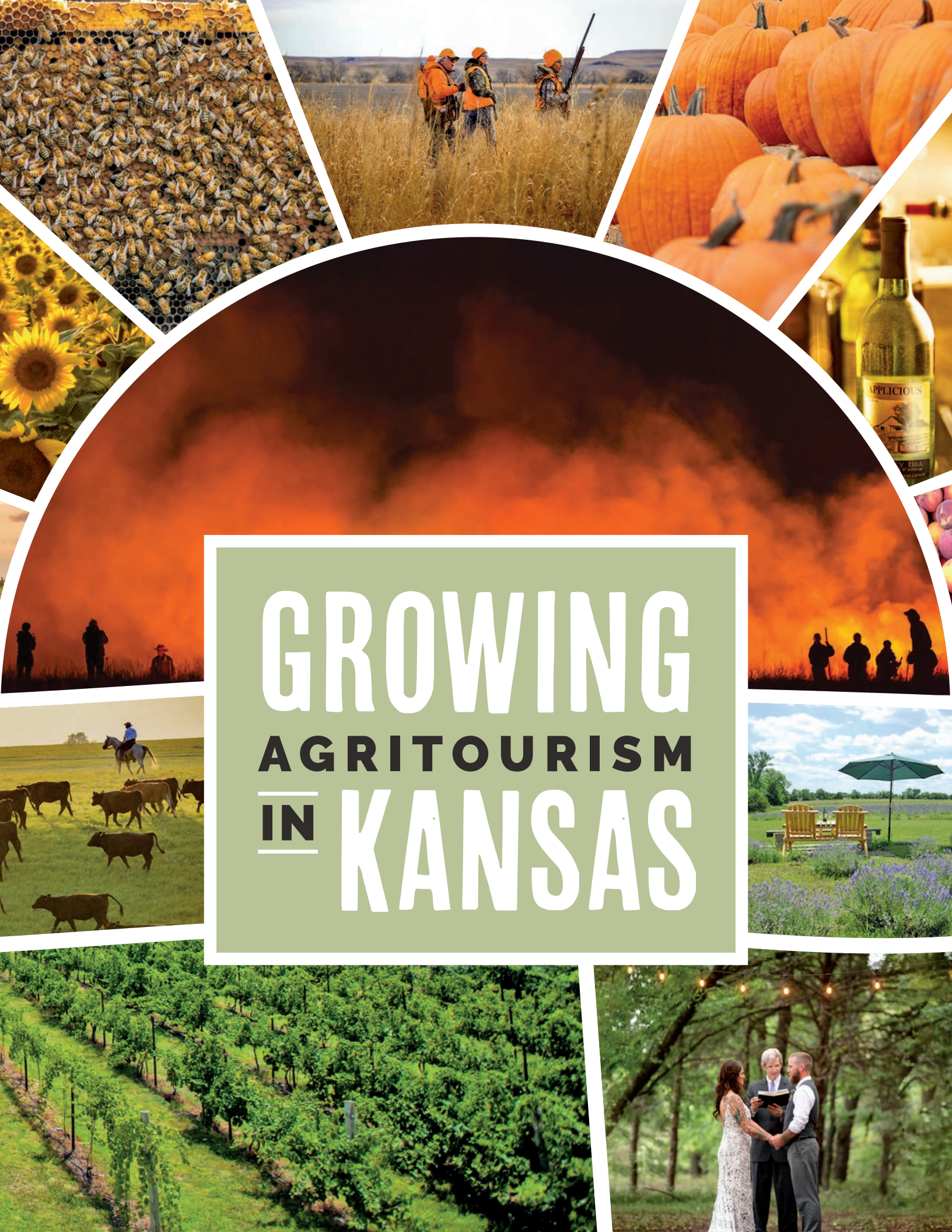




GROWING AGRITOURISM IN KANSAS





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CHAPTER

WHAT IS AGRITOURISM?

Agritourism is the intersection of agriculture and tourism where the public visits a working farm, ranch, winery, agriculture operation or active heritage site for enjoyment, outdoor recreation, activities, education, shopping, dining or lodging. Agritourism is tourism at its finest!

Agritourism may include when people work their way through a corn maze, help corral steers, hunt or fish on farm property, stay overnight in a rural bed & breakfast, camping, glamping, sip wine as the sun sets at a winery, marry at a farm venue, watch a cider press, help burn a pasture, feed a baby goat or u-pick pumpkins, sunflowers, fruits or vegetables.

Agritourism may generate income from these visits for the operators, which can help sustain the rural way of life and help keep more producers on our Kansas farms.



WHY IS AGRITOURISM GROWING?

- + Urban families are stressed out and want to relax in the country.
- + Tourists want an authentic experience they can't find at theme parks or urban retail.
- + Adults want to relive childhood memories of visiting their grandparents' farm or ranch.
- + Tourists enjoy day trips or weekend getaways close to home.
- + Families want to spend time together.
- + Adults want to show their children how their food is grown.
- + Consumers are increasingly interested in where their food comes from and locally sourced foods.

TRAVEL TRENDS THAT SUPPORT AGRITOURISM

Based on the latest travel trends identified by the Travel Industry Association of America, what travelers hope to enjoy when visiting an agritourism destination is:

1 Visiting
Relatives

2 Shopping

3 Visiting
Friends

4 Fine
Dining

5 Rural
Sightseeing

People today are three to five generations removed from the farm.

The average person spends approximately \$74 during an agritourism business visit.



Providence Hill Farm in Atchison, KS

PEOPLE PAY TO PLAY IN THE COUNTRY

Many farmers and ranchers find it difficult to believe that somebody will pay just to experience what happens in their everyday life. But people from the urban areas are hungry for these adventures, and happy to pay for authentic experiences at an agritourism business.

Check out the prices of similar products or experiences in your area via an internet search. Know your costs and what your market will support when setting your pricing structure.

YES

People will pay to walk through rows of corn or sunflowers.

Visitors pay from \$4 up to \$12 or more per person to go through a corn maze!

YES

People will pay to ride a horse through a field.

Visitors, especially urban dwellers, will pay for a half-day trail ride – unguided and on their own horses!

YES

People will pay to ride a combine during harvest, visit a patch with scarecrows, pet or feed farm animals, help with steer branding and more.

Visitors will pay for admission to the agritourism business, based on the level of experience you provide.

YES

People will pay for a private picnic area with a bonfire.

Visitors pay for a four-hour time slot!

YES

People will pay for pony rides.

Visitors pay from \$3 to \$5 for their children to ride ponies!

YES

People will pay to pick their own fruit in an orchard.

Visitors pay for the privilege to pick their own produce, and will pay a higher price knowing their food is from a reliable local source.

YES

People pay to ride with the cowboys and rope a steer.

Visitors pay for ranch stays by the day or week!

YES

People will pay to hunt.

Hunters pay thousands of dollars for their chance to "bag a buck" or participate in an upland bird hunt.

YES

People will pay to pick out a pumpkin.

Visitors will pay for a hand-painted pumpkin!

YES

People will pay for produce from a farm stand.

Visitors will pay top dollar for fresh, quality fruits and vegetables grown on the farm and to meet the farmer who grew it!

YES

People will pay to eat roasted corn.

Visitors pay for food concessions, often spending \$5 to \$10 per person during a day's visit!

YES

People will pay to do your farm or ranch chores.

Visitors will pay by the week for a family of four to stay at an agritourism business and gather eggs, feed the livestock, clean out horse stalls and all that dirty work!

YES

People will pay for fall activities.

Visitors pay for a haunted hayride during the Halloween season!



Eagle Ridge Ranch in Milford, KS

WHAT AGRITOURISM CAN DO FOR YOU

Reap Financial Benefits

By opening your property to the public, selling them what you grow and offering authentic experiences & activities, you increase revenues that are not dependent on production or fluctuating commodity prices.

Keep Possession of Your Land

When you increase revenues right on the farm or ranch, you are in a better position to keep possession of your land rather than selling it to developers.

Give Multiple Generations a Role

As your families grow into third, fourth, fifth generations, etc., there will be a variety of jobs for the younger generations. They may not need to look elsewhere to support their own families.

Help Parents Stay at Home

In many agritourism operations, both parents are an integral part of the family business, which means they can stay home instead of working off the farm.

Make the Public a Partner in Agriculture

When visitors come to an agritourism business, they develop a direct relationship with the agricultural producer. As they become more educated about the importance of agriculture in Kansas, they become more supportive of our family farms. In turn, you learn more about what urban folks want and what they enjoy.

Diversify Your Income Sources

You get more options for generating income, and again, you are less reliant on weather, commodity prices, etc.

Fun and Pride

Agritourism can be personally rewarding. You feel the pride of sharing your property and your family's heritage with the public, especially when they respond enthusiastically to what you've created.

2

CHAPTER

WHO SHOULD GO INTO AGRITOURISM?

Agritourism gives you a wonderful opportunity to increase your revenue, but it is not for everybody. Ask yourself the following questions ...

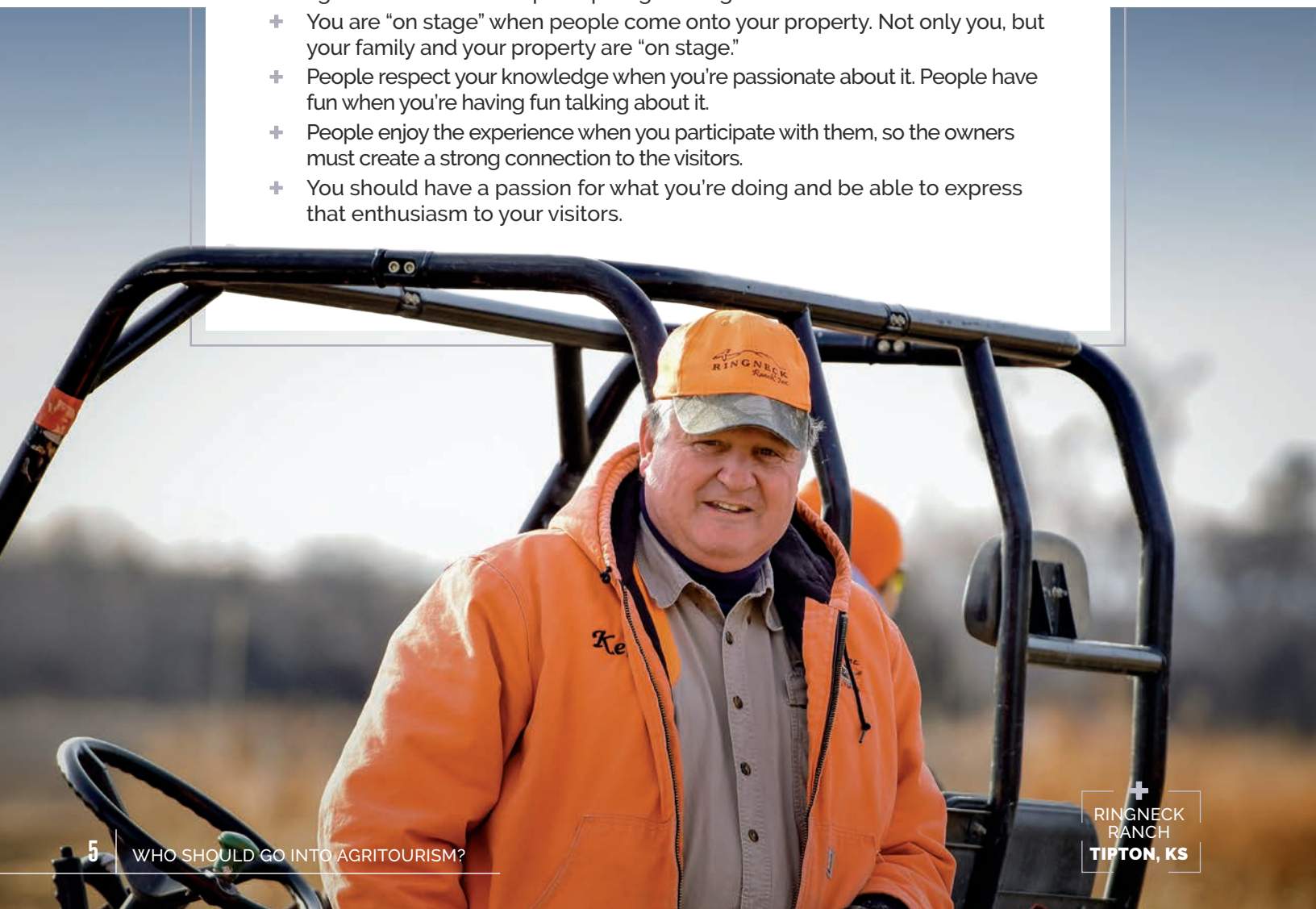
DO YOU HAVE AN OUTGOING PERSONALITY?

