VIRGINIA AGRITOURISM: EXPLORING THE OPTIONS

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Mission Statement

We promote the economic growth and development of Virginia agriculture, provide consumer protection, and encourage environmental stewardship.
Highlights of the 2012 Census of Agriculture

• 22% of all farmers were beginning farmers in 2012. That means 1 out of every 5 farmers operated a farm for less than 10 years.

• Young, beginning principal operators who reported their primary occupation as farming increased about 12% between 2007 and 2012.

• 969,672 farm operators were female – 30% of all farm operators in the U.S.

The number of farms operated by Latino farmers increased 21% from 2007 to 2012 and reflects the changing face of America as a whole.

Nearly 150,000 farmers and ranchers nationwide are selling their products directly to consumers, and 50,000 are selling to local retailers. Industry estimates valued local food sales at $7 billion in 2011, reflecting the growing new market.

Total organic product sales by farms have increased by 82% since 2007. Organic products were a $35 billion industry in the United States in 2013.
From 2007 to 2012, the number of U.S. farms engaging in some form of agritourism went up 42 percent, bringing in more than $700 million, according to the latest Census of Agriculture.

Since 2007, the amount of money brought in by agritourism rose by 24 percent.

Agritourism: It’s a Growing Thing
Farm-related entertainment enterprises blaze trails for economic development.

Defines Agritourism as a value-added activity that generates additional net farm income and creates a loyal consumer base for branded farm products.

Forty-two percent of operators surveyed stated that agritourism contributed between 76 and 100 percent of their farm income.

Almost all of the operations surveyed claimed that the average agritourism visitor spent between $31 and $40 on property per visit.
Welcome to the Virginia Grown Point of Sale Material. This page contains various resources and materials to help promote Virginia-grown products. To download these materials, please visit the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services website. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact the Virginia Grown team.
The Virginia Grown program is a VDACS marketing tool promoting fresh, local products to consumers.

Statewide Promotion
Tourism contributes the second highest amount of revenue generating $21.2 billion dollars annually and provides 210,000 jobs, according to the Virginia Tourism Board.

Virginia’s location, within a day’s drive or less of 60 percent of the U.S. population, makes it easy to get to and adds to the quality time families spend together on vacation.
Agricultural tourism is a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment or education of visitors, and that generates supplemental income for the owner.

With the increasing urbanization of the U.S. combined with social movements celebrating local and natural experiences, the future of the Agritourism industry looks good. National Survey on Recreation and the Environment.
Agritourism Diversifies Farm Offerings and Supplements Agricultural Income, it is a Viable Option for the Long-Term Sustainability of the Farm.

Benefits beyond extra income include:
- Increase in farm value
- Increased family interaction
- Public education
- Connection between rural and urban communities

When considering agritourism consider:
- Social skills and interacting with the public
- Maintaining privacy
- Insurance and safety
- Animal welfare
- Labor and financial management
- Local planning and zoning requirements
- Assessing the market
- Location
- Customers
- Marketing, social media

Memory Building Retailing in the Experience Economy

Stories Make Memories - Do Something Unexpected
The easiest way to be memorable is to do something in an expected way. Dare to be different.

Definition of Customer experience
Customer experience is about orchestrating memorable experiences; and it’s the memory of these unique experiences that becomes the product or service you are selling.

Of critical importance is the takeaway feeling your customer has about you or your product.

PEOPLE DON’T CARE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW... UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE
Every year in the United States, there are approximately 2.5 million weddings. The wedding industry has grown to an empire of 40 billion dollars per year.
As interest in urban agriculture has taken off and the local-food movement has flourished, a growing number of camps have added farming components, according to the American Camp Association.

In five years, 84 percent of camps added gardening activities, and 12 percent added farm or ranch components.
Fresh Directions

Farm to Fork Dinners
Restaurants on the Farm

Farm Cooking Schools
“The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition.” ~ Thomas Edison
SEASONS ON THE FARM
Partner with Local Photographers, Videographers for Holidays & Family Milestones

The Business Of Birthday Parties ~
A Foundation to Build On
The children's birthday party business has exploded in recent years

Competition for this growing market is no longer just the Family or Children's Entertainment Center Industry, but any number of family oriented businesses aimed at capturing a piece of this lucrative, billion dollar industry.
Glamping - Is Camping With Style

It’s a Girl's (Vacation) Thing!
Prices for 2011-12
Deer Hunting Trips

October bow hunts
6 day hunt $1500
3 day hunt $ 800

November bow hunts
6 day hunt $1800
3 day hunt $950

Gun Hunting
November gun hunts
6 day hunt $1950
3 day hunt $1000

December gun hunts
6 day hunt $1600
3 day hunt $850

All prices include Lodging, Meals, and transportation to and from stands.

Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.
Farm-friendly speed dating? Try 'weed dating'

An Idaho farm offers a new form of speed dating for those looking for something different than the typical dating scene. It's called 'weed dating,' and participants meet each other while pulling weeds amongst rows of zucchini and tomatoes.

