

Agritourism in rural development

Successes, Opportunities & Challenges



Penny Leff, Agritourism Coordinator

University of California Sustainable
Agriculture Research and Education
Program (UC SAREP)

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





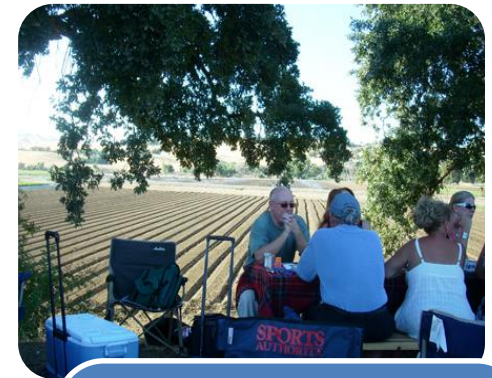
Farmers Develop Activities & Attractions

- 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



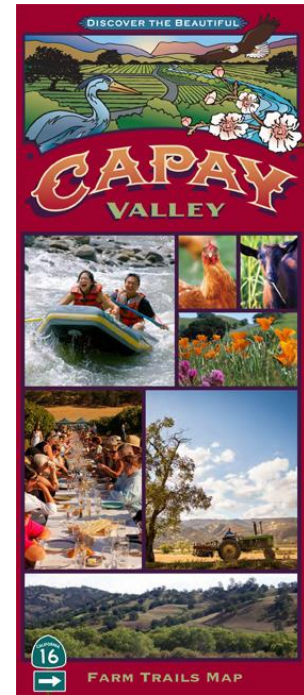
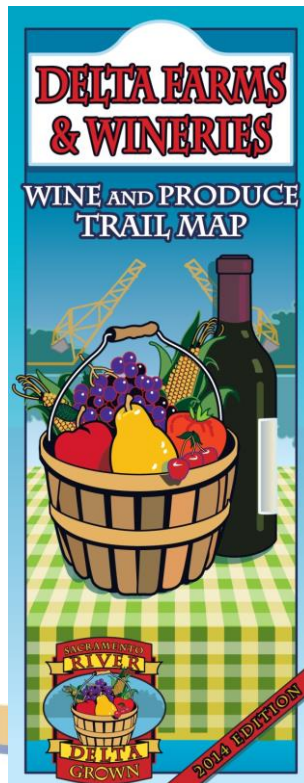
Agritourism Joins Tourism Community

- 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?

Contact:

Penny Leff, Agritourism Coordinator

UC Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program

paleff@ucdavis.edu

(530) 752-5208