At least one person – either you, your spouse, or a family member who will be working in the business – must be very **OUTGOING, FUN, FRIENDLY, and PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR AGRITOURISM BUSINESS.**

You must enjoy interacting with the crowds of visitors who will be on your property, as well as small groups and individual customers.

Why? Because you become the “FACE” of this family business.

- + Visitors have the best experience when they are talking to the farmer/rancher, learning about agricultural practices, hearing stories about the history of the agritourism business or participating in doing chores with the farmer/rancher.
- + You are “on stage” when people come onto your property. Not only you, but your family and your property are “on stage.”
- + People respect your knowledge when you’re passionate about it. People have fun when you’re having fun talking about it.
- + People enjoy the experience when you participate with them, so the owners must create a strong connection to the visitors.
- + You should have a passion for what you’re doing and be able to express that enthusiasm to your visitors.



The most successful agritourism operations are where the owner and his family love being with the public. Others have tried hiring a 'front person' but it is costly and it rarely works in start-up operations.

Visitors want a connection to the family. An outsider rarely has the same passion or motivation to mingle with the crowds.

ARE YOU WILLING TO LEARN NEW SKILLS?

Producers know a lot about raising crops and livestock. In agritourism, you must become an entrepreneur and learn many new skills or find people who can cover those aspects of the business: developing a website, keeping financial and safety records on a computer, a marketing strategy for your business that may include print advertising, social media and possibly TV and radio spots.

CAN YOU OVERLOOK THE BAD?

You should be flexible and accept the ups and downs of inviting people onto your property. People will trample a field. People will end up in areas where they're not supposed to go. People will waste your product. People may have very unruly children. People will litter and not respect you, your employees and your property. People will do a lot of things that might bother you.

CAN YOU GIVE UP YOUR PRIVACY?

You should be good natured about losing privacy when the property is open to the public. Visitors will wander all over your property, even dropping by your house or knocking on your front door.

CAN YOU COMMIT SIGNIFICANT TIME TO THE NEW BUSINESS?

Many producers ask, "How can I find time to run an agritourism business? I'm already too busy being a farmer or rancher."

It's true that you'll have to carve out and commit a lot of time to starting and running your new business. While much of this can be done by delegating some of your responsibilities, you will be in charge of developing and overseeing the new business and activities. At the same time, you will continue to be responsible for your primary job, whether it is managing the agricultural activities of your agritourism business or your job away from your agritourism business. This is a big commitment of time.

WILL YOUR FAMILY WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

In most successful agritourism businesses, the entire family is involved in one capacity or another. Without family support, agritourism is extremely difficult because the workload is often more than one individual can bear.

There are many ways family members can get involved. Those who have not worked in the farm or ranch operation might be perfect to help with the agritourism business. For example, a spouse who knows about retail sales could be great at running a store. A family member who understands computers can help set up your business computer and maybe work on your website. A grandson who lives many states away might be able to take on your accounting via computer. Maybe your children, who didn't like agriculture, might like returning to run a new business enterprise and/or return home on weekends to help with a new building project.

Can you count on any of your family members to fill these kinds of roles and support the effort?

CAN YOU PERMIT THE YOUNGER GENERATION TO MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT YOU?

Sometimes, it is the adult children who want to create an agritourism business, but the parents are against it. You can extend the farm and ranch into the next generation through agritourism, if everyone is open minded enough to accept this concept. To succeed at agritourism, both generations must embrace what the opportunity can provide and be supportive of the new business.

CAN YOU CHANGE YOUR MINDSET?

As a farmer or rancher, your main business is agricultural production. As an agritourism operator, you will be in a service-based industry that requires you to meet the expectations and needs of your visitors.

This requires a change in mindset as you interact with people from urban areas, from other states and possibly from other countries. These folks may be extremely different from you in a variety of ways, including manners, dress, speech, lifestyle choices, customs, etc. You will need to be welcoming and accepting of all people who come to your agritourism business.

Is agritourism really for you?

If you can't answer "yes" to the questions raised here, then most likely agritourism is NOT for you. Take some time to consider how much of an investment agritourism requires before you read the rest of this manual.

3

CHAPTER

WHERE TO START IN AGRITOURISM?

Before you begin to invest in an agritourism venture, it is always best to begin locally, especially if you are converting an existing structure into a building where people will gather and/or if the number of visitors to your agritourism business will impact traffic flow on local roads. Local planning, zoning and state fire safety regulations, if applicable, may impact your plans.

Be a good neighbor. Let your neighbors know what you are planning, so they are aware of possible increased traffic flow and gatherings on your property so there are no surprises. Assure them that you will be cognizant of their privacy with your business venture. Maybe they will even look forward to some part-time work at your venue.

Your operation will be an outgrowth of your property, your personality and your visitors' expectations.



HELP IS AT HAND!

Once you're ready to begin an agritourism business, there are a variety of resources in Kansas that can help you get started. Business start-ups in Kansas may check out the following links for assistance.

Prior to Starting Your Business

Contact your Local Planning and Zoning Authority (city/county if applicable) about your plans to open an agritourism activity venue on your land to ensure you follow all local business development, rules, regulations and guidelines. Visit with them about your plans.

Office of the Secretary of State kssos.org

Complete the appropriate business entity filings and forms required by the Kansas Secretary of State. Call 785-296-4564 for more information.

Department of Revenue ksrevenue.org

Visit the Department of Revenue website to find important business tax information. Call 785-368-8222 for more information.

Kansas Department of Labor www.dol.ks.gov

As of July 1, 2017, the Kansas Amusement Ride Law requires amusement ride owners to register with KDOL annually, and all owners and operators to apply for an annual permit in order to operate amusement rides in the state. New regulations apply to amusement rides, including certain water slides and inflatable devices. Tractor-operated wagons, hayrack rides and horse-drawn wagons/carriages are not included. For questions, contact the KDOL Industrial Safety and Health division at (785) 296-4386 or KDOL.amusements@ks.gov. Annual renewal

Prior to Installing Tanks

(Annual Renewal August 1)

Department of Health and Environment – Bureau of Environmental Remediation, Storage Tank Section kdheks.gov

Entities operating their own fuel tanks may be required to register with KDHE. Review information about aboveground storage tanks (AST) and underground storage tanks (UST). Review the KDHE Storage Tank Section website for further information, or call 785-296-1678 for permitting information.

The Kansas Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) has above ground storage tanks (AST) and underground storage tanks (UST) program highlights and information to assist with UST inventory control.

Prior to Construction

Department of Health and Environment – Bureau of Water, Public Water Supply and Geology & Well Technology Section kdheks.gov

If the facility will not utilize a municipal public water supply or rural water supply as the source of drinking water and the facility will serve 25 people or more per day, 60 or more days per year, it will be considered a public water supply subject to state/federal drinking water requirements. Contact the KDHE Public Water Supply Section at 785- 296-5514. Water wells shall be constructed by Kansas-licensed water well contractors. There are special construction requirements for water wells, serving public water supplies. Contact the KDHE Geology & Well Technology Section at 785-296-5560 for more information.

Department of Health and Environment – Bureau of Water, Municipal Program Section kdheks.gov

If the facility will employ an on-site wastewater treatment system rather than utilize a municipal sanitary sewer for handling and disposal of sewage from the facility, contact the KDHE Municipal Program Section at 785-296-5527 for construction and permitting requirements.

Prior to Opening

Department of Agriculture — Food Safety and Lodging

agriculture.ks.gov.

Food safety licenses may be required if the agritourism destination will be producing or serving food to guests. Lodging licenses may also be required if the business will be hosting overnight guests. Contact Food Safety and Lodging at 785-564-6767 or KDA.FSL@ks.gov to determine specific licensing requirements for your business.

Department of Agriculture — Weights and Measures

agriculture.ks.gov.

No license is needed from Weights and Measures, but an agritourism destination with weighing or measuring devices must hire a licensed service company to place devices into service and test once annually if the scales are utilized for any commercial transaction. Visit the Weights and Measures website for more information, or call 785- 564-6681. Annual service.

Ready to Open

Kansas Tourism

travelks.com

Register the agritourism destination with Kansas Tourism when the agritourism business is ready to launch. Registration with Kansas Tourism is voluntary; however, benefits of registration include assistance in promotion of the agritourism operation, and limited liability protection with posted signage (be sure to purchase the agritourism liability signs) through the Agritourism Promotion Act. Call 785-296-7198 or visit the Kansas Agritourism website for more information. With registration, you will also receive a free listing on the TravelKS.com website, so be sure to send in a few good images to add to your listing.

Helpful Business Development Resources

Agribusiness Development, Domestic & International

agriculture.ks.gov

The agribusiness development team works to grow the Kansas agriculture industry and economy by connecting people, working through regulatory requirements, as well as navigating support and incentive options for Kansas agribusinesses. The team handles both domestic and international business-related activities. For domestic questions, contact the Agribusiness Development Director, 785-250-6429. If your business has questions on importing/exporting, contact the International Trade Director, at 785-564-6704.

From the Land of Kansas Program

fromthelandofkansas.com

From the Land of Kansas is a voluntary trademark program that helps promote and identify Kansas agricultural products to consumers. Register the business for membership with *From the Land of Kansas*. For more information contact the *From the Land of Kansas* Specialist, 785- 564-6759.

Agricultural Workforce Development

agriculture.ks.gov

KDA's Workforce Development can connect you with secondary and post secondary resources to find skilled employees and/or assist in developing a training program to fit your needs. For more information, contact the Ag Career & Workforce Development Specialist, 785-564-7466.

KANSASWORKS

kansasworks.com

KANSASWORKS is a free, web-based resource connecting employers with skilled employees and training providers. Call 877-509-6757 for more information on how to utilize the KANSASWORKS services for filling your employment needs.

Rural Opportunity Zones

kansascommerce.com

The Rural Opportunity Zone program is a state program authorizing financial incentives to new full-time residents in Kansas. The two types of assistance include Kansas income tax waivers for up to five years, and/or student loan repayments up to \$15,000. For more information, please contact the Kansas Department of Commerce at 785-296-3481.

Network Kansas

networkkansas.com

Network Kansas provides a central portal that connects entrepreneurs and small business owners with the appropriate resources when they are needed most. Network Kansas works with both new and existing businesses. Call 877-521-8600 for more details.

Kansas Business Center

kansas.gov/businesscenter

The Kansas Business Center, [www.https://portal.kansas.gov/business](https://portal.kansas.gov/business) is a one-stop shop for starting and maintaining a business in Kansas. There is an online chat service or you may call or email for free personal assistance. Call 877-521-8600 for more details.

K-State Research and Extension

ksre.ks.edu

K-State Research and Extension is a statewide network of educators sharing unbiased, research-based information and expertise on issues important to Kansas. It has established local, state, regional, national and international partnerships. It is dedicated to a safe, sustainable, competitive food and fiber system and to strong, healthy communities, families, and youth through integrated research, analysis and education. For more information, please call 785-532-5820.

K-State Research and Extension, Kansas Value Added Foods Lab and K-State Food Science Institute, Meat Science Facility

The Kansas Value Added Foods Lab offers food-related businesses, processors and entrepreneurs technical assistance and product development expertise. For the full list of services and pricing refer to the Fees and Information (Kansas only). Call 785-532-1668 for more information, or email kvafl@ksu.edu.

The Meat Science Facility provides meat processors and entrepreneurs an opportunity to use a state-of-the-art meat science research and teaching complex. Laboratories include the Meat Lab, the Sensory Lab, the Color Lab, the Meat Chemistry Lab, and the Post-Processing Pasteurization Lab. For more information, call 785-532-1279.

USDA Rural Development

rd.usda.gov

USDA's Rural Development program offers loans, grants and loan guarantees to support services such as housing, economic development, health care, first responder services and equipment, water, electric and communications infrastructure.

USDA New Farmers

newfarmers.usda.gov

USDA's New Farmers program assists farmers in finding resources customized to their specific type of farm. Subcategories are focused on young and beginning farmers, women in agriculture, youth and veterans.

