

# Implementing YOUR Agritourism Plan



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Agriculture and Natural Resources

## Steps for getting started

- Evaluate your resources, decide if agritourism is for you
- Understand your community, competition & potential partners
- Identify your target customers
- Plan your ideal business, but start small
- Determine if your business is feasible; manage the risk
  - Permits
  - Liability & insurance
- Create a marketing strategy
- Create a safety plan
- Create an emergency plan
- Understand good hospitality and customer service
- Work with your community to promote the region

## **Operation's current capabilities and situation**

- How well is current operation meeting your business goals?
- What changes are planned for your current operation?



## **How could a tourism venture contribute to your business goals?**



- What goals do you have for an agritourism or nature tourism enterprise?

## Assessing what you have

- Agriculture has Unique Features and Benefits and **YOU** have Very Special Stories to Share



## Review your physical resources

- Land ownership or access
- Land Use, soil type
- Land Features, Water Bodies
- Farmstead Features
- Additional Attractions



## Farm and ranch activities

- What current farm or ranch activities might appeal to the public? What you consider routine might be unusual and interesting to the non-farming public.

### Examples:

- Cattle drives
- Viewing baby animals
- Pastured poultry operations
- Sheep sheering
- Fruit tree pruning
- On-site food processing
- Roadside produce stands
- Harvesting, U-Pick



## Side-note: Your neighbors' land use

- As you inventory your own properties, you also have to think about the broader picture.
- How are your neighbors using their land?
- How do you affect your neighbors?
- How do your neighbors affect you?



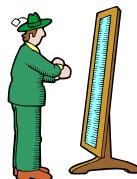
## Assess your Financial Resources

- What are your financial resources?
- Do you have access to capital?
- What are your start-up costs?
- What can you realistically afford to spend?
- How much money are you willing and able to risk?



## What are YOUR Personal Skills?

- Do you like to entertain & serve strangers?
- Are you patient and sensitive to the needs of visitors?
- Do you have the physical stamina and vigor to maintain your operation while properly serving customers?
- BE HONEST!



## Rate your Human Resources



- Staff: Family & Hired
- Management Team
- Neighbors
- Government Staff & Officials
- Business & Tourism Associations
- Other Local Businesses

## Identify your competition & potential collaborators

- With your family & other business partners:
  - Find out what agritourism and nature tourism exists in your community
  - Visit if you can
  - Talk with successful operators
    - Book a room or a tour
    - Observe & ask questions



## Assess your Community Resources



- Natural Beauty
- Cultural & Social Characteristics
- Cultural and Recreation Offerings
- Food, Lodging, Shopping & Entertainment
- Public Infrastructure
- Attitudes Toward Tourists
- Accessibility
- Existing Tourism Activity

## Begin to identify your ideal customers

- “Shotgun” approach is expensive and rarely effective
- Choose and target a customer sector within the agritourism and nature tourism industry

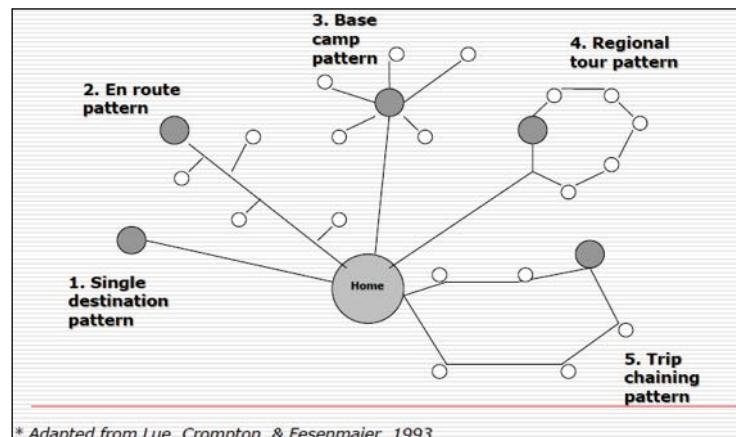


## Study YOUR Target Tourists

- Where are they coming from?
- Where else are they going?
- What is their age range?
- Families, individuals or groups?
- Income range?
- What do they want?
- When do they want it?
- Who else offers what they want?
- What do you offer that is competitive or complimentary?
- What will keep them coming back for more?



