



CENTER FOR PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION

IN AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES


Welcome to the Easy as PIE Webinar Series

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Floridians' desire to experience farms: A statewide strategic plan for agritourism

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Funding provided by an FDACS specialty crop block grant

Objectives

- Examine the current agritourism situation in Florida
- Understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Florida's agritourism industry
- Develop a plan for agritourism
 - Identify the target audiences
 - Identify goals
 - Identify tactics
- Discuss additional plan components or missing pieces



Situation: Florida

- Large and diverse agricultural industry
- Large tourism industry
- Favorably warm climate
- Agritourism law



Florida Agritourism Resources: UF/IFAS

- Fact sheets
- IFAS blogs – news and upcoming events
- Extension agents throughout the state
- Citizen awareness of food systems and the environment priority work group



Florida Agritourism Resources: FDACS Division of Marketing and Development

Operators

- Business development resources
- FL Market Bulletin
- Fresh from Florida program



Visitors

- Recreation opportunity directory
 - Map locator for u-picks
- Buy Fresh from Florida directory



U-Pick Farms



Florida Agritourism Resources: Florida Agritourism Association



Operators

- Membership
- Promotion and marketing assistance
- Agritourism toolkit
- Agritourism signage – law compliant

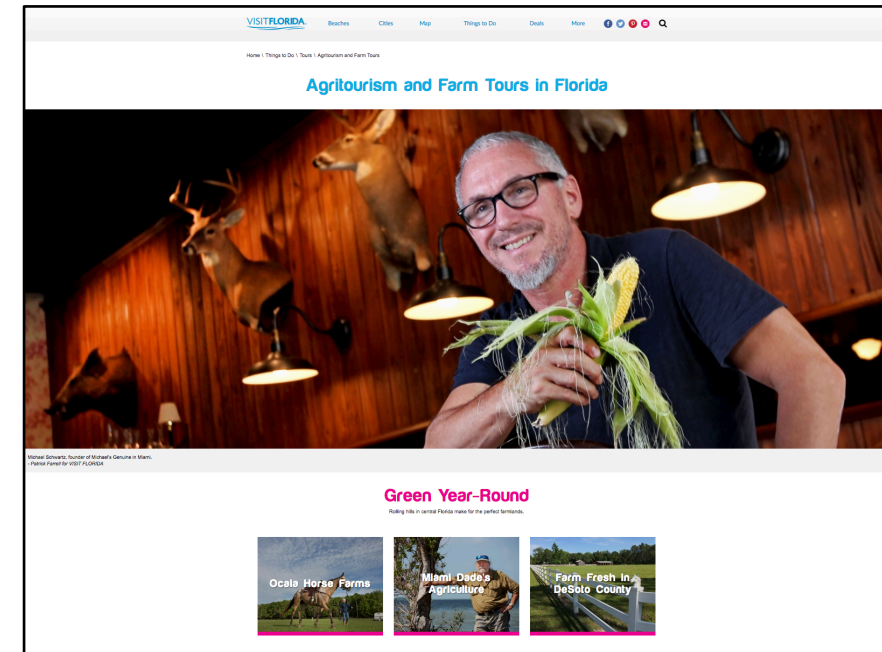
Visitors

- Operation locator
 - More than 100 listings
 - Search by location
 - Search by activity type
 - Descriptions, images, operation location, and contact info provided for listed operations



Florida Agritourism Resources: Visit Florida

- Agritourism and Farm Tours in Florida page
- Description of opportunities to experience agriculture and rural life
- Map locator
 - Limited listings
- Featured agritourism operations



Florida Agritourism Resources: Florida Farm Bureau

- Advocates on behalf of agricultural industry
- Role in passing of agritourism legislation
- Keeps members abreast of policy changes or issues
- *Agritourism* publication on website
- *FloridAgriculture* magazine often features or discusses agritourism



Consumer Awareness & Preferences

- Unfamiliar with term agritourism
- Not overly familiar with agritourism opportunities in their area
- Planned and spontaneous (prompted by signs) visits
- Leisure activity
- Self-guided opportunities
- Nostalgia, simpler times
- Amenities: bathrooms, shade/cooling options, food options