Your local Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVB), Chambers of Commerce or Economic Development Representatives

These organizations may provide assistance with getting your business off the ground with services such as:

- + Writing a business plan
- + Providing financial information
- + Assistance in securing grants
- + Developing a marketing plan
- + Producing brochures
- + Developing a website
- + Designing a logo
- + Writing media releases
- + Writing visitor surveys
- + Obtaining local, regional or national visitor information

Contact other agritourism operations to find out what works for them.

WHAT YOU DON'T NEED TO GET STARTED

You Don't Need a Lot of Facilities

You can start very small. You don't need buildings. You don't even need restrooms (you can use portable restrooms). Be sure to check local zoning regulations.

You Don't Need to be Open for Very Long

When you first start out, your operation may be open for only a few weeks. For example, ranchers may invite deer hunters onto their property for only a few days. You might sell pumpkins for a few weeks before Halloween. You might have school tours for a month in the fall or a month in the spring. You may want to be open only on weekends, when families are looking for activities to enjoy together.

You Don't Need a Lot of Money

If you are willing to start small, you can often get going with a little bit of capital. You can use a tent as your store. You can use an existing building, like a barn, to give hunter orientations. You can use straw bales for seating around a food concession, or as a maze in a children's play area. You will begin by using "sweat equity" as your primary resource.

START 1 (BABY) STEP AT A TIME



The good news is you can get into agritourism one step at a time. That means baby steps! You can try something simple – like opening a small roadside stand, planting a corn maze, renting your cabin at the lake – and see how it goes. As you begin to attract more people to your property, you can add activities and enterprises. For a list of possible ideas for activities and enterprises, see Chapter 6.

Start with one activity ...

- + It might be to sell what you grow. Develop that one idea.
- + It might be to create a corn maze. Develop that one idea.
- + It might be to invite the public for trail rides. Develop that one idea.
- + It might be growing pumpkins and sell them in the fall. Develop that one idea.
- + It might be to have a group of hunters come during deer season. Develop that one idea.

Learn from these baby steps. Eventually, one activity will lead to the start of another, based on your customers' response and suggestions.

Consider completing a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of your prospective business and as much as possible of any surrounding agritourism businesses. The following information will help walk you through an "agritourism" SWOT analysis.

CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE

First, you must decide what kind of audience you want to attract.

- + How many people do you want at your agritourism business at one time?
- + Are they families?
Are they senior citizens?
Are they teenagers?
- + Are they hunters?
Are they naturalists?
- + Where will you draw visitors from?

Families

Families will travel 50 to 100 miles for a day trip to enjoy agritourism activities.

Hunters

Hunters will travel great distances, including from other states, for the prospect of a good hunt, so rural locations are not a problem to attract customers.

Day-trippers

Day-trippers will travel from 50 – 100 miles to spend a day doing something enjoyable.

Tourists

Tourists traveling from one city to another often want to stop in an area with several attractions and places to stay.

Area visitors

Area visitors may be staying in your area to visit family and friends, attend schools or business meetings.

Motorcoaches

Motorcoaches will go out of their way to stop at unique attractions, for an unusual or unique experience, shopping and dining. They also stop at large, developed attractions with great diversity in a single stop.

CONSIDER THE COMPETITION

Look around your area to see what other people are offering, and how they're doing.

Check out the competition:

- + Where are they located in reference to your own property?
- + What kind of activities do they have, hours of operation, admission fees, and product offerings?
- + How busy are they?
- + What are their strong points?
- + What are their weak points?

You can look at competition several ways:

- + You can differentiate yourself from the competition by offering extremely different activities, products, etc..
- + You can have similar offerings, but be sure you do it better or differentiate yourself in the experience you offer so customers know why they should choose you.

Ways to differentiate yourself from the competition:

- + More customer service
- + More attractive displays of products
- + More complete array of products
- + More interesting and bigger variety of activities
- + More delicious foods
- + More authentic country experience
- + More hours and more months open

Competition

Agritourism competitors should not compete on price. If you undersell your neighbors, you will end up hurting your own bottom line.

Two agritourism businesses close to each other can both be successful.

One agritourism business gives customers a traditional wagon ride to the pumpkin patch, but their main focus is in the country market. They want to build repeat sales in their retail enterprise, which will fuel long-term growth.

The other agritourism business focuses on attracting families for the fall season only, and entertainment includes a corn maze, make your own scarecrow, craft tables and many food concessions.

Most importantly, both agritourism businesses understand there is plenty of business to go around and by differentiating themselves, customers choose which agritourism business is best for them.

**“BE FIRST,
BETTER OR
DIFFERENT
TO
SUCCEED!”**

**BECKY WALTERS
WALTERS PUMPKIN
PATCH IN BURNS, KS**

CONSIDER YOUR LOCATION

If you are near a city or densely populated areas, you may choose an activity that can draw more visitors. For example, a corn maze needs a good strong stream of customers to be profitable.

If you are not near a city or populated area, or not near a well-traveled highway, you must provide a unique experience to entice people to come to your property.

If you are not near a significant population, then choose an activity where you can make more money per person. For example, the right kind of lodging, working ranch, wildlife watching or a hunting experience on your property may be profitable with just a handful of people.

CONSIDER YOUR PROPERTY

Look at your property and the existing buildings for an idea of where to begin.

WHAT'S ON YOUR PROPERTY?	WHAT CAN IT BECOME?
Barn, pavilion, machine shop, empty farm house	Wedding venue, store, gift shop, retail space, fruit and vegetable stand, food concession area, eating area with tables. Conduct group activities, like craft making, gardening classes, tours, bed & breakfast
Lake, river, pond, creek	Fishing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, picnicking, camping, RV hook ups, children's day camp
Cabin, lodge, bunk house, empty farm house	Lodging, bed & breakfast
Empty silo or grain bin	Store, bar, silo rock climbing in summer, ice climbing in winter, convert to lodging
Woods and fields	Hunting, horseback riding trails, nature walks, ATV trails, mountain biking, wildlife habitat, zombie paintball, guided tours
Tillable acreage	Corn maze – zombie paintball, sunflower field, berry patch
Quarry	Swimming or rock climbing
Beautiful scenery, vistas	Nature walks, photography, birding or wildlife watching, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, wedding backdrop, star gazing
Large garden, orchards, vineyard	Open a farm stand to sell fresh vegetables, plant pumpkins to sell in the fall season. Vineyard/winery, event venue, photo-ops
Sod house or historic building	Living museum, lodging, bed & breakfast, retail space
Heritage site (civil war, prairie connection)	Historical tourist spot: with markers, reenactments, covered wagon ride, Pony Express, etc.



Elderslie Farm in Valley Center, KS

CONSIDER YOUR HOBBIES

Often a hobby or interest (of any family member) can become the focus of an activity to attract the public.

- + If you love to cook, you might have cooking classes or sell homemade baked goods
- + If you enjoy gardening, you might want to invite the public for gardening classes
- + If you like flower arranging, you might hold classes or sell arrangements for weddings, mother's day, etc.
- + If you like growing flowers, you might open a pick-your-own fresh flowers business
- + If you make crafts, you might host a craft show/festival

THINK COMPLETELY OUTSIDE THE BOX

Add activities that have nothing to do with what you grow or the animals you raise.

HorseThief Reservoir in Jetmore, Kansas, mostly a water recreation area, planted corn in an open area at the reservoir. In the fall, they host Zombie Paintball with paintball guns mounted on a trailer that drives through the cornfield with "live" and stationary objects to spatter with paintballs. They also built yurts for "glamping" (glamour camping) while enjoying the lake activities.

4

CHAPTER

COVERING THE BASICS

Before you open the doors of your agritourism operation, you should be sure all the basics are covered. Some of these steps may sound quite simple, but they are very important in creating a lasting, quality experience for the visitor.



SIGNS

Signs Leading to Property

Make it easy for people to find your property, especially if your business is down a country road.

Put up signs all along the route, right up to your front gate.

These do not have to be wooden signs – you can use creative methods to give directions along the road.

- + Use large, round straw bales that can be painted with a friendly graphic (such as a pumpkin face, ear of corn, wagon wheel, horse shoe) and a directional arrow.
- + Create a little scene with a wagon and a directional sign.
- + Paint your water tank or silo with the name of your agritourism business.

At key corners you don't own, find the owners of the property and ask them for permission to put up some kind of directional sign. Offer a trade (a day's hunting, overnight stays at your B&B, passes to a special event) or, if necessary, a small amount of cash (\$25 - \$100).

Regulations on Signage

Be sure to check with your township, city, county or state road department before erecting signage for legal placement of any permanent signage. There may be regulations covering the posting of signs along certain roads – even if posted on private property. Contact Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to find out about the regulations. You will find information about the Tourism Signage Program on the TravelKS website at: travelks.com/industry/signage.

Front Gate Sign

The first impression your visitors receive when they get to your property is your front gate sign. Landscape your property entrance with attractive plants and country items. Make it a real work of art that expresses the personality of your operation. Locate your Kansas Agritourism warning signage on your front gate, or at your admission entrance in full view for your visitors to see.

Signs Inside the Property

- + Make them legible and easy to read.
- + Do not crowd signs with too much information.
- + Keep them fresh – don't let the paint peel.
- + Use attractive graphics with a theme consistent with your venue.

Signs Should Cover

- + Educational and interpretive information
- + Historic buildings or sites
- + Ongoing activities
- + Special activities
- + Future activities
- + Products for sale
- + Directions through the property
- + Directions to restrooms



Put up easy-to-read directional signs to help visitors find your property, especially at intersections on isolated country roads. (Gypsum Hills Trail Rides in Medicine Lodge, KS)



A pole sign inside the property helps keep visitors aware of the activities on your property and how to find them. (Fire Lake Camp and Soapery in Paola, KS)



Use country-themed graphics on your signs, like this one that looks like an apple! (The Turner Barn in Gardner, KS)



In order to create the country experience, decorate your signs with corn stalks, cowboy hats, scarecrows and other themed items. (Meadowlark Farm in Rose Hill, KS)

CLEANLINESS

Your property should be clean and inviting from every angle. What you can tolerate as a farmer or rancher is very different from what visitors will tolerate when they are guests on your property. Think about how you react when you are traveling somewhere as a tourist.

- + Put all rusted farm equipment, cars, trucks, etc. out of sight.
- + Be sure to pick up litter throughout the property every morning before you open, and designate employees to pick up trash throughout the day.
- + Trashcans should be conveniently located for visitors to use.
- + Put a fence around your trash collection area so it is out of sight and away from the customers.



Imagine how welcome visitors feel when greeted by these pumpkins on an antique wooden wagon! Make your entrance come alive with wonderful landscaping and farm or ranch decorations. (Granny Mae's Pumpkin Patch in Dorrance, KS)

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF BUILDINGS

Every building your visitors enter or see (even if it is just something in the distance) should look inviting.

- + Give all your buildings and fences a fresh coat of paint.
- + Fix broken windows or shutters.
- + Use paint colors that create the look of a traditional farm or ranch. (For example, paint the barn in red with white trim or surround the property with a white fence.)
- + Keep areas around the buildings trimmed and free of litter.

LANDSCAPING

THE MOST important reason guests return to a property, research shows, is the scenic beauty of the property. Landscaping plays a critical part in creating this kind of beautiful environment. Do not think of it as a cost, think of it as a return on investment!

- + Think COLOR. At the big theme parks, they use hundreds of flowers, bushes, hanging baskets, etc. Everywhere you look there is something bright and colorful.
- + Highlight the Kansas themes by planting sunflowers or by placing a Conestoga wagon at the entrance.
- + Place a friendly looking scarecrow dressed as a farmer or cowboy at the entrance. Use corn stalks and straw bales to play up the country look. In the fall, put up piles and piles of pumpkins for color and atmosphere.
- + Use metal art in the shape of animals, farm buildings or western heritage as part of the landscaping.
- + Use antique farm equipment throughout the landscaping, especially at the entrance.
- + For a Bed & Breakfast, landscaping is especially important to create an inviting property, and gardens can even become the major attraction.