## Where Else are they Going? (Who are your partners?)



## What you can do - Defining limitations

- Good neighbor limitations
- Natural resource limitations
- Human Resource limitations
- Legal limitations



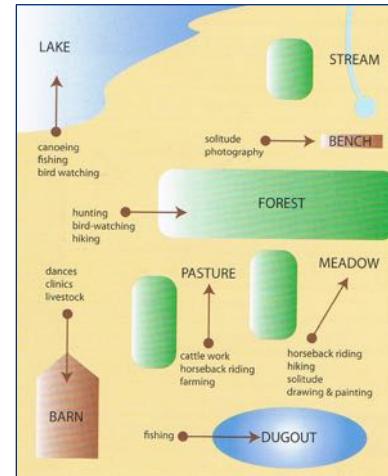
## Legal limitations

- Zoning, permitting
- Easements
- Building codes
- Septic requirements
- Labor laws
- Food safety
- Direct marketing – reselling regulation
- Liability



## Now... Evaluate some Possibilities

- Consider different potential agritourism activities
- With family or management team, ask evaluation questions for each activity
- List pros and cons for each of the possible activities
- Think about where, sketch a map



## Premises Liability

- Premises liability is based on the notion of negligence
  - The failure to exercise the care that a *reasonably prudent person* would exercise in like circumstances

**DUTY**

**BREACH**

**CAUSATION**

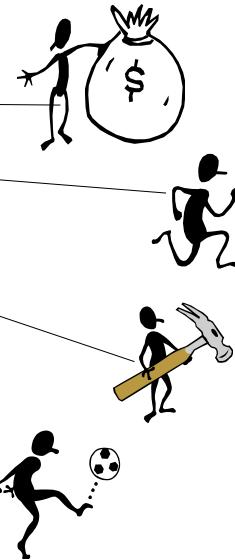
**DAMAGES**

**NEGLIGENCE**

+

## Risk management Approaches

- Assume the risk
- Avoid the risk
- Reduce the risk
- Transfer the risk



## Insurance

- Make the insurance agent aware of any changes and that they are covered by the policy (in writing)
  - If possible have them see the agritourism operation in person before buying a policy
  - Check in yearly to see if coverage has changed

## Agritourism Planning

- Helpful hints:
  - Mark boundaries carefully
  - Set up an inspection schedule
    - Pros and Cons of this approach
  - Use information from the inspection to provide invitees with a written warning of the dangers.

## Planning for Safety

**Agritourism Safety**

Agritourism – activities that bring visitors to a farm or ranch – is seen more often today than ever before. Types of agritourism operations vary: corn mazes, pumpkin patches, pick your own operations, dude ranches, and more.

As agritourism continues to grow in popularity, implementing safety strategies to help maximize fun and minimize liability is increasingly important. This website provides tools and resources that can assist and educate.

To help keep visitors safe, use these walkthroughs, checklists and resources to implement safety best practices. It's easy and fun. For additional tips on getting the best out of this site, please review [How to Use this Site](#).

[Learn more about safety on farms](#)

For additional information on keeping children safe on farms, visit the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety website.

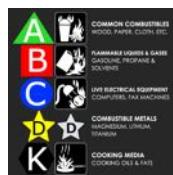
**WALKTHROUGHS**

**CHECKLISTS**

**RESOURCES**

- [safeagritourism.org/](http://safeagritourism.org/)

# Emergency Preparedness


**AGRITOURISMREADY**  
Agritourism Emergency Preparedness

**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

**HOME**

**HOW TO START YOUR PLAN**

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

**EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS**

**NATURAL DISASTERS**

**MAN-MADE DISASTERS**

**SECURITY**

**EMERGENCY**

**RECOVER PRACTICES**

**IMPROVE PRACTICES**

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**Search this blog...**

**Agritourism Ready**  
A One Stop Shop for preparing your emergency management plan

Ohio State University Extension is excited to bring this curriculum to farm families in Ohio and across the nation. This project is the result of two grant projects, focusing on the unmet need for emergency preparedness materials within the agritourism industry in Ohio.

The curriculum focus is seven units, comprised of chapters specific to Risk Management and addressing potential emergencies. Chapters within each unit strive to educate the farm management team to develop their plan, including the details needed to print a detailed emergency preparedness plan for use in their business. Part of this plan will be a posted flip-chart for hands-on access to employees and others who will assist with the response to and mitigation of the emergency.

