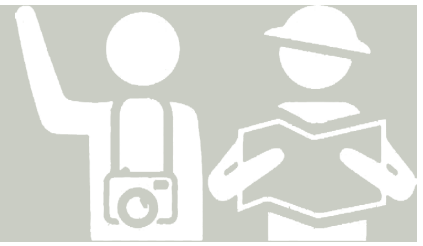


AGRITOURISM

Where agriculture and tourism meet



A corn maze. Barn weddings. A tour of a bison ranch.

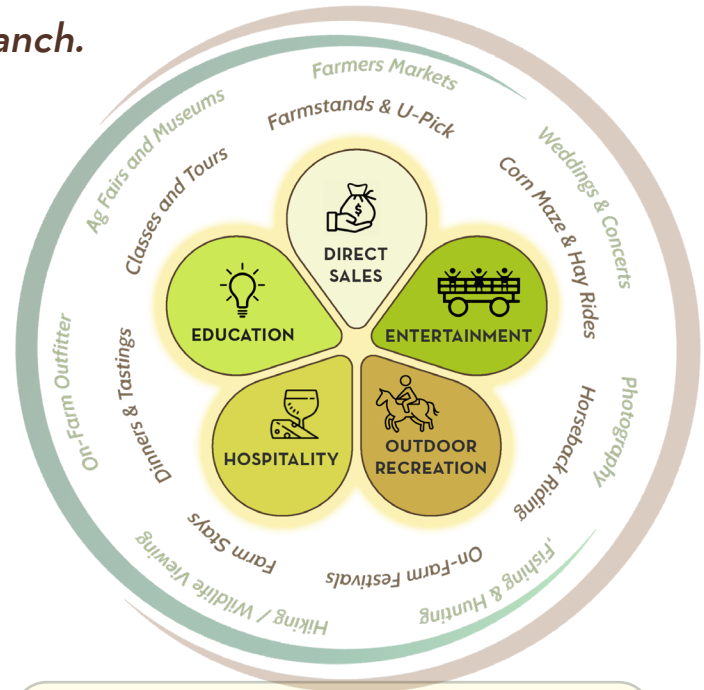
Today the public is seeking out **authentic, on-farm experiences** which can extend from such well-known activities as a pick-your-own berries on-farm to an overnight stay in a yurt in a sheep pasture and duck hunting on the edge of a farmer's pond.

All of these on-farm activities are part of agritourism, which has been most simply defined as **where agriculture and tourism meet**. Often this entails attracting visitors on-farm to experience its location or products, although the variety of possibilities and farmer ingenuity consistently presses the boundaries of the term.

What is the value for farmers and communities?

For some farmers, agritourism may be **a source of new revenue** to diversify the business. For others, getting visitors on the farm to see their operation may satisfy an interest to better **educate the public** about agriculture. Whatever the reason, whenever a visitor and farmer share a positive exchange, good things happen.

For rural communities, agritourism can play an important role in **business and community development**. On-farm businesses provide an avenue for local business development and can attract visitors and their spending to the communities. In addition, they can help define a local identity, or preserve rural amenities and character.



MN Statute 604A.40:

"Agritourism activity" means activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows organizations or members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, charitable, or educational purposes, to view, enjoy, or participate in rural activities, including, but not limited to: farming; viticulture; winemaking; ranching; and historical, cultural, farm stay, gleanng, harvest-your-own, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant pays to participate in the activity.



IS AGRITOURISM RIGHT FOR MY OPERATION?

Similar to investigating any additional enterprise, you must decide how an agritourism venture will complement your current activities. Agritourism can be as simple as hosting an early childhood class to see farm animals and as complex as developing a posh farm-to-table dining business.

Connecting with educational resources, associations, and agencies that support agritourism activities in Minnesota is a great way to start and explore possibilities, anticipate risks, and build connections with other operators. An open exploration should provide tangible ideas of how agritourism plays out in 'real life' and give a grounded view of how to get started.

Come and Get It (a guidebook for on-farm food service) provides assessments and questions to provoke your thinking:

- » What is my current schedule like?
- » Is there synergy with other farm operations?
- » Where is the bulk of my current time and commitment to this operation going?
- » What is the appeal of your farm to visitors? How do you present your farm to visitors?

These questions around the topics of risk management, food safety, and customer service are key to examine before launching even the simplest on-farm event to make sure you and your visitors have a positive experience.

SEE REVERSE for additional resources to guide your agritourism journey. ➔

AGRITOURISM

Planning Resources

👉 Links to these resources can be found at z.umn.edu/mn_ag_tourism_resources



BUSINESS PLANNING

- » [United States Small Business Development Administration](#) offices are located around the state and offer free business consulting.
- » [Come and Get it Guide, Serving Food on the Farm](#), is a guidebook produced by the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture.
- » [Building a Sustainable Business](#) booklet is available from the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture.
- » [Farmstay Manual](#) is a publication of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture.
- » [Iowa State University's Agricultural Marketing Resource Center](#) provides a comprehensive set of information and resources pertaining to agritourism.

LICENSING AND REGULATORY

- » [Minnesota state statute](#) provides limited immunity from liability for farmers that host agritourism activities.
- » [Starting a food business roadmap](#) is a Minnesota Department of Agriculture resource to help people navigate licensing and regulation requirements for starting up a food business.
- » [Minnesota Department of Agriculture](#) provides a searchable licensing and inspections list.
- » [Legal considerations](#) are summarized at FarmCommons.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- » Making your farm safe for youth provides unique challenges. This [Farm Safety for Youth fact sheet](#) from University of Minnesota Extension provides ideas and guidance.
- » Mitigate the risks for those that come in contact with animals or animal waste on your farm by revealing this [Animal Contact in Public Settings fact sheet](#) from University of Minnesota Extension.
- » [Handwashing and Farm Safety resources](#) are available from the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH).
- » Those serving food on their farms should have standard operating procedures approved by their food service inspector. [Standard Operating Procedures for Foodservice](#) by University of Minnesota Extension can be helpful.
- » [Safer Farm Animal Contact Exhibits \(Safer FACEs\) online training](#) is available through the Minnesota Dept of Health.

MARKETING

- » [Minnesota Grown](#) is the Minnesota Dept of Agriculture's marketing program for Minnesota farms and farm products.
- » [Explore Minnesota](#) is Minnesota's tourism promotion agency.

To join a mailing list to stay updated on agritourism resources and efforts in Minnesota, fill out the form at:

👉 z.umn.edu/mn_ag_tourism_mailing_list