PARKING

- + Remember to keep the entrance and first view of your property as attractive and inviting as possible. New entrance access to your agritourism business, if along a Kansas highway, will require a permit from Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to construct. You may apply for one at your local KDOT office.
- + Locate your parking lot in an area where it will not block the entrance of a building. This usually means the parking lots should be to the side of your buildings, rather than in front. *Be sure to check with your local planning and zoning authority before laying out your parking facility. There may be regulations required for entrances, emergency personnel access, lighting, etc. that you may need to comply with.*
- + At the beginning, you just need to have an area that is well marked. It can be on grass or you can spread gravel on the area.
- + Make the parking lot as smooth and level as possible and fill any holes so people will not fall or trip.
- + Designate handicap parking spaces as required by federal law. (See Resource Guide, Page 108) or visit adata.org/factsheet/parking
- + Locate the parking close to where the activities take place or, if not possible, offer parking lot shuttles. Be sure your parking lot shuttle is handicap accessible. If you have a retail operation, people want convenience in carrying their products, particularly when pushing a baby stroller. At a Bed & Breakfast, parking should allow visitors to carry their luggage easily.
- + Consider an asphalt parking lot to cut down on blowing dust or when you are attracting larger crowds. Most motorcoaches require asphalt or very firm parking areas because they need ample room to turn around and they do not want to get stuck in the mud!
- + You do not want interaction between cars and activities. For example, do not have your wagon ride come through your parking lot. Do not have people passing over the path of a wagon ride or train track, etc. You also want to keep the agricultural vehicles separate from where visitors are walking and parking.

RESTROOMS

Whether you provide restrooms or not depends on how long you want visitors to stay on your property.

If you are just starting out and have a roadside stand selling sweet corn off your pickup truck, you do not need restrooms.

As soon as you are offering activities, a retail store or concessions, you should provide a restroom facility for the convenience of your customers..

Check with local planning and zoning, if applicable, before any restroom placement. There may be regulations you must comply with to have either portable, or built restrooms, lagoon or sewer requirements.

Portable restrooms are fine if you are open for a limited time such as a few weeks during the fall, or if you offer very limited activities such as a corn maze only. Be sure to offer a good wash station with any portable restrooms. A nice family friendly touch – add a training seat in your restroom stalls for children.

Customers prefer permanent restrooms, especially if you are hosting dressier events such as weddings. Consider building permanent restrooms if visitors spend several hours on your property. If you are open for several months during the year, permanent restrooms will encourage them to visit more often.

Sometimes you can adapt an existing restroom that might be in a barn or maintenance shop, but update them so they are fresh

and inviting.

Keep your restrooms clean. Be sure to assign staff to keep restrooms clean and well stocked throughout the day. Everybody hates it when there is no toilet paper. Consider putting a baby changing station and nursing area in your restrooms or at a location with close access to toddler activities. Moms will love you for it!

Save your staff a lot of time by putting up very clear directional signs to the restrooms.

5 CHAPTER

CREATING THE “EXPERIENCE”



WHAT DO VISITORS WANT?

Authentic Experiences

Visitors want to touch, see, hear, taste, and yes, even smell everything that happens every day at your agritourism business.

Visitors want to feel they actually lived on the farm or ranch for the day.

What you might take for granted, is exactly what people think is special about visiting your agritourism business. The experiences you consider WORK, are actually PLAY for non-farm families and they will pay to play in the country!

They want to touch, see, hear, taste or smell:

- + Farm animals
- + Tractors
- + Silos & barns
- + Fields of crops
- + Horses grazing
- + Cattle branding and roping
- + Animal feeding
- + Animal birthing
- + Hanging fruit on the tree
- + Wildlife in the woods
- + Rolling hills and green pastures
- + Milking a cow
- + Homegrown fruits and vegetables
- + Country home cooking
- + Sunrises and sunsets

Sometimes visitors come to experience the vistas and beauty. They don't want to "do" anything. They want the peace and tranquility. They want to catch lightning bugs. They want to see the night sky filled with stars.

They want to experience for themselves – with their own hands – everything that happens at the agritourism business.



Berry Hill UPick Farm in Berryton, KS

THE EXPERIENCE BEGINS AT THE FRONT GATE

In addition to the activities you offer at your agritourism business, how you package everything together is also part of the experience. This includes the signs at the front gate and throughout your property, the landscaping, the retail displays, the appearance of your buildings, etc. Everything should have a country look and theme to help create the country experience. Even the names of your buildings, farm animals and foods should reflect the country spirit.

THE EXPERIENCE ENDS AS A MEMORY

People remember their agritourism experiences long after they've captured pictures and returned home. People often return to repeat the experience and continue coming with the next generations, bringing their grandchildren and even great grandchildren! They will stop and tell you about their memories on your land and together you will have developed a relationship that feels almost like family. Keep in mind that you want to become a "memory maker" as you develop your activities and agritourism attractions.

CREATING A FARM OR RANCH ATMOSPHERE

Pay a lot of attention to this step! Research shows that the number-one reason people visit our agritourism businesses is for an authentic country experience.

Think of how Norman Rockwell would paint a picture of a farm or ranch. That's what tourists expect. So, give them your authentic farm experience!

6

CHAPTER

ACTIVITIES & ENTERPRISES

Now comes the fun and the most important part: choosing what activities or enterprises you will offer as part of your agritourism operation. Of course, this will depend on many factors, including the manpower you have available, the layout of your property, safety considerations, and whether there is competition for the same activities close by.

Remember, if you're just starting out, begin with baby steps by developing one activity. Eventually, one activity will lead to the start of another, based on your customer responses and suggestions.



CHARGING FOR ACTIVITIES

As you consider what activities to offer, you also need to consider how you will make money from these activities. Admission fees vary based on the experience or activities available. (From \$5 - \$15 with many charging a higher admission rate on weekends.)

Charging an Entrance Fee

Pros:

- + Visitors, especially families, like to know in advance what they will pay for their entertainment.
- + Visitors think an entry fee is a good value since they can participate in anything they want as many times as they want.
- + Since visitors can participate as many times as they want in activities, they often stay longer and spend more money on food and products.
- + Decreased theft.
- + Maximize revenue per parking space.
- + The entrance fee covers the overall costs for the owner to develop and maintain activities, which gives more control over profits and losses.

Cons:

- + You must be sure to move visitors from the parking area directly through an entrance gate to limit access onto your property. This could require building fences or other barricades, so people can't just walk onto your property without paying the fee.
- + People may not perceive the activities offered are worth the price of admission, so you may have to do a "sell job" to visitors, such as posting a sign detailing what is included in admission or handing out a map that also lists activities.

Charging by Activity

Other properties charge by individual activities. Be sure to post the fees indicated under each activity listing in this chapter. Be sure to post your pricing on your website!

Pros:

- + Visitors pay only for the activities they want to do, which gives them control over their expenses.

Cons:

- + You must have staff prepared to collect and make change at each activity, which means you lose some control over your money.
- + Visitors feel like they're being "nickel and dimed" by reaching into their pockets so many times, especially when the child is begging them to pay for activities.



COMBO TICKET

Another Option

A "combo ticket" offer with a "general admission," "best value" or "most fun" where your visitors decide their preferences.

Some agritourism businesses have on-line advance ticket sales for special events so they will know how many guests are coming.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

U-PICK OR PICK-YOUR-OWN

This is when consumers go into your fields or orchards and pick what they want to buy. This is a WONDERFUL way to offer a special experience, especially to folks from the city who never walk through orchards or fields of fruits and vegetables!

Examples

- + Pick-your-own fruit: apples, peaches, blueberries, strawberries, etc.
- + Dig-your-own potatoes
- + Pick-your-own vegetables: carrots, broccoli, asparagus, pumpkins, etc.
- + Cut-your-own flowers
- + Cut-your-own Christmas trees

Tips:

- + Provide field supervision to ensure visitors are safe and they do not damage or trample plants.
- + Do not use ladders in the field.
- + Take people to where the product is abundant. They'll pick more and pay for more. Your goal is to sell more, not to pick what others have left behind.
- + Provide wagons or carts so visitors can carry product out of the field (if you don't offer wagon rides).
- + Take payment in the field or at a central location.
- + Be willing to accept credit cards, pay pal and phone payments. Customers will pick more when this is an option and fewer people carry cash anymore.
- + Do your research for a "Point of Sale" (POS) System that will be your best financial management tool, something that will generate robust reporting for you on your sales results.

Containers for Picking

As part of offering Pick-Your-Own, the price should include a container for picking.

- + Print your logo, website address, social media info, business hashtag and phone number on each container so it will help market your agritourism business.
- + Make sure containers are large and will hold a lot of product, especially when you are charging by the pound, so visitors are encouraged to pick and buy more.
- + Make sure the containers have handles because visitors pick more when it's easy to carry out of the field.

Add Wagon Rides

Use wagon rides pulled by horses or tractors to transport visitors to your fields or orchards. They love this experience, and often start singing as they're going off to pick! (See Page 27 – Wagon Rides.)

Pricing

Price these products at the same level or even higher than what customers pay at grocery stores. Customers are happy to pay for produce that is fresher than anything they'd get in the store, and for the opportunity to meet the farmer who grew their fruit! They also are happy to pay for the fun experience of picking it themselves on a farm!

It may be beneficial to post signage stating freshly picked produce does not contain the preservatives found on fruits and vegetables purchased from the store, letting them know how to care for their produce at home to keep it fresh.

You may charge by container or by the pound. It's easier to charge by container, but you can make more if you provide a scale and take the time to weigh each purchase.

Kansas requires every commercial weighing or measuring device, excluding gas pumps, to be tested by a licensed service company each year. The Kansas Department of Agriculture's Weights and Measures program licenses service companies and their technicians. These companies are authorized to repair, install and certify commercial weighing and measuring devices. Kansas is believed to be the only state that allows its service technicians to certify commercial weighing and measuring devices.

FAMILY PLAY AREAS

Remember, families come to our agritourism businesses to spend time together. Give the kids plenty to do. A children's activity area should have a variety of activities for kids two years and older. Make sure the play area represents the country experience and not just something they could find at their neighborhood playground.

Examples

- + Large piles of loose straw for throwing
- + Corn boxes or sand boxes
- + Straw bale maze (See Page 35 – Mazes)
- + Barrel train rides (pulled by small tractor)
- + Old, painted tractor for kids to climb on
- + Straw pyramid for climbing and sliding down
- + Show & tell vegetable garden
- + Slides from an old combine, stripped and painted brightly
- + Tractor-shaped tricycles & tricycle maze
- + Corn-stalk teepees
- + Games (apple bobbing, gunny sack races, etc.)
- + Scavenger hunt
- + Fishing pond with cane poles
- + Corrugated pvc "log" swings

Naming Your Play Area

Be sure the name is part of the country experience within your overall agritourism business theme: Farmer Brown's Corral, Little Farmer's Play Yard, Family Fun Corral, etc.

Pricing

There are several schools of thought on pricing of the family play area. If you charge a general admission fee, the play area can be included. If not, charge by the activity or charge an admission to the play area. The more activities, the more you can charge.

Offer an area for nursing mothers with a diaper changing station close to the play areas and a child "potty seat" hung in each stall or porta potty for the little ones in training. The families visiting your agritourism business will remember this courtesy and tell their friends!



Hickory Creek Ranch in Spring Hill, KS

PETTING CORRAL WITH FARM ANIMALS

Families love to see farm animals up close. Just having the animals in pens where children and adults can watch and pet them through the fence is great fun.

Types of Animals

Goats, lambs, sheep, cows, horses, pigs, llamas, alpacas, chickens, ducks, pigs, turkeys, peacocks, etc.

At the time of publication, the USDA does not require licensing or inspection of petting corrals or zoos with “farm animal species,” however, a good resource to send inquiries about petting zoos for farm animals is: United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The Kansas contact office is: 2150 Centre Ave, Bld B, MS#3W11, Fort Collins, CO 80526 or the USDA website: aphis.usda.gov/aphis/home

Safety & Confinement of Animals

There are public safety issues if you let the public mingle with the animals. It is best to keep the animals in confined pens and the people on the other side of the fence to reduce your liability risks. Even healthy animals can carry germs and you cannot tell which animals might carry them. Most visitors don't understand this inherent risk. A good reference for zoonotic disease risks with children is: safeagritourism.org/wp-content/uploads/Zoonotic_Disease_Agritourism_Owner_Fact_Sheet.pdf

Health & Hand Washing

If you choose to allow interaction with the animals, install hand washing facilities with soap, water and paper towels so your guests can wash their hands when leaving the animal area. There are some great portable hand washing stands available. Hand sanitizer can kill some germs, but not all, and should not be considered a replacement for handwashing.

Selling Feed

A possible way to increase revenue is to sell feed for the animals. There are companies that sell gumball-type machine dispensers for food pellets for a fee. In fact, it is so popular at many properties that owners provide change machine or a have a staff person making change. Another option – bag feed in snack size zipper type bags to sell.