By Jessie L. Bonner, Associated Press | JULY 16, 2012

The payoff for their toil? A chance at romance.
AgriTunity – Adding Value

Testimonial...... “Besides the revenue it generated, it created interest and excitement ”
Inflatable movie screens and outdoor movie screens for rent and for sale
LEARN ABOUT AND CAPITALIZE ON YOUR REGION’S ASSETS

Are you using your community’s best assets to drive your economic strategies? New thinking on economic drivers suggest that parks, festivals, sporting facilities and tourist spots can provide a significant economic engine for your community.
In a marriage of agriculture and artistic tourism, local groups are starting a project to bring a barn quilt trail to Washington County, Va.

CONNECT WITH LOCAL ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN

Take an Arts & Eats Tour, Oct. 19-20, 2013!

Join us Tuesday and Thursday, Oct. 19 and 20, 2013, and take a four-day food & culture adventure. Our tour includes a tour of local wineries, wineries and barns throughout the region. We'll be visiting vineyards, wineries and barns, while stopping to learn about the history and culture of the region. Join us for a local culinary experience that you won't forget!

Download the 2013 map and guide at www.artsandeats.com.

Latest News

Arts and Eats is an event that brings together local artists, chefs, and the community to celebrate the arts and local cuisine. Applications are now officially closed to become part of the 2013 Arts and Eats.

Artists, Eats, Farms, Venues

PURE MICHIGAN
**WELLNESS TOURISM**

Health tourism focuses on two areas:

**Pampering and wellness** – Services such as massages, herbal wraps and exfoliating scrubs.

**Wellness** – Involves helping healthy people prevent problems so they stay well, both physically and mentally.

**Community Business Partners:**
- Spas
- Hotels
- Yoga Studios
- Health Clubs
- Health Food Stores and Restaurants
- Outdoor Outfitters
- Athletic Stores
- Health and Wellness Festivals

Cycle to Farm® is a popular series of organized group rides that encourage and promote local food, local farms and agritourism by bicycle in the South.

Riders experience a beautiful (but challenging) metric century route, enjoy tasty food samples at "Farm Stops" hosted by local farms, and purchase products at each Farm.

Cycle to Farm staff collect the purchases and transport them by vehicle back to the Start/Finish, where riders return for a farm-to-table meal with the community at the Fabulous After Party.
Do the Funky Chicken

Getting egg-cited for the Funky Chicken Coop Tour this Saturday

BY MARGARET SHUGART, 5:05PM, TUE. MAR. 26, 2013

Did you know that there is a hobbit home for chickens in town? That there is a breed of chicken called “PBR”? That you can use chickens to help support a hydroponic farm or to keep your goats company? That some breeds of chickens have mohawks? Come explore all things chicken with flocks of Austinites as we tour the coolest coops in town.
Get out There ~ Forging Strong Community Connections

Start an online discussion group with shared interests

Explore your local community like a tourist

Join or start a meetup group

Sell your product or be a featured program at a local farmers market

Join the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Garden Clubs, or other community groups

Join or start a small business alliance

Identify and get to know local ancillary businesses

Community Marketing

• Volunteer space for a local community promotion

• Provide talks to the local chamber of commerce group

• Give talks to community groups

• Adopt a local project

• Allow the sales team to get involved in a project for a set number of hours as part of their job

• Gift a product that is not selling to local events as a marketing tool

Partnerships are about engaging with the local community, sponsorships are about donating to the community.

As a retailer you will get a better return on your investment by becoming a partner, plus, you will have lot more fun.
Homeschooling has grown by almost 300,000 since 2007—a growth of 17% in five years.

Approximately 1,770,000 students are homeschooled in the United States—3.4% of the school-age population.

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**FIELD TRIPS**

Click to read
Our young farmer and rancher members are committed to serving their communities by volunteering and making a difference,” says Julie Roop, director of program development at the American Farm Bureau Federation. “That is why Farm Bureau and the BSA merit badge program is such a great fit.”

Boy Scouts, Farm Bureau Members Agree on Merits of Ag

Boy Scouts can earn agriculture-related merit badges

Farm Bureau members are training to become registered merit badge counselors with the Boy Scouts of America

Agricultural related merit badges offered include:

- Plant Science
- Farm Mechanics
- Soil and Water Conservation
- Horsemanship
- Fish and Wildlife Management
- Environmental Science
- Gardening
- Landscape Architecture

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Farm Product Search Websites

- Virginia Grown
- Virginia Tourism
- Local Harvest
- Buy Fresh, Buy Local
- Rural Bounty
- Farm Stay U.S.
- Chefs Collaborative
- Wedding Wire.com
- Venue Safari

FarmStayU.S.
The Farm to Table Movement + Suburbia = Agriburbia

*Forget The Golf Course, Subdivisions Build Around Farms*

'Agrihoods' taking root across the U.S.
Residential developments sprout up around working farms

The 'felfie' is part of a new trend of "establishing niche micro-categories" for different kind of selfies, according to *TIME*. Specifically, the selfie is a selfie for farmers.
That's all Folks!