

CHECKLIST WHEN CONSIDERING AN AGRITOURISM PROGRAM

Agritourism is your chance to turn your farm into a unique, enjoyable experience that supports local agriculture! This is your opportunity to diversify and/or expand your business in order to increase your income by attracting more customers. You can successfully attract a diverse consumer base by offering the public something unique beyond the food they can take back to their dinner table. Agritourism is about marketing your farm operation and products in a special and innovative way that reflects you and your family as individuals.

Is Agritourism Right For Your Farm?

- Social skills are a must. Visitors should be treated as guests and extended unconditional friendliness and hospitality to ensure their return.
- Farm should have a designated guide to provide tours to guests who is knowledgeable in all areas of the farm.
- Farm should provide an introduction that outlines history, tour, theme of tour, and farms uniqueness.
- Farm should be neat and clean for all to see and enjoy. Tools, chemicals and equipment should be properly stored.
- Farm should engage in safe, up-to-date farming practices, and comply with federal, state and local regulations.

Who Will Visit Your Farm?

- Families
- Church Groups
- Youth Groups
- School Children
- Senior Citizens
- Anyone looking for something to do with natural surroundings in a structured setting

What Kind Of Activities Could You Offer?

- Farm tours, exhibits, and demonstrations
- Farm museum
- Seasonal festivals (pumpkins, sweet corn, music, crafts, competitions)
- Nature study/walks
- Rural education center
- Petting farm/zoo
- Pick-Your-Own Operation (fruits, flowers, vegetables, Christmas trees)
- Direct delivery of food products

What Educational Opportunities Exist On Your Farm?

- Soil and water conservation
- Proper animal treatment
- Harvesting
- Integrated Pest Management
- Organic growing
- Composting

How Will Visitors Learn About Your Farm?

- Internet
- Social media (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter)
- Descriptive brochure, rack cards
- Radio
- Television
- Newspaper
- Mailing lists
- Hawaii Visitors Association
- Area travel guides
- Hotels/Resorts/Vacation Rentals/Bed and Breakfasts
- Chamber of Commerce
- Libraries
- Word of mouth

What Governmental Regulations Should You Consider?

- Zoning: contact county planning.
- Health regulations: if providing food samples, Department of Health permits are required.
- Employees are working to OSHA safety guidelines.
- All animals are confined and pose no risks to visitors.
- Inspection Services: if exporting agricultural products, Plant Protection at the Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service of USDA.
- General Excise Taxes: contact Department of Taxation.
- Product packing: if selling packaged products, should conform to Hawaii Department of Agriculture standards.
- Majority of ingredients used in value-added products are grown on the farm or supplies by a local farm partnership.
- Accessible facilities for persons with disabilities (shaded areas and seating).
- Parking areas with easy egress and ingress.

Do You Need Insurance?

- Farm must have general liability insurance and product liability insurance.

What Are Some Other Issues You Should Consider In Your Agritourism Operation?

- Tour should end either at a designated departure area or at an area to provide the opportunity to purchase farm or value-added products.
- Tour information should be clear and instructive and present a positive educational picture of Hawaii agriculture.
- Safety equipment is available (up to date, complete First Aid Kit).
- Emergency plan should be developed and CPR training should be up to date.
- Eating areas, garbage cans, and recycling bins are provided if needed.
- Restrooms and wash stations are available for visitors.
- Level of tour difficulty provided, from easy to hard (amount of walking, stairs, steps and uneven trails).
- Surrounding neighbors have been informed.
- Possible funding sources that might be available to help you get started.