



AGRO TOURISM: AN IDEAL RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

Agricultural geography is the main branch of economic geography. Now-a-days an innovative practice is receiving higher profit in agricultural activity. An agrotourism is advance source of income in this activity. The term agrotourism describes any type of activity based on the relation between agriculture and tourism and designates a concept over 100 years old, when city-dwellers visited their relatives or friends in the countryside in search of a more pleasant air and of quiet. This practice has become even more popular because of the following: when automobiles appeared and developed; when people were under the pressure of economic crises; when city-dwellers tried to escape war-developed stress; because of countryside nostalgic ones; due to the popularization of agrotourism activities. In the few decades since it has been practiced, agrotourism – still in search of one's own identity has known several names (agrarian tourism, agricultural tourism, farm tourism, countryside tourism, and rural tourism) and definitions whose common element is the rural and that all tend to focus on those types of activities visitors practice in the rural area. Taken into consideration we have studied the agrotourism is an ideal resource for sustainable development. The paper is based on field survey and secondary sources. Due to population growth the land holding capacity is reduced therefore the necessity of maximum profit should obtained from minimum land. Agrotourism is proper solution for getting maximum profit for the same problem.

Keywords: Agricultural, economic, geography, tourism, resources

Introduction:

The World Tourism Organization defines tourism as “Activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.”

Agrotourism or agrotourism, as it is defined most broadly, involves any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. Agritourism has different definitions in different parts of the world, and sometimes refers specifically to farm stays, as in Italy. Elsewhere, agritourism includes a wide variety of activities, including buying produce direct from a farm stand, navigating a corn maze, slopping hogs, picking fruit, feeding animals, or staying at a bed and breakfast (B&B) on a farm (*Büso, Emily 2007*). The agrotourism practice has become even more popular because of the following: when automobiles appeared and developed; when people were under the pressure of economic crises; when city-dwellers tried to escape war-developed stress; because of countryside nostalgic ones; due to the popularization of agrotourism activities. In the few decades since it has been practiced, agrotourism – still in search of one's own identity has known several names (agrarian tourism, agricultural tourism, farm tourism, countryside tourism, and rural tourism) and definitions whose common element is the rural and that all tend to focus on those

types of activities visitors practice in the rural area

Concept of tourism & agrotourism:

Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes. Tourism is different from travel. In order for tourism to happen, there must be a displacement: an individual has to travel, using any type of means of transportation (he might even travel on foot: nowadays, it is often the case for poorer societies, and happens even in more developed ones and concerns pilgrims, hiking, etc.) any travel for holidaying, business or professional trip becomes a part of tourism if it is temporary and is undertaken voluntarily, without an aim to earn any livelihood out of it.

Agrotourism is the form of tourism which capitalizes on rural culture as a tourist attraction. It is similar to ecotourism except that its primary appeal is not the natural landscape but a cultural landscape. If the attractions on offer to tourists contribute to improving the income of the regional population, agrotourism can promote regional development. To ensure that it also helps to conserve diversity, the rural population itself must have recognized agrobiodiversity as valuable and worthy of protection. There are a range of other forms of rural tourism which are not necessarily a part of agrotourism in the strict sense - e.g. ethnotourism, project tourism, health tourism, historical tourism, cultural tourism or

adventure tourism. The term 'agro-ecotourism' is generally synonymous with 'agrotourism'.

Data collection & methodology:

The present study is based on field work and secondary data sources like concern books, periodicals, websites and observations. We are observed the selected agrotourism places in south Maharashtra i.e. Ramkrishna Visava (Kodoli-chikurdi warna, Kolhapur), Sahyadri (Savarde khurd, Kolhapur), Vasundhara (Chikurde, Sangli), Anand Sevhan (Ashta, Sangli) and Koyana (Tapola via Mahabaleshwar, Satara) in the sense of getting high yield from agriculture business. We collect the information like land holding, structure, variety in crops and plantation, interest of tourist, investment, knowledge, income and expenditure.

