Welcome to the National Extension Tourism Design Team webinar series!

https://extensiontourism.net/net-webinar-series/

Today’s webinar:

Agritourism around the US: Findings from a National Survey

presented by Lisa Chase, Dee Singh-Knights, and Penny Leff
Upcoming NET Webinars

March 18, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. ET/12:00 p.m. PT

Community Discussion: "Sustainable Tourism" — what does it mean, what are its core components, and what is Extension's role in promoting it?

Survey of Agritourism
including On-Farm Direct Sales in the United States
Project Team

Lisa Chase, David Conner, Lindsay Quella, Weiwei Wang, Chadley Hollas | University of Vermont

Penny Leff, Gail Feenstra | University of California-Davis

Doolarie Singh-Knights | West Virginia University

Mary Stewart | Oregon State University

Lori Dickes, Dave Lamie | Clemson University

Claudia Schmidt | Pennsylvania State University

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POLL: Describe yourself. Check all that apply.

- Extension / Service Provider
- Researcher
- Educator
- Producer / Farmer / Rancher
- Tourism Professional
- Business Owner / Manager
- Non-profit
- Government Agency
- Other
POLL: How often do you work with agritourism?

- Regularly
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Not yet but planning to in the future
- Never
What is Agritourism?

- The core is **on-farm experiences and product sales** closely tied to agriculture such as overnight farm stays, harvest festivals on farms, pick-your-own, farm dinners, and educational field trips.

- The peripheral tiers include activities that may or may not be considered agritourism, depending on the place and situation.

- Categories of agritourism include hospitality, education, direct sales, entertainment and outdoor recreation.

- Includes farms, ranches, vineyards, and aquaculture.

Interviews and Qualitative Analysis

- Semi-structured interviews with 25 agritourism operators from Vermont, California, Oregon, West Virginia and Minnesota conducted between Winter 2018 and Spring 2019.
- Maximum variation sampling method used to select farmers and ranchers from each state.
- Focused on 5 key questions about agritourism perceptions.
  - How important is agritourism to your farm or ranch?
  - How do you define and measure “success” in agritourism?
  - In what ways does agritourism bring other benefits?
  - What are the key factors to success in agritourism that you have identified?
  - What key lessons have you learned about agritourism?
- Results used to develop quantitative survey, along with literature and past surveys.
Online Survey

- Conducted November 2019 - February 2020
  - Pre-COVID responses
- 1834 respondents from all 50 states

In the survey, we asked about:
- Products and activities
- Motivations
- Challenges
- Support systems
- Partnerships
- Plans for future
- Firmographics
- Demographics
Results Overview

Survey respondents:
- were 55 years old (average age)
- were female (58% of respondents)
- had a college degree (70% of respondents)
- had 10+ years experience in agritourism (53%)
- farmed 60 acres (median farm size)

Survey response by US region, n=1491

West 26%
Midwest 21%
Northeast 24%
South 29%
Categories of Farm Experiences by Region

- On-Farm Direct Sales
- Education
- Events and Entertainment
- Recreation
- Lodging

[Bar chart showing the percentage of farm experiences by region for each category: West, Midwest, South, and Northeast. The chart indicates the distribution of farm experiences across different regions for each category.]
Products by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crops</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals and Animal Products</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-added Products</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Median Size of Farm and Proximity to a City (50,000+ people)

- West: 40 acres
- South: 68 acres
- Midwest: 62 acres
- Northeast: 80 acres
Median Number of Visitors and Days Open

- **Northeast**: 
  - Median Number of Visitors: 100 visitors per year
  - Median Number of Days Open: 30 days each year

- **South**: 
  - Median Number of Visitors: 100 visitors per year
  - Median Number of Days Open: 30 days each year

- **Midwest**: 
  - Median Number of Visitors: 300 visitors per year
  - Median Number of Days Open: 60 days each year

- **West**: 
  - Median Number of Visitors: 300 visitors per year
  - Median Number of Days Open: 60 days each year
Farm Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Range</th>
<th>Farm Revenue</th>
<th>Agritourism Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $1,000</td>
<td>4,999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 - 4,999</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 - 24,999</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 - 99,999</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - 249,999</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000 - 499,999</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 - 999,999</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1 million - 4,999,999</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5 million +</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While farmers with different amounts of agritourism revenue looked quite similar, their farms differed widely.

- **Agritourism revenues of less than $100,000**
  - **30+ miles** away from a city of 50,000 or more people
  - **Closed** on average for more than half of the year

- **Agritourism revenues of $100,000 or more**
  - **Less than 30 miles** away from a city of 50,000 or more people
  - **Open** on average for more than half of the year
Factors Contributing to Agritourism Profitability (Preliminary)

- Entertainment/On-Farm Events
- Motivation – Increase Revenue
- Years in Operation
  - Gross Revenue
- Motivation – Social Interaction
- On-farm Direct Sales
  - Visitors - >50 Miles
  - Southern States
- Motivation – Family Employment
  - Farm Acreage
- Off-Farm Direct Sales
- Female Operator

Estimated Profits Generated in 2018

P < 0.01
P < 0.05
P < 0.10
Motivations and Goals

- Increase farm/ranch revenue: 94% rated as very important or important, 87% feel successful.
- Build goodwill in the community: 89% rated as very important or important, 88% feel successful.
- Educate public about agriculture: 88% rated as very important or important, 87% feel successful.
- Increase traffic to on-farm sales outlet: 81% rated as very important or important, 86% feel successful.
- Enjoy social interaction with public: 81% rated as very important or important, 97% feel successful.
- Provide family employment: 78% rated as very important or important, 95% feel successful.

Legend:
- Green: Percent of respondents who rated goal as very important or important.
- Light blue: Percent of respondents who feel they are successful in achieving important goals.
**Challenges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor (including family)</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about liability issues</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing your operation</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost/availability of insurance</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Flow management</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of operating capital</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing visitor access</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and local regulations</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/implement a business plan</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“This has been one of the hardest jobs and ventures I have ever been involved in, and I make little to nothing to show for all the effort and work put into this business.”

- West coast operator
Challenges by Region

- Liability issues were a top challenge for all four regions of the US.
- Availability of capital was also a top challenge for all four regions.
- Regulatory concerns such as taxes and zoning were of higher concern for the West, Northeast, and Midwest.
- The South had the greatest challenges with e-connectivity.
The Future of Agritourism

- 69% of respondents plan to expand their services
- 55% of respondents plan to invest in more buildings or equipment
- 36% of respondents plan to hire more employees
## Supports Needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media marketing and management</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and liability information</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing plan development</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website management</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources for public on locating agritourism enterprises</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety information for having on-farm/ranch visitors</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Lisa Chase
lisa.chase@uvm.edu

Penny Leff
paleff@ucanr.edu

Dee Singh-Knights
DoSingh-Knights@mail.wvu.edu

https://www.uvm.edu/vtrc/agritourism-survey