To avoid direct contact while feeding the animals you may install a tube of PVC pipe for children to drop the food in for the animals to catch at the other end of the tube. Be watchful of your livestock for signs of bloating, especially if selling or using feed pellets, possibly having hay available for feeding as an option.

Goat Walks

This is a unique attraction within the petting corral. Build a series of elevated ramps that lead the goats to a feeding platform. (One agritourism business had them climb to the top of the barn roof!) Then create a pulley system that transports a tin cup filled with feed to the goats at the top. Kids love to put feed in the cup and then watch the goats race to eat.

Goat Yoga

Another popular activity is yoga with goats mingling among your guests as they are led through yoga poses. Is it a fad or here to stay? Many agritourism businesses are cashing in on it.

Contests to name baby animals

This is a popular and fun way for kids to get excited about the baby animals. Have them submit names and then post a sign that says, “Bobby Smith named Wiggly, our new pig.” This helps create relationships between the kids and the animals and encourages repeat visits because the child wants to watch “their” animal grow up.

Naming of Petting Corral

Make this very fun and country, such as Critter Corral, Uncle Bob's Barnyard, etc.

Pricing

The petting corral is usually part of the Family Play Area or part of the general admission for the agritourism experience. However, if this is your first attraction, you can easily charge per person to experience your petting corral.



Children and farm animals become fast friends during a day in the country! (Hickory Creek Ranch in Spring Hill, KS)

CLASSES

A great way to attract visitors and get some media coverage (especially in the calendar of events in your local newspaper) is to conduct classes, where your guests create something during the class to take home, using your products, if applicable. This is different from a demonstration, where audience members just watch.

Examples

Adults:

- + Gardening (create a hanging basket)
- + Flower arranging
- + Drying herbs
- + Food preservation
- + Canning
- + Bread making
- + Scrap booking
- + Quilting
- + Jam and jelly making
- + Nature photography
- + Fly fishing
- + Cooking
- + Making gingerbread houses
- + Soap making

Children:

- + Cooking
- + Gardening
- + Nature
- + Crafts
- + Prairie experience
- + Paint a pot and plant a flower
- + Making gingerbread houses
- + Creating Christmas ornaments

Pricing

Check to see what similar classes around are charging, figure in your time or the rate charged by your "expert," plus the cost of materials. It depends on how sophisticated the class is and the length of time of the class. Do not undersell your value.

CONDUCTING THE CLASS YOURSELF

OR

HIRING AN EXPERT

As a farmer/rancher, you and your family members have expertise that most people don't have. Remember, you can share your knowledge and charge for it through a class. If the subject is something you don't know about or you just don't have the time to do it yourself, hire an expert to conduct the class. Check with master gardeners, chefs, county extension agents, garden society members, historical society members, crafters, etc. These people enjoy sharing their knowledge at community events and may not even charge you a fee, although they enjoy receiving product from your property.

DEMONSTRATIONS

A demonstration allows an audience to watch an "expert." In general, a demonstration lasts from 10 to 30 minutes and the audience does not participate in the action.

Examples

- + Pruning trees
- + Sheep, alpaca or llama shearing
- + Border Collie handling
- + Branding steer
- + Cleaning fish
- + Animal birthing
- + Cow milking
- + Flour milling
- + Harvesting (at the show & tell plot)
- + Grain threshing
- + Pet grooming
- + Horseshoeing
- + Prairie grass threshing
- + Civil War re-enactments
- + Candle making
- + Field to Table Chef
- + Soap making

Conducting the Demonstration

Yourself or Hiring an Expert

While you can conduct these demonstrations yourself (See Page 26 – Classes), many of these heritage-type ideas are best left to the groups that re-enact historic events. They have period costumes, music, games, etc. that can enhance the demonstration.

Pricing

Typically, you do not charge for demonstrations, but use them to draw in crowds as part of the special agritourism experience or a festival. (See Page 31 – Festivals)

WAGON OR BUGGY RIDES

A great country experience is taking a ride in a wagon or a buggy. A wagon can be pulled by a tractor or by horses. Families love taking wagon rides and you'll see the phones and cameras snapping and videoing, rushing to get photos of everyone on the wagon or buggy.

Examples

Use wagon rides to take visitors on a tour of your property or use them to transport people to and from the u-pick fields. The driver can narrate and educate everyone about your agritourism operation.

Wagon Construction & Safety

- + It's safest to transport people when they are confined, so there should be rails on the side of the wagon.
- + No hanging the feet off the wagon.
- + Use handrails to make it easy to get on and off the wagon.
- + Make it easy to get onto the wagon by building steps or just use a block of wood or stone.
- + For wheel chair accessibility, create a ramp that can be placed over the steps or somehow allow the chair to be rolled onto the wagon.

Pricing

A wagon ride may be included in the overall admission fee, or in the u-pick price, or it may have a fee of its own, per person, depending on the length of ride, what they will see, and whether it's narrated.

You may find a checklist for hayride safety at: safeagritourism.org/wp-content/uploads/HayrideSafetyChecklist-1.pdf

FOOD CONCESSIONS

These are "stands" or small areas for food sales to customers. The goal is to increase revenue, but also to keep visitors on the property longer, as they don't have to leave to get food and drink.

Do It Yourself or Hire a Concessionaire, Caterer, or Food Truck

Especially at the beginning, food service may be overwhelming. Even if you don't want to do it, you still need to offer basic food. This could be as simple as a not-for-profit group that will grill hamburgers, or a professional concessionaire who brings his own sales trailer or cooking equipment. If there is a popular concessionaire or food truck in your area with a following of loyal customers, hire them. If you do hire somebody, generally you take a percentage of the sales (15 to 20%), rather than a flat fee.

Caterers can provide more substantial meals and perhaps better-quality food. They can give you turn-key service where you provide the location and they provide everything else including necessary food licenses and paying taxes on their food sales. You negotiate a set price for each meal and then mark up your customer price as appropriate.

Setting Up Concession Areas

Begin with one sales location – it could be inside a barn, under a tent or just out in the open under a tree. As you see that lines are getting longer, and more people are visiting your agritourism business, add more concession stands.

Regulations

Food Safety licenses may be required if you serve food – agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/food-safety-lodging or 785-564-6767.

Types of Food

Anything that can be eaten by hand, especially with a "country" flavor:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| + Roasted sweet corn | + Hamburgers |
| + Apple cider | + Hot dogs |
| + Kettle corn | + Bratwursts and sausages |
| + Doughnuts | + Homemade ice cream |
| + Funnel cakes | + Pop & bottled waters |
| + Lemonade | + Regional specialties |
| + Homemade pies | + Coffee specialties |

Tables and Seating

Once you start selling food, people want a place to sit and eat. You can use straw bales to start, or eventually get picnic tables or benches.

Trash Cans

Have plenty of trash cans around concession areas and be sure you have staff responsible for cleaning up and dumping overflowing trash cans. You want this area to be very clean and appealing. Consider bins for recycling to show your business' effort to be "green."

Pricing

Price in round numbers (including sales tax) to minimize the amount of change you must make, which will speed sales. Food prices should be competitive with a fast food restaurant or quick stop. Do not under price your food! If you use concessionaires, you will take a percentage of their sales, from 15 to 20%.

RESTAURANTS

A permanent building for serving food, as opposed to concession stands.

When to Consider a Restaurant

In general, a restaurant is a risky proposition. Even professional chefs and restaurateurs have failed in the restaurant business. Before you consider opening a restaurant, you must be able to count on a steady stream of customers when open. Here are some possibilities:

- + You have lots of people coming to your operation for the many activities you offer.
- + You may be located near a heavily traveled highway.
- + Your community might be short of restaurants.
- + You might create a unique theme that will make people come from farther distances.
- + You might only be open on weekends when families might eat out.

Where to Start

Contact the Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association – krha.org. They will provide you with lots of information and education about how to set up and run your restaurant. They have annual conference and special food handling classes as well.

Types of Food

Capitalize on the country experience by offering favorites such as grilled barbecue, fried chicken, biscuits and gravy, cowboy stew, corn on the cob, big bowls of mashed potatoes, etc. Develop specialty recipes or items unique to your region, operation or family.

Regulations

Check with the Kansas Department of Agriculture – agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/food-safety-lodging/food-safety-egg-lodging-app-forms. (See Resource Guide, Page 106)

Pricing

A good rule of thumb is: food cost is 1/3, service is 1/3 and overhead & profit is 1/3.



Selling food is a great way to increase revenue, and equally important, it keeps visitors from leaving the agritourism business to find a restaurant. The longer they stay on your property, the more activities they enjoy and the better chance they will return! (Firefly Farm in Wichita, KS)

RANCH EXPERIENCE

Visitors experience life on a working ranch through a variety of activities, demonstrations and lodgings. This can be for a day, an overnight, or a week's vacation.

Activities and Offerings

- | | |
|---|--|
| + Summer Camps | + Cowboy chats |
| + Trail rides | + Cowboy storytelling and poetry |
| + Cattle sorting | + Float trips |
| + Fixing fence | + ATV trails |
| + Cattle roping | + Bow and arrow shooting |
| + Cattle branding | + Horseshoe pitching |
| + Blacksmith demonstrations | + Riding arena |
| + Horseback trail rides | + Paddle boats |
| + Chuck wagon dinners | + Horse boarding |
| + Horse-drawn or mule-drawn wagon rides | + Black powder rifle shooting |
| + Bunkhouse lodging | + Snake hunting |
| + Roping demonstrations | + Trap, clay, skeet or target shooting |

Trail Riding

With your horses: This is one of the most expensive activities to offer because it greatly increases your insurance liability. Remember, not everyone is a skilled rider. Be sure you use your most gentle and calm horses and provide extra supervision for novice riders.

With the visitors' own horses: When visitors provide their own horses, it may be easier to get insurance liability coverage.

This requires additional staff to guide trail rides, so visitors stay safe and don't get lost.

Pricing: Prices vary greatly depending on what is offered. Charges are per hour per rider when horses are provided, but less when the visitors bring their own horses. Sometimes horse riding is included in a package (day's ride with chuck wagon lunch, or with lodging, etc.). Research what others are charging by visiting with the Kansas Horse Council, 785-776-0662, or ranchweb.com

Overnight Experience

Many travelers today want a longer ranch experience, either overnight or up to a week's stay. During their stay, they ride with the cowboys, eat from an open fire, sleep under the stars in sleeping bags, help with care and feeding of the animals, herd cattle, etc.

Pricing: Visitors pay substantial fees for this privilege, up to \$1,000 or more for a week's stay.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor recreation covers many activities, and what you might offer depends on the nature of your property and utilizing your natural resources.

Examples

- + Summer Camps
- + Canoeing
- + Kayaking
- + Hiking
- + Camping
- + Swimming
- + Wildlife watching
- + Nature photography
- + Archaeology
- + Mountain biking
- + Rock climbing
- + Horseback riding
- + Trap, clay or skeet shooting
- + Gathering rocks, gems or Indian artifacts
- + Prairie wild flower walks/identification
- + Birding

Pricing:

Depends on the activity, duration and whether it is packaged with lodging. Also, owners may rent equipment such as canoes, and charges would be similar to the prices at other venues.

ATHLETICS

You can offer athletic activities of many kinds, and this is a way to tap into your own athletic hobbies. They might include:

- + Archery
- + Bocce Ball
- + Miniature golf
- + Golf course
- + Golf driving range
- + Disc golf course
- + Batting cages
- + Baseball fields
- + Paintball games
- + Soccer fields
- + Cross Country course for running or skiing

Pricing

Depends on the sport and the type of equipment rented but it would be similar to pricing at other venues.

HERITAGE/KANSAS PRAIRIE EXPERIENCE

Any activity that replicates the Kansas Prairie experience.

Kansas History

Many tourists are fascinated by the prairie experience. Whether they read about it in Laura Ingalls Wilder books, saw it on "Little House on the Prairie," or read about it in history books, the Kansas prairie experience played an important part in our nation's past. Tourists want to experience it, hear about it, learn about it, and participate in it.

Historical Property

Perhaps your property includes something historic that people would want to see. For example, a civil war site or an original sod house from 1907. Perhaps your property was used as a stopping point for the Pony Express, a cattle trail or stage coach line. Perhaps characters from history lived in your area or slept at your agritourism property, etc. Consider how to present these ideas to tourists.