Discussion and analysis:

Agrotourism operations are challenged by the cost of and access to insurance and liability coverage, unpredictable weather, the seasonal nature of the operation, health and code inspections, and the struggle to provide customer service to the sometimes not-so-agreeable public. These factors cannot be addressed in detail in just one document; they require the involvement of multiple experts and numerous face-to-face discussions. The different types of agritourism have appeared from the experiences the tourists wanted to live (nature tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, etc.). Thus, each type of tourism is a way of naming a new niche on the tourism market for a different experience. Farm tourism is defined as a travel associated with the practice of agriculture whose reference point is the village. It is identified with agritourism and with rural tourism and is associated with countryside tourism and with rural tourism. It is considered a subset of cultural tourism and a mechanism through which non-farmers can learn about agriculture. The main ingredients are: farm visits for the retail purchase of local produce; activities organised on private agricultural lands that can include fee paying hunting and fishing, overnight stay, educational activities, etc.

Conditions of Development of Agrotourism:

A number of conditions must be met in order to allow the development of an agrotourism. These include, A largely authentic natural or small-scale, richly structured cultural landscape. The attractions of large-scale monocultures are rather limited. In addition to the beauty of the landscape itself, it is important to have other cultural, historical or natural attractions. Good transport links, because even attractive regions can be almost impossible to market for tourism

if they are not easily accessible from the population centers. A certain level of infrastructure must be in place: e.g. transport, accommodation and catering facilities. Stable political conditions: this is essential for marketing even major tourist attractions. Acceptance among the population: local people must be in favour of tourism.

Conclusion and recommendations:

Agrotourism is the best practice for getting higher income and mind satisfaction from humankind. According to observations from visited agro tourist places there are tripled income gets by this activity with living luxurious life. Agrotourism provides employments, ecological balance, satisfaction from own and others, entertainment, innovative practices, organic agricultural products etc. There is need to training education of agrotourism for youngster group.

Before opening the doors to the public, take time to think about your options and the impact your choices will have on reaching your goals. There are some key steps to developing and implementing a successful plan of agrotourism.

- **Create a plan.** What farm experience can you offer the public that will make your operation unique, in compliance with all local ordinances and codes, and profitable? Your local Extension agent and farm management agent can help you identify alternatives.
- **Plan to grow your business.** After developing the initial plan to establish an agritourism business, you need to consider how to continually create new adventures to attract new guests and entice those who have already visited the farm to return. When considering growth, assess space limitations, availability of parking, maximum number of people who can be safely transported, time required to travel around the activity area, and seating capacity for activities.
- **Understand your liability.** When visitors arrive on your property, liability increases. Identify risk-management issues, implement safety plans to prevent identified risks, and obtain the necessary insurance coverage for your specific operation. Wise agritourism entrepreneurs consult their attorneys and insurance agents prior to opening their doors to guests.
- **Develop partnerships.** Talk to neighbors about your plans and ask for their support. Inform your economic development office and Chamber of Commerce about your plans to open a new business enterprise. Review road

signage and confirm that directions to the farm are clearly marked.

- **Inventory existing attractions.** Ask the local tourism office to provide assistance in reviewing your publicity plan and linking to other local activities. Determine if other farms in the region are engaged in agritourism activities and explore the idea of all the farms developing a publicity partnership.
- **Visit other agritourism farms.** VDACS maintains a list of agritourism farms throughout the commonwealth at www.vdacs.virginia.gov/news/c-tourism.shtml.
- **Add your operation to tourism websites.** Contact the Virginia Tourism Corporation at www.virginia.org, and scroll to the bottom of the page to select “Add/Update a Listing.” (You will need to register for a free account.) Also be sure to list your operation with VDACS.
- **Know your customers.** Long-time agritourism entrepreneurs know that their customers want to slow down, relax, and truly enjoy a farm experience.

- **Set guiding rules for all farm visitors and communicate them clearly.** You will want to make the visit a wonderful experience for each guest. However, guests must follow the rules for handling animals, traveling through open fields, and avoiding areas that are not visitor-safe.

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