Agritourism in rural development
Successes, Opportunities & Challenges

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Agritourism is:

Any income-generating activity conducted on a **working** farm or ranch for the enjoyment and education of visitors.
Why Agritourism?

For Visitors

• Relaxation
• Authentic Experience
• Participation
• Time with family & friends
• Weekend/local travel experience
• Connection with farmers & Ranchers & the natural world
Why Agritourism?

For Farmers and Ranchers

• Additional income, jobs for family
• Educate about agriculture
• Promotion of agricultural products
• Build community, companionship
Why Agritourism?

For Communities

- Keep farms & ranches viable
- Maintain rural ambiance
- Economic benefit to community
- Recreation, local identity for local residents
Agritourism activities include...

- **On-farm Direct Sales** (U-pick, farm stands, dairy, wine, beer, farm products, etc.).
- **Accommodations/Lodging** (farm stays, guest ranch, B&Bs, camping, cabins, etc.).
- **Entertainment/Special Events** (harvest festivals, corn mazes, farm dinners, weddings, parties, etc.).
- **Outdoor Recreation** (picnicking, swimming, hunting, fishing, photography, horseback riding, snowmobiling, biking, etc.)
- **Educational Activities** (farm or ranch work experience, camps, classes, tours, tastings, demonstrations, petting zoos, etc).

From: Multi-institutional interdisciplinary research project – survey of 288 western agritourism operators as part of 3 year USDA grant: “Place-Based Innovation: An Integrated Look at Agritourism in the Western US”
Agritourism Enterprise Types

• **Supplementary enterprise**
  – A minor activity supporting other products on the farm
    • Example: occasional school or group tours for a fee

• **Complementary enterprise**
  – Agritourism shares equal footing in farm’s product mix
    • Example: apple orchard with half U-Pick, half wholesale

• **Primary enterprise**
  – Agritourism is the dominant/primary activity
    • Example: Winery tasting room with lodging facility
Agritourism challenges

- Hospitality skills
- Different staffing
- New regulations
- Additional risks
- New partners
- Community support
Farmers Develop Activities & Attractions
- Something to see/learn
- Something to eat/drink/do
- Something to buy

Destination Marketing Organization Assists & Trains Farmers
- Train Farmers:
  - Business planning
  - Risk management
  - Customer service skills
- Build Partnerships
  - Organize Farmer Network
  - Identify Partners
    - Lodging
    - Adventure tourism
    - Art, culture
    - Food and drink providers
- Create Itinerary with partners
- Improve Infrastructure

Agritourism Joins Tourism Community
- Where are potential visitors going now?
- How can agritourism fit with their trip planning?
- Who will sell agritourism itinerary?
Regional Collaboration

Strength in Numbers

The farm trail or agritourism association can be a way to unite small and larger producers in your county or region.
Thank you!

Questions?

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