Replicate History

Even if your property does not have an historic site or connection, you can still re-create some traditional prairie activities for visitors. The state of Kansas is known for the prairie life that tourists would love to experience.

Ideas for Activities

You want to give visitors a sense of what it was like to live the life of a prairie dweller in the 1800s. Some activities could include:

- | | |
|---|--|
| + Crossing the prairie in Conestoga wagons | + Specialty cooking demonstrations over an open fire |
| + Storytelling | + Specialty lodging such as a treehouse |
| + Costumed re-enactments and skits | + Camping in a teepee |
| + Stage coach rides | + Sleeping under the stars |
| + Prairie or sod homes to visit or overnight stay | + Lectures about the time period |
| + Root cellar tour | + Western music by a campfire |
| + Wheat harvesting | + Cowboy poetry |
| + Civil war re-enactments | + Glamping |
| + Burning of the prairie grass | |
| + Traditional music | |

What makes it work?

The more unique and authentic you make these activities, the more the public will enjoy them. Staff should be dressed in period clothing and signage should help educate about history. Investigate partnerships to help develop these activities. Contact the Kansas Historical Society, get to know local historians, etc. Maybe you've got a great property for a re-enactment and you can contract with others to provide actors, clothing, food, etc.

Pricing

Depends on the scope of what you offer and average length of time a visitor will stay to participate. It is often included in an admission fee or festival price.

FESTIVALS & SEASONAL EVENTS

Invite the public for special activities, foods and entertainment, all organized around a theme. The goal is to attract larger crowds, especially on special weekends where people are looking for things to do.

Reasons to hold special events:

- + Visitors like to seek out special events on holidays when they want something different to do with the family.
- + Some folks just love festivals and your special events will attract these people who might not otherwise come to your property.
- + Special events are a good way to attract visitors during times when business is slow or non-existent. For example, in the early spring when Easter takes place or during times when there is no ripe product for u-pick.
- + Create a special event when seasonal changes provide natural drama.
- + You can develop something on your property that ties into a special event happening in the community that has the public out and about that weekend. For example, if the town is having a chili cook-off, you can host an antique car or tractor show.

In fact, special events can be your sole entry into agritourism; you can hold special events even if you're not open to the public for any other activity. Be certain to check with your local planning and zoning folks to see if any permits are required for hosting events.

Examples

- + American as Apple Pie Festival
- + Yellow Brick Road Festival
- + Pride of the Prairie Festival
- + High Plains History Days
- + Flowers in the Flint Hills
- + Fort Festivals
- + Pioneer Days
- + Corny as Kansas in August Festival
- + Sunflower Festival
- + Conestoga Weekend Days

Seasonal/Holiday Examples

- + Halloween Costume Party
- + Christmas Carol Festival
- + Mother's Day Festival
- + Fall Harvest Festival
- + Easter Egg Hunt



Hunting for Easter eggs is even more fun on a farm! Think about creating events or festivals during holidays when families are looking for something special to do. (Walters Pumpkin Patch in Burns, KS)

Developing Themes

The theme can be related to products you grow, an animal you raise, a time of year, a community tie-in, historical tie-in, etc.

Types of Special Activities to Include:

- + Entertainment (music, barn dancing, square dancing, theatrical performances)
- + Contests
- + Games
- + Specialty foods, especially around the theme (See Page 27 – Food Concessions)
- + Special guests
- + Craft making
- + Demonstrations
- + Lectures
- + Rides
- + Pie-eating or food-eating contests
- + Pony rides
- + Children's activities: clowns, face painting, balloon animals, puppet shows, story tellers, pictures with the Easter Bunny or Santa.
- + Specialty drink – partner with a local Kansas winery or brewery to sample at your venue with hor d'oeuvres made with local foods in your maze.
- + Nighttime events such as a Maze by Flashlight or Zombie Paintball

Pricing

These festivals are often part of the agritourism activities and covered by the general admission fee (See Page 22 – Charging Activity Fees). If there is a separate fee for special festival activities, check with local carnivals or birthday parties to see what others are charging for activities such as face painting or pony rides. If an “adult only” event, prices are higher for an evening out such at \$20 - \$50 per person, especially if alcoholic beverages and food are provided as a part of the package.

SPONSORSHIPS

OR PARTNERING

Many businesses and/or organizations will co-sponsor these festivals, especially when they draw families or large crowds.

Types of sponsors: Not-for-profit organizations (e.g. the Heart Association, Cancer Society, 4-H, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, etc.), local businesses (banks, retail operations, fast food chains, etc.), service clubs (Optimists, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, garden clubs, etc.)

What sponsors get from you:

Sponsors like to be good “citizens” in the community and like having their name attached to an event where they can reach crowds of people. As part of the co-sponsorship, they would expect to put up signs; have their logo included on all festival advertising, printed materials and on your website; have a booth on the property where visitors can get information and giveaways; get a significant number of free passes, etc.

What you get from sponsors:

Frequently the sponsor has a much higher profile and marketing budget than you do. You can benefit from being associated with them. The sponsors' contribution can include cash payments; publicity in their stores/businesses; mention of the festival on their websites, advertisements or shopping bags; volunteers; giveaways; prizes for contests; printing of materials, etc.

How to approach sponsors:

You need to approach sponsors at least six months prior to the festival. Sometimes it takes a year's advance notice, so the festival can be put into their yearly budget. Write or call the vice president of marketing, or business owner or president of the club, and clearly explain what the festival is, what the opportunities are for the sponsor, expected attendance and marketing efforts planned. Try to arrange a face-to-face meeting to go over all these details.

SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S GROUP TOURS

These are when you invite children's groups to tour your facility as a fun learning experience that can last an hour or can be a one-day "agritourism camp."

Ages

All ages, even up to high school, but content and learning lessons must be age appropriate. Generally broken down as: pre-school and day care center children; K-3; 4-6; middle school; senior high school.

Educational Content

Students should really get a hands-on view of what it is like to be a farmer or rancher. They can pick vegetables or fruit, hoe a garden, watch a demonstration of sheep sheering, horse shoeing, cattle roping, etc. The educational component should be created by a teacher, or use the resources through Kansas State Extension, or through "Ag in the Classroom" program. agclassroom.org/teacher/matrix/

Props

Based on the ages, make it fun and interactive to tell the story. Use videos to describe growing seasons and harvesting, or stages of raising animals; use a roping dummy to show lassoing of a steer; use puppets to explain agricultural concepts, such as a bee puppet, and a flower puppet to explain pollination; use live farm animals for demonstrations, cow milking, etc.

Restrooms

You must provide restrooms, either portable or permanent.

Who should run tours?

Choose a person with an outgoing personality – either the property owner or hire somebody very personable who is accustomed to working with children, such as a former or retired teacher.

How long should a tour last?

An entire tour should not last more than 1 to 1.5 hours, which means you can run many tours during the day. The educational component for younger children should last 15 - 20 minutes and for older students 30 minutes.

Steps to Operating a Tour

- + Use a portable microphone so everyone in the group can hear you.
- + If a group arrives on school bus or motorcoach, tour leader should board the bus to greet the group. If not on a bus, congregate them under a tent, in a barn, etc.
- + Explain the sequence of the tour and if necessary, divide the class into smaller groups.
- + Gather the children under a tent or in a barn building. Have them sit on bales of straw or benches and give the educational presentation.
- + Give the children a wagon ride or walking tour of the operation, continuing to explain what they're seeing.
- + Try to include a hands-on activity, such as picking vegetables, petting animals, planting seeds, picking a pumpkin from the patch, going through corn maze, etc.
- + A simple refreshment is often served.
- + Set aside a space for a play area and give children time to run around.
- + As children leave, give each one a flier or brochure about your agritourism business that includes a map and coupon for a future visit, such as "buy one admission/get one free." This will encourage the child's family to come back to visit.

Provide the teacher with supplemental educational materials (almost a lesson plan) to use in classroom following the visit; be sure these are age appropriate. Be sure accessibility is available for all. Do you have handicap parking and wheelchair ramps?

Marketing Tours to Schools

or Children's Groups

- + Create a mailing list of all schools, day care centers, boy scouts, girl scouts, home school groups, etc. that are within a 100-mile radius of your property. Create the list with a Google search or The Kansas Department of Education has a listing of public schools in a pdf here: ksde.org/Portals/0/Directories/2017-2018%20Educational%20Directory/Consolidated%20Directory.pdf?ver=2017-10-13-154030-657
- + Create a simple flier or letter explaining what your tours offer, times available, price and number to call to book the tour and include your website.
- + Send this marketing material to the mailing list in early August.
- + Put a full description (including pricing) on your website.

What makes it work?

Schools want excellent educational value for an agritourism business tour. To get the funding for a field trip, most schools must show the educational value of the trip for their students. Work with a teacher to design the content, handouts and classroom follow-up materials for each group, according to age, as explained above.

Pricing

Most agritourism businesses charge per person, keeping the rate under \$10. The teacher is usually admitted free, but accompanying adults are generally charged. Consider a minimum of 20 children per group or a minimum charge, to make it profitable and worth your time.



School tours are as much fun as they are educational, especially with hands-on activities like picking strawberries! (Tenth Street Orchard in Sterling, KS)

ADULT GROUP TOURS

These are tours geared to adult groups, and most often they are pre-booked by clubs, organizations or motorcoaches.

Content

Visitors want to get a feel for what it's like to be a farmer or rancher, but because these are mostly adults, they are very interested in learning about agriculture, how things work and why you do what you do. They want to tour the facility, whether that is done from a wagon or just by walking through the property.

Who should run tours?

A person with an outgoing personality. Usually an owner operator or somebody else very familiar with the operation.

Restrooms

You must provide restrooms, either portable or permanent. It is helpful to have more than one or two.

Pricing

Adult tour pricing can vary based on if a meal or gift to take home is included, either or both of which you would include in your tour price. Note: the bus driver and escorts on motorcoach tours are not charged any entry or tour fees or for any food the group is receiving.

Steps to Operating a Tour

- + Use a portable microphone so everyone in the group can hear you.
- + If groups arrive on a motorcoach, board the bus and greet the group. If not on a bus, congregate them under a tent, in a barn, etc.
- + Be sure accessibility is available for all. Do you have handicap parking and wheelchair ramps?
- + Introduce yourself and give a history about your family, your agritourism business, what you grow, raise, etc. Make the stories personal and as friendly as possible. They want to feel as though they've gotten to know the owners.
- + Using a wagon or a walking tour, go through the property and show key areas, giving explanations as you go.
- + If appropriate, create signs (for example, in the processing plant) to explain what is happening.
- + Encourage questions as you go.
- + Distribute samples of product wherever appropriate.
- + Make sure the tour ends at the store, if you have one.
- + Try to have something they can take home with them – either something they've picked or something they've made, or a small token souvenir.

Marketing Tours to Groups

- + Create a simple flier or letter explaining what your tours offer, times available, price, and number to call to book the tour and include your website.
- + Create a mailing list of all church groups, men's service clubs, women's organizations, non-profit organizations, senior bank clubs, retirement centers, garden clubs, etc. that are within a 100-mile radius of your property.
- + Provide a full description including pricing on your website.
- + For motorcoach groups, you will need to work with the Kansas Tourism office or other tourism authorities such as your local Convention & Visitors Bureau. (See Page 101 – Making the Tourism Connection)

MAZES

Visitors have to find their way through paths of corn, sunflowers, sorghum or sudan grass that twist and turn, some leading to dead ends and some to the exit.

Large Corn Maze

- + Large corn mazes are created on 5+ acres of land, usually in a very interesting pattern that can be seen from above via helicopter. For example, there have been corn mazes in the shape of the United States or a state or an animal, statue of liberty, university logo, etc. There was even one that read "Happy Birthday Larry King" which was then featured on his talk show!
- + At the entrance, visitors are usually given a map of the maze to help them find their way out.
- + Some mazes have interactive stations within the maze, so it becomes a bit of a scavenger hunt to find each station. This makes it more fun and challenging. Sometimes you get a stamp to put on your map at each station to prove that you've found them.
- + The interactive and educational "clue" stations can be done in many ways. Each station can consist of signs with educational information. For example, if the maze is in the shape of the United States, when the path takes you to any state, there will be a sign with information about that state. In the Statue of Liberty maze, the stations may teach about the structure, how and when it was built, etc.
- + You can create your own design or hire a maze company for a fee. The maze company can create the design and come to your agritourism business and cut it out. They can also create the interactive stations.
- + If you do it yourself, plot the design on graph paper and create a corresponding grid at the field. Many use global positioning systems (gps) to help cut out the pattern.
- + There are differing opinions about how high the crop should be when you cut out the pattern and paths. You can start cutting when the crop is 6 inches high. One advantage of cutting early is that nature helps decompose the stubble, which must be cleared out, so people don't trip. If you wait until the crop is mature and high, it is more labor intensive to clean out the stubble.
- + When visitors find their way out of the maze, you can give them a fun certificate that they've completed the maze, or a coupon for a \$1 off their next corn maze visit.
- + Drones have made it much more affordable to have an aerial photo taken of the maze pattern when it is fully grown. This photo can be used on your website, in your brochures and fliers, and to get publicity through local newspapers, television stations and state tourism magazines.
- + A maze designed in an interesting pattern should get you some good publicity. Be sure to write a news release and distribute it widely. If you have taken an aerial photo, include it with your release.
- + You can often get a company to sponsor a maze if their logo is included in the design.