Operator's Needs & Concerns

Challenges

- Business planning
- Navigating regulations
- Marketing
- Competition
- Urban sprawl
- Criticisms and negative reviews

Education/Training

- Crop/livestock selection
- Rules/regulations
- Collaboration
- Marketing
- Livestock/animals in operations
- Measure success



Operator's Needs & Concerns

Tourism Boards

- Promotion/marketing
 - Cross county marketing
 - Emphasis on rural tourism
- Interface with legislators and governments
- Regulatory guidance
- Grant opportunities
- Understanding of services

State & County Governments

- Regulatory guidance
- Proactive communication
- Greenbelt enforcement
- Farm trail development
- Economic recognition
- Tax, zoning, and new business support



Situation: Benchmarking (NC, TN, CA)

- Cross-referencing other agritourism organizations
- Operation locators with different search options
 - County, region, season, month, activity, alphabetical order
- Events calendar
- Directional road signs
- Educational resources
- Social media presence – specific to agritourism



Strengths

- Strong agricultural industry
 - Strong tourism industry
 - Agritourism association
 - Hundreds of current operations
 - Successful operations
- Several organizations offering agritourism support
 - Agritourism legislation
 - Fresh from Florida



Weaknesses

- Lack of consumer awareness of agritourism
- Heavy marketing focus on tourists not locals
- Not all operations are members of association
- Lack of collaboration among organizations
- Duplication of work across organizations
- Lack of understanding of roles/ services offered by different organizations
- Lack of regulatory guidance
- Lack of economic reporting



Opportunities

- Marketing
- Reach local population
- Expand association membership
- Operator education/training
- Expand operation listings on Visit Florida
- Alternative search options on operation locators
- Rebranding of agritourism with consumer friendly terms
- Extension agent training
- Legislative support
- Grant funding
- Trail development
- Ecotourism integration
- Economic recognition
- Enhance organization collaborations
- Florida Land Lease Exchange
- Agritourism World



Threats

- Competition
 - Other tourism attractions
 - “Fake farmers”
- Criticisms and activists
- Liability
- Lack of consumer familiarity with local operations
- Undefined and overlapping roles among organizations providing agritourism support
- Greenbelt enforcement
- Agricultural threats
 - Pests
 - Disease
 - Weather
 - Labor
 - Urban sprawl
 - Input costs



Target Audiences

- Primary
 - Growers, producers, agritourism operators
 - Extension agents, specialists
 - Agritourism support organizations
- Secondary
 - Consumers, residents, tourist, agritourism visitors



Goals

- Short term (1 year)
 - Clearly defined roles established among organizations supporting agritourism in Florida
 - Extension agent's express intent to improve agritourism
- Medium term (5 years)
 - Extension agents offer ongoing operator education and training
 - Number of operators participating in agritourism increases
 - Agritourism organizations collaborate on development of a state-wide initiative to promote Florida agritourism
- Long term (7 years)
 - Floridians aware of agritourism and visit agritourism operations
 - Consumers aware and informed on agricultural topics and issues



Tactics: Short term goals

- Utilize Extension's Citizen Awareness PWG to engage agent's statewide
- Meeting of key players in supporting organizations to define roles
- Facilitate a collaborative environment among organizations and cross-list resources on websites



Tactics: Medium term goals

- Training and development of extension agents to be able to train agritourism operators on skills necessary to run a successful agritourism business
- Utilize existing resources and materials
- Develop a branding and marketing plan for Florida agritourism
 - Social media
 - Media relations
 - Key message (ex. Visit FL Farms)
 - Communication tactics
 - BMPs for agritourism
- Lobby to support agritourism in state tourism budget



What is missing?

- What other SWOTs do you see?
- Additional goals that should be included?
- Additional tactics?
- Recommendations?





Thank you!

Post-webinar Evaluation

https://ufl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_81bqr5pUlwPB1Xf

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