.466	0.290
USA	0.238	-0.022	0.473	**0.763***	-0.128	0.136	-0.135	-0.267
Male	0.339	0.102	0.240	0.475	0.392	0.450	0.697	0.714
Postgrad degree	0.109	-0.161	0.138	-0.591	-0.174	-0.361	-0.521	-0.206
Age	-0.016	0.015	-0.015	-0.012	0.000	0.007	0.015	-0.013
McFadden's Pseudo R^2	0.015	0.040	0.044	**0.082***	0.045	0.044	0.057	0.059

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

Benefits of the IWA and Virtual Gatherings

Binary Logistic Regression Results



"Significant" Benefits of Attending Programs

September Survey Demographics (n = 217)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
In-Person	0.77	0	1
Researcher	0.31	0	1
Extension/Service	0.22	0	1
Nonprofit	0.18	0	1
Government	0.07	0	1
Educator	0.23	0	1
Producer	0.27	0	1
Tourism Professional	0.22	0	1
Business Owner/Mgr	0.20	0	1
USA	0.65	0	1
Male	0.29	0	1
Postgrad degree	0.60	0	1
Age	47.09	21	74

February Survey Demographics (n = 305)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
In-Person	0.39	0	1
Researcher	0.27	0	1
Extension/Service	0.14	0	1
Nonprofit	0.16	0	1
Government	0.09	0	1
Educator	0.25	0	1
Producer	0.33	0	1
Tourism Professional	0.21	0	1
Business Owner/Mgr	0.24	0	1
USA	0.53	0	1
Male	0.28	0	1
Postgrad degree	0.59	0	1
Age	50.45	25	83

“Significant” Benefits of Attending Programs

September Survey Reported Benefits (n = 217)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
Made new contacts for collaborations "Significantly"	0.62	0	1
Increased my knowledge and understanding of topics "Significantly"	0.74	0	1
Learned about resources related to my work "Significantly"	0.69	0	1
Met my professional development needs "Significantly"	0.57	0	1
Found a sense of community "Significantly"	0.63	0	1

February Survey Reported Benefits (n = 305)

Variable	Mean	Min.	Max.
Made new contacts for collaborations "Significantly"	0.41	0	1
Increased my knowledge and understanding of topics "Significantly"	0.70	0	1
Learned about resources related to my work "Significantly"	0.57	0	1
Met my professional development needs "Significantly"	0.46	0	1
Found a sense of community "Significantly"	0.52	0	1

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

September Survey (n = 217)

Benefit = ß0 + δ1inperson + δ2researcher + δ3extserv + δ4nonprofit + δ5gov + δ6educator + δ7producer + δ8tourism + δ9biz + δ10USA + δ11Male + δ12Postgrad + ß1Age + ε

Variable	Contacts	Knowledge	Resources	PD	Community
Intercept	-2.447**	1.493	1.034	-0.237	-0.485
In-Person	**2.043*** **	-0.277	-0.421	**0.741***	**1.276****
Researcher	**1.198***	0.421	0.312	0.549	**1.085***
Extension/Service	-0.308	-0.223	-0.059	**0.928***	0.008
Nonprofit	0.282	-0.539	-0.419	-0.462	-0.160
Government	0.146	-0.662	0.814	0.114	-0.087
Educator	0.194	-0.281	-0.430	0.479	0.486
Producer	-0.078	**-0.823***	-0.183	-0.162	-0.278
Tourism Professional	0.715	-0.031	-0.006	0.406	0.406
Business Owner/Manager	0.420	0.367	0.003	-0.213	0.816
USA	**0.779***	-0.105	**0.799***	0.324	-0.465
Male	**0.921***	0.141	0.701	-0.130	0.250
Postgrad degree	0.190	-0.337	0.172	-0.197	-0.625
Age	-0.001	0.008	-0.013	-0.010	0.003
McFadden's Pseudo R^2	**0.159*** **	0.045	0.053	0.075	**0.091***

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Photo courtesy of Green Mountain Girls Farm

February Survey (n = 305)

Benefit = ß0 + δ1inperson + δ2researcher + δ3extserv + δ4nonprofit + δ5gov + δ6educator + δ7producer + δ8tourism + δ9biz + δ10USA + δ11Male + δ12Postgrad + ß1Age + ε