Pricing: Check around and remain competitive when pricing for separate admission to your maze. Some agritourism businesses have a daytime rate and a different rate for nights (by flashlight) and weekends. Free for children under three. Consider selling souvenir tee shirts with the design of the maze and the name of your agritourism business.



Imagine trying to find your way through this fabulous corn maze! Let your imagination go wild in coming up with design ideas. (Kansas Maze in Buhler, KS)

Straw Bale Maze

- + **CHILDREN:** Used in children's play areas, so they should not be very complicated, large or confusing. Adults can peer over the bales and watch the kids try to work their way out.

Pricing: Typically, this is part of a children's play area that requires an admission fee to the area. However, you could charge a small fee per child.

- + **TEENS & ADULTS:** A left-turn maze is a design of single bales of straw, laying flat on the ground, where the challenge is getting from the entrance to the exit by making left turns only. This is great fun and difficult enough for teens and parents to be challenged.

Pricing: Typically, this is included as part of the admission fee to the agritourism business and does not have a separate fee.

Hedge Maze

This is the kind of maze you may have seen in pictures of English gardens. This requires several years to grow, but they are permanent and can be used forever.

Pricing: If this is your featured attraction, it should be a very large and significant maze and then you can charge a separate admission fee. If it is a small hedge maze, typically this is included as part of the admission fee to the agritourism business and does not have a separate fee.

Other Mazes

Mazes can be made from other materials such as sunflowers, sorghum, sudan grass, fencing, rope, mirrors, etc.

7

CHAPTER

WINERIES, VINEYARDS AS DESTINATIONS

Prior to prohibition, Kansas was one of the largest grape producing and winemaking regions in the United States. But between Carry A. Nation's hatchet swinging temperance movement and Kansas being the first state to pass statewide prohibition outlawing wine, the grape and wine industry was destroyed in Kansas.

It wasn't until 1985 when the Farm Winery Act was passed that the industry began to again emerge and rebuild, now with wineries and vineyards statewide including at least one meadery.

Tourists have made wine and vineyard visits a multi-billion-dollar industry. Why do millions of tourists plan vacations around visiting wineries?

- + Pursue interest in wine
- + Relax in a beautiful environment
- + Dine on fine foods
- + Shop for wine and gift items
- + Enjoy entertainment and activities
- + Attend festivals



MARKETING OF WINERIES

Websites

Wine lovers do their research online first to get information about local wineries. A good website and social media are critical and should be extremely user-friendly. Be sure to give information about all your wine varieties, as well as the activities, special events, etc. on your property. For complete information on how to create an effective website, see Page 87 – Websites.

Tastings

Tastings give visitors a chance to taste your different wine varieties. This is what differentiates wineries from other agritourism destinations – the chance to taste wine made from local grapes. Some wineries give visitors a small taste of their wines, while others charge a fee for tasting. For some wineries that can't afford marketing or even getting the product on store shelves, this is the best way to motivate visitors to buy their product.

Wine lovers are food lovers, too!

People who are serious about wine are often serious about culinary experiences, too. Many wineries have restaurants or offer special dining events around culinary themes featuring their wines. You may create special events such as a murder mystery dinner or a new vintage dinner, paired with local foods that complement your new wine.

FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Wineries are great locations to hold festivals such as Oktoberfest, Maifest, Wurstfest, New Vintage Festival, etc. A few activities to consider:

- + Harvest party
- + Grape stomping
- + Wine & cheese pairing
- + Concerts and live music
- + Special foods
- + Art shows
- + Antique shows
- + Gourmet classes and gatherings
- + Engagements and weddings
- + Photo shoots

RETAIL: WHAT TO SELL

Wineries may increase revenue by having a store that sells a variety of goods, including:

- + Wines from your property
- + Wine accessories (stemware, corkscrews, wine coolers, etc.)
- + Gift items
- + Décor items with wine and grape motifs
- + Local cheese, gourmet foods, especially appetizers
- + Fine chocolates

TOURS

Many wineries give the public tours of the property and the bottling facility, which makes the visit more interesting and usually motivates wine sales. For complete information on how to conduct tours, see Page 34 – Adult Group Tours.

LIQUOR REGULATIONS & TAXES

For complete regulations about liquor sales, contact Kansas Department of Revenue – Alcoholic Beverage Control. (See Resource Guide, Page 106)



“CLUSTERS” OF WINERIES

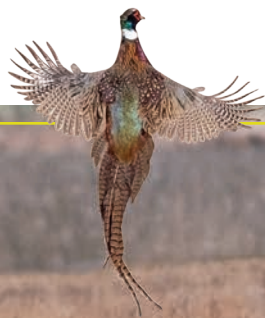
When multiple wineries are within a short driving distance from one another, there is the opportunity to create a “Wine Trail” travel experience, where visitors go from one property to another during a day or two. This requires working with other wineries (and your local Convention and Visitors Bureau or Kansas Tourism office) to market yourselves together. For example, you can join forces to create a brochure that lists all the wineries and other tourism attractions in the region. Miami County Trolley offers “Wine Tours” throughout Miami County to the local wineries.

8

CHAPTER

HUNTING & FISHING

Hunters from every state and many foreign countries come to Kansas each year, hoping to bag the trophy buck of their dreams or experience some of the best pheasant, quail, turkey and waterfowl hunting in America. Some hunt on private land they lease directly from the landowner and others hire outfitters. Hunting can be an important source of income to agritourism businesses, as well as rural communities and when resources are managed correctly, there's room for growth in this facet of agritourism. You'll find information on seasons, regulations, permit and license requirements and application deadlines on the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) website, ksoutdoors.com. You can also learn about Habitat First, a program that connects private landowners with wildlife biologists, who provide technical assistance on improving wildlife habitat, as well as state and federal programs that offer financial assistance for habitat improvement projects.



SOME BASIC FACTS

- + The more you know about Kansas game animals and how to hunt them the more credible you'll be with potential clients. Ensure your staff are knowledgeable, as well.
- + Stay up-to-date about Kansas hunting and fishing regulations and licensing requirements. Clients will depend on you to ensure they are legal.
- + Long-term success with a hunting business will depend on more than just successful hunters. Providing great customer service will ensure return business and positive word-of-mouth advertising.
- + Get to know your local game warden and let your guests know the warden may visit your operation from time to time. Communicate with your guests that you expect them to follow regulations and hunt ethically. The majority of hunters follow regulations and they appreciate law enforcement presence that ensures others are legal.
- + Efforts to improve habitat will do more than attract and hold wildlife. Clients and potential clients will notice these enhancements, which contribute to the overall reputation of your operation.
- + Be honest with clients about hunting pressure that occurs on your land. If they expect and pay for exclusive access, make sure they get it.

HOW TO START

- + Visit with landowners who have successful commercial hunting operations in your area to learn the basics. You can also join the Kansas Sport Hunting Association (Huntkansas.org). They provide information on their website and through their workshops and conferences. Another group to consider is the Kansas Outfitters Association at (kansasoutfittersassociation.com).
- + There is plenty of information online about agritourism and how to incorporate activities like hunting and fishing into an agricultural operation. Also, check with local tourism or agricultural extension services to see what information they can offer.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY THROUGH HUNTING

- + Lease your land to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) for public hunting through the Walk-In Hunting Access (WIHA) program. Payments vary depending on the number of acres enrolled, length of contract period, as well as the quality of opportunities provided. Liability is waived from private individuals who lease land to the state for recreational purposes. State law provides immunity from damages or injuries resulting from ordinary negligence. For information on this and other programs that benefit landowners, visit ksoutdoors.com/private-lands.
- + Lease your land directly to hunters. Lease rates vary greatly, depending on the number of acres, quality of habitat, game populations and exclusiveness.
- + Lease your land to an outfitter with a good reputation and history of good customer service. A good outfitter carries liability insurance that covers their clients when they are on your land. Make sure the lease agreement is explicit on what is expected of you and what you expect from the outfitter. Ask for references and contact hunters and landowners they've worked with.
- + Become an outfitter and guide and provide clients with all aspects of the hunt, including assistance in acquiring the correct licenses and permits, and providing or arranging lodging and meals. Other services could include cleaning and packaging for upland bird, turkey and waterfowl hunters and access to a local meat processor for deer hunters. Clients may also desire a good taxidermist who can either mount their game or get it ready for another taxidermist of the hunter's choice.

FINDING CLIENTS

- + Good hunting operations can only accommodate a limited number of hunters, so work with neighbors and local guiding services that may refer overflow hunters to you.
- + Check hunting and agriculture publications, websites and online forums for hunters who are looking for hunting leases or specific hunting opportunities.
- + Create a professional looking website with well-written information and great photography. Utilize search engine optimization, including words and phrases that will place your site near the top of the results when a hunter uses a search engine, such as Kansas deer hunting, Kansas pheasant hunting, trophy whitetail deer, wild pheasant hunting. If you don't have advanced computer skills, hire a professional website developer.
- + Make sure local and regional economic development/tourism organizations are aware of your new business and provide them with brochures or business cards so they can refer hunters to you.
- + Use social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to help spread your message. A dynamic Facebook page can direct potential clients to your website.

TYPES OF HUNTING

- + Deer hunting provides the best opportunity for landowners to make income from hunting. Kansas is a top destination state for trophy whitetail hunters and those hunters are willing to travel and pay for good outfitting services. Prices for packaged deer hunts range from \$2,500 to as much as \$10,000.
- + Spring wild turkey hunting is popular and attracts resident and nonresident hunters. The season runs from April through May, with youth and archers getting several days before the regular season opens. Most commercial hunts are two to five days in length and prices for fully guided hunts, with accommodations, run around \$300-\$400 per day.
- + Kansas is also a top destination for hunters seeking to hunt pheasant and quail, but wild bird populations fluctuate from year to year, depending on weather and habitat conditions. And even when populations are high, they can only withstand a certain amount of hunting pressure before the hunting quality declines. There is demand from hunters who desire wild bird hunts, but long-term success will depend on having a large area of land to hunt and providing top-notch services, guides and hunting dogs.
- + Establishing a controlled shooting area (CSA), also known as a shooting preserve, is another option. On CSAs, guests hunt pen-raised pheasant, quail or chukar that have been released just prior to the hunt. CSAs are licensed by KDWP and owners must keep records of the number of birds released and harvested. Hunts can occur from September 1-April 30, and hunters are not restricted by state bag and possession limits. A hunting license valid only on CSAs is available and it costs less than a regular nonresident hunting license. Services offered vary from fully guided hunts with meals and lodging to day-hunts where hunters bring their own dogs and hunt unguided. Rates range from \$100 per day to more than \$400 per day. Visit the Kansas Sport Hunting Association's website, huntkansas.org, for more information about CSAs. Call KDWP's Operations Office in Pratt for information about CSA permits, 620-672-5911.
- + There is a long-standing tradition of leasing wetlands and crop fields for duck and goose hunting, especially near federal and state-owned waterfowl management areas such as Cheyenne Bottoms, Marais des Cygnes, and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Kansas often attracts and holds large numbers of ducks and geese, providing excellent hunting opportunities. Waterfowl hunters are particularly dedicated and will travel and pay for good hunting. Options range from leasing access only to fields and marshes to providing fully guided waterfowl hunts.



