

Do You Make Money Farming with Agritourism (or Want to)?



If your small scale farming operation utilizes agritourism as a way to make money from the farm, here are four travel forecasts from AAA to consider.

1. Train travel is predicted to grow in popularity. With the economy troubles and airline travel safety restrictions becoming a headache, more people are traveling by train. If you have a “How to get here” link on your farm’s website (or even if you don’t), check to see where the nearest train station is to your small farm and let visitors know the distance, providing them with a link to the train station.

2. Nearby and shorter-term travel is predicted to continue. Make money farming by attracting more local and regional customers to your farm’s agritourism destination. If you relied on distant travelers in the past, hold a farm festival for the locals or write a press release on your farm’s B&B as a nearby get-away for regional customers. The title, *The New Agritourism: Hosting Community and Tourists on Your Farm* shows how to write press releases for your agritourism venture along with numerous ways to attract the local community.

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3. “Glamping” is expected to continue in popularity. It’s a combination of camping and glamour. Mary Jane’s Farm in Idaho helped save her farm with this method. The wall tents in her orchard have quilted beds and pretty country furnishings in each tent with a rustic outdoor kitchen (there is a chapter in *The New Agritourism* on how she started her wall tent project). For the small scale farming operation wanting to just try agritourism out for a month or so without long-term commitment, this might be a fun possibility for the camping and honeymoon months of June, July and August only, then assess afterwards how you feel about agritourism in general.



4. And “voluntourism,” the combination of travel with volunteering for a good cause or to learn and enjoy a new experience is expected to continue to gain popularity. The small scale farming community is especially good at this agritourism segment of travel. As two examples we’ve seen, a small vineyard invites volunteers out to learn how to carefully hand harvest wine grapes and discern if and when they’re perfect for picking and gets free labor for the trade; and micro farming families invite the community out to plant a row for the poor - which attracts the media, free publicity for the farm, and new potential farm customers.

The New Agritourism serves the small-scale farming and agritourism communities.

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