This optimized website was developed for use by the management team in preparing the plan and to educate employees on how to deal with specific emergencies. It can also be used by educators to teach this curriculum. For a primer, you can watch this webinar recording.

This project aims to increase the overall emergency preparedness capacity of agri-tourism and direct marketing enterprises, which in turn increases the preparedness of the communities in which they exist.

Follow us at [u.osu.edu/agritourismready](http://u.osu.edu/agritourismready) and click follow button at the bottom of the screen.

This material is based upon work supported by USDA-NIFA under Award Number 2013-41210-2191.

**Start Here:**  
**First Unit: How to Start Your Plan**

<https://u.osu.edu/agritourismready/>

**YOUR target tourists, and the way your reach them, depends on your operation, and on YOU**

**Target marketing steps:**

- Know your new industry (travel, hospitality, agritourism)
- Know your product
  - What makes you special?
- Identify your target customers
- Identify your new partners
- Develop your message
- Offer a memorable experience
- Keep them coming back!



## Trends in tourism

- **Culinary Travel trends** (from the World Food Travel Association)

- Increasing Sustainability Sensitivity
- Local Sourcing is Hot
- More Expensive
- Authenticity is important to foodies
- Wi-Fi service is expected, and expected to be free
- New: Peer to Peer Dining Experiences
  - EatWith, Feastly, MealSharing



**The percentage of US leisure travelers who travel to learn about unique dining experiences grew from 40% to 61% between 2006 and 2013**

## Trends in tourism

### Cultural and Heritage Travelers

- Travel to experience the places, people, activities and things that authentically represent the past and present, including cultural, historic and natural resources
- 78 percent of all leisure travelers
- More frequent travelers
- Spend more on leisure trips
- More educated, higher household incomes
- More likely to travel further
- More likely to also participate in culinary activities
- Seek authentic destinations with historic character & educational experiences



The Cultural & Heritage Traveler Study was conducted by Mandala Research for the U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Marketing Council, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce / Office of Travel & Tourism Industries.



## Trends in tourism

### The Millennial Traveler

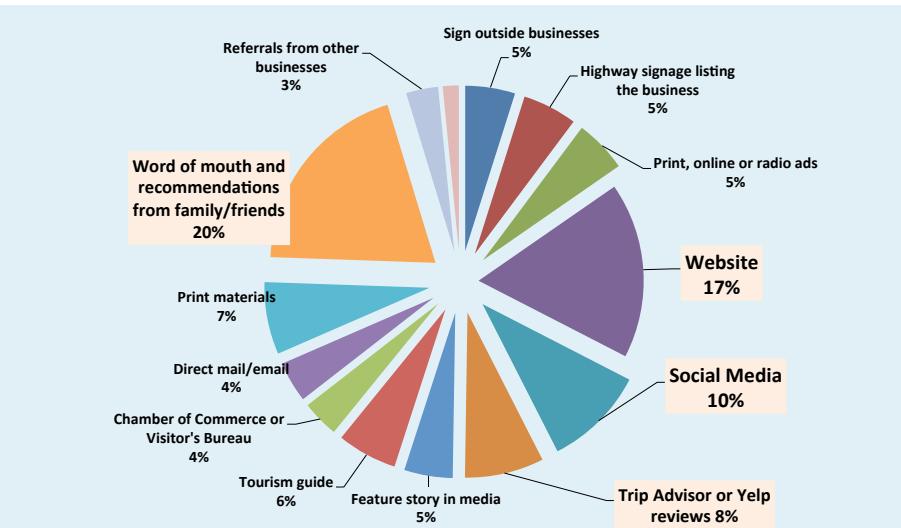
- Born between 1980 and 2000
  - By 2020 will be half the U.S. labor force
- Love Travel: travel the most of any age group
  - 66% consider travel a very important part of their life
  - Take short getaways, but also more likely to take longer trips
- Adventurous, looking for more remote destinations

BUT...