Variable	Contacts	Knowledge	Resources	PD	Community
Intercept	-0.880	0.818	0.165	-0.630	-0.740
In-Person	**2.036*** **	0.363	0.487	**1.366*** **	**1.147*** **
Researcher	0.147	**1.003***	0.295	0.292	0.090
Extension/Service	0.007	0.416	0.241	0.652	-0.317
Nonprofit	0.146	-0.011	-0.005	0.326	0.195
Government	-1.094	-0.206	0.237	-0.565	-0.318
Educator	0.182	-0.061	0.381	**0.831***	-0.056
Producer	-0.167	-0.121	0.126	-0.408	-0.125
Tourism Professional	0.354	0.007	0.398	0.553	**0.703***
Business Owner/Manager	-0.359	-0.193	0.163	0.538	-0.065
USA	-0.342	**-0.662***	-0.310	-0.471	-0.282
Male	**0.970****	-0.076	0.487	0.419	0.468
Postgrad degree	-0.608	0.141	0.107	-0.058	-0.273
Age	-0.002	0.001	-0.010	-0.009	0.010
McFadden's Pseudo R^2	**0.191*** **	**0.069***	0.042	**0.137*** **	**0.075****

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Respondent Perspectives: Networking

"The in-person networking was excellent. As a new entrant into the field, I probably increased my professional network by 500%...I believe attending the conference in-person greatly contributed to these [networking] benefits, I do not think I would have made many connections as a virtual attendee." – September Respondent, IWA In-Person Attendee

"The conference helped me solidify professional relationships that I already had, which will be very helpful in forging future collaborations. Great to finally meet so many people in person!" – February Respondent, IWA In-Person Attendee

"I attended virtually and while I found a lot of the presentations worthwhile, I would have really like being there in person." – September Respondent, IWA Virtual Attendee

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

Respondent Perspectives: Accessibility

"It was made possible for me by having the virtual format. It was great!" – September Respondent, IWA virtual attendee

"It gave me an opportunity to attend the workshop, when I could not attend in-person due to Visa challenges." – September Respondent, IWA virtual attendee

"It allowed me to "be present" on the days that I couldn't (I was sick)" – September Respondent, IWA in-person attendee

"Very much appreciated that all sessions can be accessed later (I don't have to choose!) and the accessibility to virtual participants" – September Respondent, IWA in-person attendee

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

Takeaways

- Virtual Gatherings allowed this network to grow and diversify across the globe, setting the stage for GAN.
- Virtual attendance at webinars and the IWA were equally effective for spreading knowledge and access to resources.
- In-person events remain important for building relationships (and for conducting agritourism itself!)
- While in-person events do have additional benefits, offering a hybrid option makes the event more accessible.

Future Event Topics

September Survey (n = 238)

Topic	%
Case studies of successes and challenges	71%
Strengthening regional collaborations	62%
Definitions and meanings of agritourism	35%
Best practices and quality standards for agritourism	70%
Economic impacts of agritourism	66%
Policy and regulations	47%
Agritourism trails	55%
Multi-cultural perspectives and applications	46%
Impacts of environmental challenges	45%
Marketing strategies and consumer behavior	67%
Collaboration for research and practice	53%

February Survey (n = 365)

Topic	%
Case studies of successes and challenges	76%
Strengthening regional collaborations	64%
Definitions and meanings of agritourism	39%
Best practices and quality standards for agritourism	74%
Economic impacts of agritourism	68%
Policy and regulations	52%
Agritourism trails	61%
Multi-cultural perspectives and applications	53%
Impacts of environmental challenges	53%
Marketing strategies and consumer behavior	70%
Collaboration for research and practice	51%

Future Event Formats

September Survey (n = 240)

Format	%
Zoom webinars	54%
Interactive online meetings	42%
Recorded presentations	34%
Social media	22%
Hybrid events that allow for both virtual and in-person participation	55%
In-person meetings or conferences	80%
Tours of agritourism operations	76%

February Survey (n = 365)

Format	%
Zoom webinars	70%
Interactive online meetings	52%
Recorded presentations	47%
Social media	21%
Hybrid events that allow for both virtual and in-person participation	64%
In-person meetings or conferences	64%
Tours of agritourism operations	73%

Future Agritourism Support: Content Analysis of September Survey (n = 130)

Category	Count	Sub-Categories
More Events	57	Similar conferences, farm visits & tours, local or regional events, conferences in other countries, virtual events
Educational Resources	42	Logistics & best practices for operators, context-tailored information resources, marketing support & resources, research sharing, classes, research on agritourism economics, resources for new operators, conference reports
Networking Support	36	General networking, formal network, virtual communication platforms, employment support
More Inclusive Conference	28	More presentations from practitioners, DEI, recommendations for conference logistics, food, support for attending events, arts & entertainment
Advancing the Cause	14	Policy advocacy, fiscal support, research on agritourism economics

Photo by Bear Cieri, courtesy of Hello Burlington.

Thank you!