

Agritourism in Action: A Growing Opportunity for Rural Economies

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A Snapshot of Tennessee Agritourism: 2013 Study Summary

A survey of Tennessee agritourism operations was conducted in early 2013. A total of 171 operations responded to the survey. Selected results are summarized here for a small snapshot of Tennessee agritourism.

- More than 20% of operations responding had the following types of attractions or offerings:
 - On-farm retail markets offering farm products for sale
 - School field trips/tours
 - Event hosting (birthday parties, corporate events, etc.)
 - Pick-your-own operations
 - Hayride or wagon ride
 - Farm tours other than school field trips
 - Event hosting – weddings
 - Other family fun activities
 - Pumpkin patches
- Agritourism operators face many challenges including:
 - Attracting customers to visit
 - Deciding how to promote the business
 - Capital for infrastructure
 - Developing advertising
 - Keeping and evaluating records
- Average number of years in business = 11.4
- 45% of operations had gross sales of less than \$25,000 in 2012
- Median visitor expenditure = \$20; Average visitor expenditure = \$35.12
- Median number of visitors per operation for 2012 = 1,000; Average per operation = 15,932; Average visitors per operation that is open fewer than 180 days = 5,434
- Operations reported hosting more than 1.75 million visitors at Tennessee farms in 2012.
- Visitor expenditures to Tennessee agritourism operations in 2012 were estimated to be over \$34.4 million directly and more than \$54.2 million including multiplier effects.
- Estimated economic impact has more than doubled in less than 10 years!
- Agritourism operators typically have income from other farm sources and non-farm sources in addition to agritourism. Only about 16% relied on agritourism alone for income.
- Nearly 63% of operators had attended an agritourism educational program in the last three years. On average, operators estimated that these programs influenced their sales in 2012 with an increase of 19.9%.
- The total estimated impact for the industry of educational programs in the last three years is nearly \$7.6 million.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Want to see all the results of the study? Find the entire report online at <http://tiny.utk.edu/ATStudy>.

Looking for an agritourism operation to visit? Check out PickTNProducts.org or TNVacation.com.

Interested in starting an agritourism operation? Visit <http://tiny.utk.edu/IdeastoAction> or contact your local Extension agent or the Megan Bruch Leffew at mleffew@utk.edu or (931) 486-2777.



Agritourism is...

...for consumers.

Authentic	Unique	Intellectually Stimulating
Relaxing	Memory Making	Fun
Delicious	Beautiful	Exhilarating
Romantic	Nostalgic	

...for farmers.

	Challenge	Hard Work
Advocacy for Agriculture	Fun	Revenue Enhancer?
Investment	Risk	Add Value?

...for communities.

Shop/Play Local	Tourism \$ Draw	Local Purchases by AT
Jobs	Tax Revenue	Tax Savings
Quality of Life	AT Support for Local Causes	Multiplier Effects



Communities can sow seeds for agritourism success by:

1. Promoting smart product development
 - a. Take a market driven approach to create unique complementary operations.
 - b. Create customer experiences.
 - c. Start smart: Assess resources, research/learn, generate ideas, assess market potential, run some numbers and develop a business plan.
2. Facilitating collaborations.
 - a. Create/facilitate marketing opportunities and partnerships.
 - b. Form networks and mentorships.
3. Advocating for operations.
 - a. Share good news of impacts.
 - b. Help obtain resources.
 - c. Help prevent barriers.
4. Supporting and promoting operations.
 - a. Provide exposure for agritourism operators and operations.
 - b. Purchase farm products.
 - c. Use operations for events.