- Expect everything to be available anywhere, anytime
- Make fast decisions and expect fast service
- Research and book trips online, often using smartphones
- Willing to spend money on travel, and amount will increase
- Increasing their use of travel advisors

From Virtuoso Luxury Traveler  
[Blog.virtuoso.com/traveler\\_trends](http://Blog.virtuoso.com/traveler_trends)

## Information Sources Used by Agritourists (from National Survey of Agritourism Visitors)



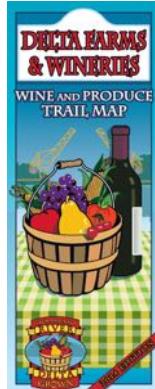
## Regional Collaboration



### Strength in Numbers

The farm trail or wine trail can be a way to unite small producers in your county.

Encourage local producers that the Farm Trail is the start of a tighter knit community of local small/specialty **farmers**.



- Tickets sell out at 2,000
- Passport sales start Labor Day
- 6-week sales cycle supported by TV, Radio, Social Media, Email Marketing and word of mouth
- **\$50,000+ yearly revenue from the sale of passports, promotional items and advertising agreements**
- Approximately \$7-10K map and passport printing
- Approximately \$8K on advertising (mostly social and online, our local TV station is a sponsor)
- Radio and print promotions in exchange for ticket give aways.



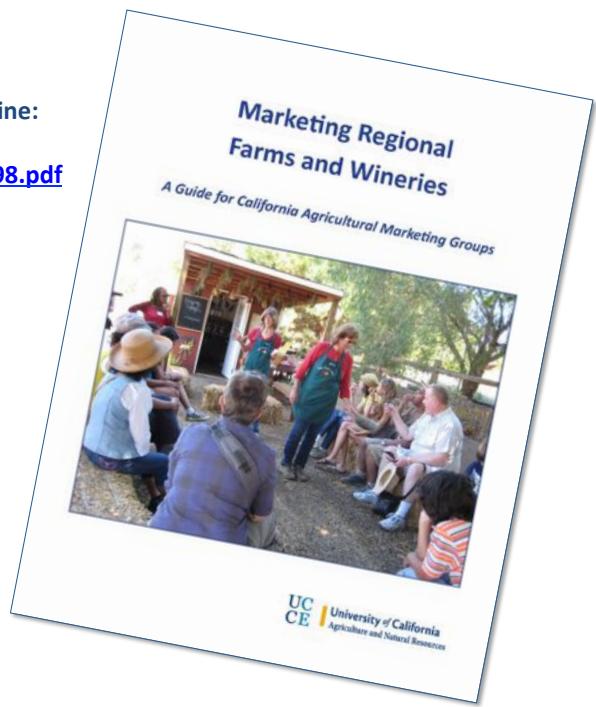
## Apple Hill – a fall tradition

- Apple and fruit farms
- U-Pick farms
- Flowers
- Bake Shops
- Craft Fairs
- Pumpkins
- Christmas Trees
- Wine
- Spas
- Special events
- 50 years old, started by growers, still owned and operated by growers
- 55 ranches are members, current members vote on new memberships
- Membership fee \$175 and up
- No grant funding



38 page guide available online:

[sfp.ucdavis.edu/files/224898.pdf](http://sfp.ucdavis.edu/files/224898.pdf)



## REMEMBER, Tourists want a quality experience



They participate in meaningful, fun and authentic activities.

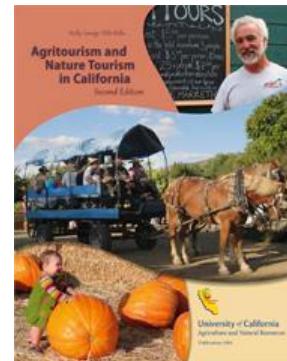
They are welcomed, respected and well cared for.

They get what they came for, and when they leave -- they leave wanting to return.



## More agritourism resources:

- *Agritourism and Nature Tourism in California*  
2<sup>nd</sup> edition – [UC ANR Catalog](#)
- UC Small Farm Program website:  
<http://sfp.ucdavis.edu/agritourism>
- Sign up for California Agritourism News  
[\(email newsletter\)](#)
- Webinars and online conversations:  
[ucanr.edu/agtourconv](http://ucanr.edu/agtourconv)
- Free online agritourism directory and calendar [www.calagtour.org](http://www.calagtour.org)
- FaceBook page -  
[www.facebook.com/agtourconnections](http://www.facebook.com/agtourconnections)



# Thank you!

## Questions?

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