

Brief Eleven.

Proposed Actions & Considerations

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The project team surveyed and interviewed farmers who welcome visitors across the United States in 2024 and 2025 to better understand the national picture of agritourism, learn about the major challenges farmers face, and hear their suggestions for support and technical assistance. Based on our findings, we have the following suggestions for farmers, policy makers, and researchers.

Recommendations for Farmers

Table 3. Recommendation for Farmers	Read More In...
Agritourism is a people business. Before you start, talk to your family and/or your colleagues about how you will manage visitors on your farm, which may also be your home. You may also want to talk with other farmers who do agritourism in your area, as well as your neighbors and members of your community.	<u>Brief #3</u>
“Don’t do something unless it’s something that you really enjoy.” When deciding what activities to offer, think about what you enjoy doing and what makes your farm special. Consider the interests and needs of different types of visitors, as well as the start-up costs for different activities.	<u>Brief #4</u>
Agritourism can contribute to farm profitability, but making money is not the only motivator. In interviews and the survey, farmers reiterated that the additional income from agritourism was important to their farm business, but that providing agricultural education was almost as important. While 75% of respondents said they were successful at increasing revenues through agritourism, there is no silver bullet for the problem of farm profitability, and you have to be excited to educate and work with people to make the additional income worth the additional work.	<u>Brief #3</u> and <u>Brief #5</u>

Recommendations for Policy

Table 4. Recommendations for Policy	Read More In...
Keep in mind the dual restrictions of time and money. Farmers have limited funds and more work to do than there are hours in the day. Policy and outreach efforts for agritourism must keep these restrictions in mind to be successful.	<u>Brief #6</u>
Reduce the administrative and financial burdens of regulatory compliance. Keeping the above restrictions in mind, state and local governments should ensure that regulations relating to agritourism are proportionate, easy to understand, and uncomplicated to follow. These efforts are especially urgent in states like Oregon and California, where farmers find regulations disproportionately challenging compared to other states.	<u>Brief #7</u>

Farmers need access to free or low-cost marketing expertise literate in both agriculture and tourism. Most farmers find marketing challenging, and the twin restrictions of time and money make it hard to get help and make it more important that farms spend their marketing budgets wisely. We recommend that Extension offices and state departments of tourism and agriculture coordinate to provide this expertise.

[Brief #6](#) and [Brief #8](#)

Pilot grant programs for visitor-facing infrastructure like farmstands, farm stores, bathrooms, and parking areas. As dedicated grants for agritourism are few and far between, any amount funders are able to allocate to these programs will mark a step in the right direction. Grants should provide advanced payments, as opposed to reimbursement, and funders should provide support for farmers looking to apply.

[Brief #10](#)

Recommendations for Research

Table 5. Recommendations for Research

Read More In...

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service should rephrase the agritourism and direct sales questions on the Census of Agriculture to match current practice. Hollas et al. (2024) explore how Census questions on agritourism and direct sales income do not reflect common definitions of agritourism used by farmers, scholars, and outreach professionals. This mismatch means accurate counts of farms that welcome visitors are currently out of reach, and that it is not possible to use Census data to understand the dynamics of agritourism finances. Revising these questions would open many possibilities for improving the national understanding of agritourism.

[Brief #2](#) and [Brief #5](#)

Local and regional research-outreach projects that work closely with farmers to provide business and marketing assistance and collect essential data. Most farmers need marketing assistance, and many also need help with business planning. The field of agritourism research lacks concrete data on agritourism’s role in farm finances as well as on agritourism demand. We recommend smaller-scale research efforts that work closely with a cohort of farms to deliver technical assistance and collect data on financial performance, visitor profiles, and/or marketing efficacy.

[Brief #5](#) and [Brief #9](#)