Agritourism:
What does it mean for Rural NC?

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North Carolina General Assembly
Committee on Cultural and Natural Resources
March 20th, 2014
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Overview

- Defining agritourism
- Rural micro-entrepreneurs in NC
  - People-First Tourism
- Does it really work?
  - Three levels of analysis
  - Three dimensions

Norris Farm (Boonville, NC)
The Meaning of Agritourism

Agritourism (USDA Census)
Income from recreational services such as hunting, fishing, farm or wine tours, hay rides, etc.

Agritourism in NC (2002-2007)
- Slight decrease in the number of agritourism farms (from 622 to 602 farms)
- Significant increase in agritourism-related income (from $1.9 to $12.7 M)

Myron Smith Benson (NC)
The Meaning of Agritourism

Visiting a working farm or other agricultural setting for recreation or education purposes.

1. Setting
   - Working farm
   - Non-working farm (e.g., abandoned mill)

2. Contact
   - Direct (e.g., learning to grow mushrooms)
   - Indirect (e.g., eating farm products)
   - Passive (e.g., wedding)

3. Experience
   - Authentic (e.g., U-pick)
   - Staged (e.g., winery tours)

4. Activity
   - Recreation (e.g., rides)
   - Education (e.g., workshops)

Gil Arroyo, Barbieri & Rich (2013); Phillip et al. (2010).
Missouri & North Carolina, 2011 (n=1,300)
A marketplace for rural tourism micro-entrepreneurs

www.peoplefirsttourism.com/NC

Community Focused
Sharing a commitment to responsible and ethical tourism allowing entrepreneurs to shape their future.

Learn more

NORTH CAROLINA
13 NETWORKS

Equitable Economic Development
Local Foods Movement
Military Readiness
The Biltmore received 1.2 million visitors in 2013.

P1T Madison network draws visitors from Asheville on day trips.

Improved destination competitiveness, increased length of stay.
Angelina’s Kitchen restaurant sources food products from local farms and directs patrons to the P1T farms.

Local small organic farms are more financially viable; restaurant is more successful; visitors learn and enjoy experience.

County Tourism office and Coop Extension office collaborate.
Marines and Army need rural land to remain mission-compatible

Agritourism creates new sources of revenue for working lands

Soft approach wins hearts and minds of neighboring communities
Agritourism is one form of on-farm enterprise developed to increase farm revenues or values.

- Does agritourism really work ($)?
- Who benefits?
- How sustainable is agritourism?
1. Farmers have a diverse set of economic and non economic goals.

2. The wellbeing of the farm household drives farmer’s decisions.

3. Agritourism promotes rural development.

4. Agritourism as a sustainable strategy.
Farmers’ Goals:

**Firm Profitability**
- Decrease fluctuations in farm revenue
- Meet financial obligations
- Better utilize farm resources
- Off-season revenue generation
- Reduce impact of catastrophic events

**Market Driven**
- Increase direct sale of farm products
- Better serve current customers
- Capture new customers
- Educate the public about agriculture
- Increase sale of value-added products

**Family Connections**
- Provide employment for family members
- Keep the farm in the family
- Enhance family quality of life

**Personal Pursuits**
- Make money from a hobby or interest
- More revenues to keep them farming
- Keep you active

(Barbieri, 2009; McGehee et al., 2007; Nickerson et al., 2001; Ollenburg & Buckley, 2007)
### Agritourism Assessment: The Agripreneur

**Importance of AT in Goal Accomplishment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean $^1$</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capture new customers</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>4.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educate the public about agriculture</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>3.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhance family quality of life</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>3.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better serve current customers</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>3.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep you active</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase direct-sale of value-added products</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional revenues to keep farming</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>3.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase direct-sale of other products</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>3.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decrease revenue fluctuations</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhance ability to meet financial obligations</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>3.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep the farm in the family</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>3.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better utilize farm resources</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5-pt Likert Scale: (1) = Not important; (3) = Somewhat Important; (5) = Extremely Important.

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Missouri, 2008 ($n=164$)  
(Tew & Barbieri, 2012)
Accomplishment by Goal Dimension

(MD1) Farm Profitability: 3.16
(MD2) Market Driven: 3.70
(MD3) Family Connections: 3.26
(MD4) Personal Pursuits: 3.33

5-pt Likert Scale: (1) = Not important; (3) = Somewhat Important; (5) = Extremely Important.

Missouri, 2008 (n=164) (Tew & Barbieri, 2012)
1. Effect on Profits

**Change in Profits after Agritourism Development**

- Significantly increased: 36%
- Slightly increased: 28%
- Did not change: 35%
- Slightly decreased: 0%
- Significantly decreased: 1%

(n = 162)

**Amount of Profit Increase after Agritourism Development**

- 1% to 10%: 23%
- 11% to 30%: 28%
- 31% to 99%: 21%
- 100% or more: 28%

Mean = 56%

Agritourism Assessment: The Farm Household Missouri, 2008 (n=164)

(Tew & Barbieri, 2012)
2. Impact on Family Employment

U.S.A., 2005 (n=873; p<.05)
3. Impact on Off-farm Employment

U.S.A., 2005 (n=873; p<.05) (Barbieri, 2013)
1. Economic: Perceived Benefits

- **Rank:**
  1. Generating additional income for farmers and landowners* (4.4)  
  2. Enhance the tourism appeal of rural areas* (4.2)  
  2. Revitalize local economies (4.1)  
  2. Provide job opportunities for farm household members (4.1)  
  3. Enhance the quality of life of local people (4.1)

* indicates statistical difference

Scale: 1 = “Very unimportant”; 5 = “Very important”.

North Carolina, 2011 (n=681; p<.05)
1. Economic: On-farm Employment

Post-Diversification (Gain)

- Agritourism: 24
- No Agritourism: 2

Total Non-Family

- Agritourism: 34
- No Agritourism: 6

(Barbieri, 2013) U.S., 2005 (n=873; p<.05)

Sanders Ridge Vineyard (Boonville, NC)
2. Socio-Cultural: Perceived Benefits

Scale: 1 = “Very unimportant”; 5 = “Very important”.

Rank:
1. Educate the visitors and public about agriculture
2. Share agricultural heritage and rural life-styles with visitors
3. Preserve rural heritage and traditions
4. Improve relationships between farmers and local community
5. Develop interactions between visitors and farmers
6. Provide recreational activities for visitors
2. Socio-Cultural: Family Farm Heritage

U.S.A., 2005 ($n=873; \ p<.05$) (Barbieri, 2013)
3. Environmental: Perceived Benefits

Scale: 1 = “Very unimportant”; 5 = “Very important”.

North Carolina, 2011
(n=681; p<.05)
3. Environmental: Farming Practices

- Wildlife habitat improvement: 50%
- Integrated Pest Management: 48%
- Water conservation: 65%

(Barbieri, 2013)
U.S.A., 2005 (n=873)
Agritourism is visiting a working farm or other agricultural setting for recreational or educational purposes. 

People-First Tourism: How agritourism works in rural North Carolina.

Agritourism System’s Assessment:
- Three dimensions
- Three levels of analysis
Wrapping-Up

- Farmer level...
  Satisfies a mix of economic & non-economic goals

- Farm Household level...
  - Increases farm profits
  - Creates jobs and reduces off-farm employment
  - Preserves farming life-style

- Society level...
  - Creates jobs
  - Preserves farm heritage
  - Fosters environmental friendly farming practices

Attitudes or behaviors?
Indirect gains?
Impacts on visitors?
Thank You!

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