FISHING

There are more than 100,000 privately owned farm ponds scattered across rural Kansas, and thousands of miles of streams and rivers flow through private land. Fishing can be fantastic in these waters because access is limited, and many provide beauty and solitude anglers are looking for.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY THROUGH FISHING

- + The Fishing Impoundments and Stream Habitats (F.I.S.H.) Program is patterned after the Walk-In Hunting Access Program, leasing ponds and streams for public fishing. The program also leases access points to the Kansas, Arkansas and Missouri rivers, which are considered navigable rivers and open to the public between the high-water marks. For information on these and other fishing programs to benefit landowners, visit Private Landowner Assistance (ksoutdoors.com/private-lands) under the Fisheries section.
- + Another way to get income from private waters is to charge an annual lease fee to a limited number of families or individuals. Anglers usually won't spend as much as hunters, but it's possible to get \$100-\$500 a year for fishing rights. If the lake is large enough, and the fish populations strong enough, you may be able to sell fishing rights to 10 or more people. Lease agreements often include rules on the number of guests that can accompany the lessee, as well as limits on the number and size of fish that may be harvested. KDWP fisheries biologists can provide pond owners with technical advice on how to manage their ponds for optimum sport fish populations.
- + Fishing can also be a nice addition to rural bed-and-breakfast or hunting lodge operations. Some landowners who host fall and winter hunters rent their lodging facilities to fishermen through the spring and summer. Rates per day at a "Bed and Bassfest," with no meals included, can range from \$25 to \$150 per person. Anglers might appreciate the use of a small boat or kayak for fishing. Be sure to check with your insurance agent concerning liability issues if you decide to offer such craft. Remember, KDWP strongly recommends that everyone on board a vessel wear a personal flotation device, and they are required by regulation in some instances. Check out Boating (ksoutdoors.com/Boating) for complete information.

RESOURCES

Contact the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Park's Pratt office, 620-672-5911, to get contact information for district wildlife and fisheries biologists who can provide wildlife and fishery management technical advice. Visit www.ksoutdoors.com to learn more about other private land habitat programs.

Kansas State Extension Service

Charlie Lee
wildlife.k-state.edu
785-532-5734

National Agriculture in the Classroom

agclassroom.org/teacher/matrix

Kansas Sport Hunting Association

huntkansas.org
info@huntkansas.org

Kansas Outfitters Association

kansasoutfittersassociation.com

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

760 South Broadway Boulevard
Salina, KS 67401
785-823-4500

Kansas State Farm Service Agency

3600 Anderson Avenue
Manhattan, Kansas 66503
(785) 539-3531

Farm Flavor

farmflavor.com/kansas-agritourism

Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever

pheasantsforever.org

Ducks Unlimited

ducks.org

National Wildlife Turkey Federation

nwtf.org

CHAPTER 9

LODGING: HOSTING THE OVERNIGHT GUEST



VARIETY OF LODGING

Creating lodging on your property as part of an agritourism destination requires a lot of personal involvement and commitment by the owners. In fact, the more unique and special the lodging experience, the more appealing visitors find it.

Guests do not stay at agritourism destinations expecting a Holiday Inn corporate experience. They want something special and unusual, and for the most part, they want a peaceful getaway. Some guests may want more interaction with you and your family, others want very little. Some will be more comfortable with rustic or shared facilities, while others will expect private baths and hotel-type amenities. Know the tourists you want to attract in order to develop the right experience for them.

Types of Lodging

- + Bunkhouse
- + Barn
- + Log Cabins
- + Bed & Breakfast at owner's farm or ranch house
- + Conestoga wagon
- + Teepee
- + Camping
- + Cottages with or without kitchenettes
- + RV camp sites
- + Luxury or specialty rooms
- + Spa
- + Treehouses
- + Yurt
- + Glamping

WHERE TO START

Contact the Kansas Bed and Breakfast Association – kbba.com. There is a great deal to consider about lodging and it can be a heavy investment along the way. These are the experts who can help you get going.

The Kansas Bed & Breakfast Association has extensive information on:

- + How to create lodging
- + How to budget and price
- + Taxes you must collect
- + State, county and local licensing
- + Zoning regulations
- + Transient Guest Tax

The Kansas Department of Agriculture – Food Safety and Lodging. Food safety licenses may be required if the agritourism lodging destination will be producing or serving food to guests. Lodging licenses may also be required if the business will be housing overnight guests. Contact Food Safety and Lodging.

THE INNKEEPER

Whoever greets the guests, serves them meals, gives them tourism information, etc. should be very, very friendly and very patient. Tourists come in all kinds of personalities.

GETTING GUESTS TO STAY LONGER

Agritourism business stays are so popular that you might want to consider creating a "package" to get visitors to stay longer and you can make more money. The package could include working side-by-side with the farmer or rancher, feeding and tending the animals, camp fires, horse-back rides, nature trails, outdoor recreation, spa activities, etc.

PRICING

This varies a great deal based on the type of lodging and the type of experience being offered. The simplest lodging may start at \$75 per person per day, but upscale accommodations can be from \$150 to \$200 and more per day. It is important to accept credit cards as travelers want this convenience. Again, check with the Kansas Bed & Breakfast Association website to see what others are charging.

EXAMPLES

1 Circle S Ranch and Country Inn

Near Lawrence, Kansas
circlesranch.com

Imagine soaking in a hot tub in the middle of a barn silo. You can at the Circle S Ranch! Since 1860, the Cronemeyer family has owned and operated the 1,200-acre property with horse-back riding and first-class accommodations.

2 Red Rock Guest Ranch

Near Soldier, Kansas
theredrockguestranch.com

The Browns have a beautiful B&B located on 160 acres in the Glacial Hills Area of Kansas, with three miles of groomed hiking trails and a large meeting room. At their ranch setting they host weddings, reunions, meetings or just a weekend getaway and hunters are always welcome.

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CHAPTER

RETAIL SALES FOR PROFITS

In agritourism, a retail operation is when you sell products to the public either from a stand, a tent, a store or via the internet. There is revenue potential in retail operations and agritourism businesses often begin with this enterprise on a simple basis.

When you first begin, consider setting up a retail operation from a farm stand, either by the side of the road or even from a small tent on your property. As your sales increase and you expand your product line, you will probably want to create a store in a permanent building, either one that exists on your property or one you construct.





KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER

WHAT DO YOUR CUSTOMERS WANT?

Organic? Homegrown?

Locally grown? International?

Specialty products?

What your customers want should influence everything from what you sell, graphics on your sign, what kind of promotions to develop, how to price products, etc.

CREATING A COUNTRY RETAIL EXPERIENCE

Tourists love to shop. It's one of the reasons they travel! Your retail operation should reinforce the country flavor and experience, in the same way your agritourism business does. It should be as unique as your property, and the products you sell should help market your overall operation by reinforcing the traveler's experience. This approach includes signage, displays, product selection, staff uniforms, etc. Remember, you're selling an experience along with the product. You want your visitors to feel this is fun and unique, completely unlike going to their local super center or grocery store.

WHAT PRODUCTS TO SELL

Begin by selling what you grow or raise. Be sure the signs indicate this is a "home grown" product from your agritourism business.

Add produce from other farms to complete the assortment. Consumers like to make one stop and get everything they need. Include "add on" for products you sell. For example, if you sell fruits like apples and peaches, sell cobbler mixes. If you sell vegetables, add dipping mixes. In the fall, have caramel apple mix.

Private Label

A great choice is to sell products with your logo on the label. This could include jams, jellies, mustards, dips, salsas, packaged soup mixes, cobbler mixes, etc. There are companies in Kansas and elsewhere that provide private label merchandise for relatively small orders. This gives your agritourism business more brand recognition and allows you to price products competitively.

"From the Land of Kansas"

The Agricultural Marketing Division of the Department of Agriculture manages a program to promote the sale of products grown and processed in Kansas. Consider selling these products along with your products at your retail operation because it creates the "home grown" experience as well. To find out about vendors in this program, or to participate yourself, contact: fromthelandofkansas.com.

Gift Items

Gift items usually sell well, especially if they have a farm, ranch or country theme. T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, stuffed animals, children's books or farm games, Kansas memorabilia and other typical tourist materials are a good addition.

Complementary Products

Sell products that complement your business. If you're a ranch, sell cowboy hats, bandanas, spurs. If you're a farm, sell straw hats, toy tractors, soy candles, goat milk or lavender soaps, soaps and lotions, and decorative items featuring cows, roosters and pigs. If you're a hunting destination, sell gun related products, hunting vests, camouflage gear, etc.

Cookbook

An agritourism family cookbook is popular. Google Kansas companies that will assist you in publishing the cookbook, which should include family photos and your farm family's story.

RETAIL TIPS

Credit Cards

As you expand your retail product mix, it becomes important to accept payment by credit card or smart phone pay as you go. This significantly influences growth in sales and consumers expect to be able to utilize *their* choice of payment for purchases. A large population of folks no longer carry cash, so if you don't offer alternate payment options, you will lose sales!

Displaying Products

- + Whether you're selling from a small fruit stand or from a 5,000-square-foot newly constructed building, display products in a country theme.
- + Use antique furniture as shelves. Line areas with country themed fabric such as red and white gingham. Use wicker baskets.
- + Shelves should be brimming with products and well lighted. When shelves are bare looking, customers think the products are old and stale.
- + To create an eye-catching display, alternate contrasting colors. For example, put tomatoes next to celery next to radishes next to lettuce. If you're carrying many types of apples, put a display of green apples next to red apples, then green again, then red again.

Signs

- + Should clearly indicate the products and pricing.
- + Tell the story of the company or product.
- + Graphics should use a country theme.
- + Signs often can give a tip for preparation, such as with apples: "Great for pie baking" or "Great for applesauce", even provide printed recipes.

Lighting

- + Overhead lighting, especially spot lighting, has a huge impact on the amount of product sold.
- + If you have converted a barn or other kind of building into a retail operation, be sure to add the proper overhead spot lighting.
- + Spotlights should be focused on the produce to make the colors stand out and to make it easy to find.

Sampling of Products

- + Give consumers a taste of what you're selling! Research shows they will purchase more if they have a chance to sample your products.
- + Slice your fresh fruit or make a batch of dip to try with carrots and celery.
- + Make up a bean soup and offer samples in small cups.
- + Offer your homegrown tomatoes and strawberries or other fruit by itself – many people have never tasted the homegrown difference!



Keep your displays well lighted and teeming with product. Create colorful displays by alternating colors such as red apples, then green apples, then red grapes, etc. (Britt's Garden Acres in Manhattan, KS)



Pile your products high and fill the shelves so customers can choose from an abundant mix, rather than half-empty cases that look like the product is old. Use red gingham table cloths, wicker baskets, antique furniture and other country-themed items to create the right kind of experience. (Louisburg Cider Mill in Louisburg, KS)

PRICING STRATEGIES:

Most agritourism businesses make a big mistake by not charging enough for their products. You can charge MORE than the stores in the cities, because you're offering prime products at the peak of freshness. Don't be frightened that people won't buy. They are coming to your agritourism business specifically for this "just-picked" taste. In agritourism, your target customers are visitors, not your neighbors, so you can charge a premium for these products!

- + Selling homegrown products directly to the consumer requires a very different strategy than selling to a wholesaler.
- + Buyers will pay more for what you are selling: freshness, a special taste, and the "experience" of your agritourism business.
- + Do not undercut your neighbor! You do not want to compete on price; you want to compete on quality. You can charge more for quality – comparable to grocery store prices.
- + Set the price to make a profit. Too often agritourism businesses will hurt themselves by discounting prices when there's an abundance of product picked that day. It is better to hold back how much product you display – even if it has to go to waste – and keep the price high. Why? Because your customers get accustomed to discounted prices and then expect them each time they shop.
- + Highest quality products should be sold at premium prices. Do not mix high quality products and distressed products. If you have distressed products, sell them separately at a reduced price with a special sign, such as "Overripe Tomatoes: great for sauces."

SALES TAX

You are required to collect and pay sales taxes to the Kansas Department of Revenue and possibly to your local municipalities as well. Visit ksrevenue.org for more information.



Ad Astra Alpacas in Baldwin City, KS

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CHAPTER

DEVELOPING A FALL SEASON

In agritourism the fall “season” traditionally runs from Labor Day through Halloween. It is almost part of the back-to-school ritual when the leaves begin to turn color, the air gets cooler and Halloween is approaching. In Kansas, because of favorable weather through early December, you may consider extending the season through Thanksgiving.

The fall “season” is popular throughout the country, both in retail sales of home decorations, as well as Halloween and Thanksgiving themed items.

For farmers, this season begins when sunflowers bloom in August/September and the apples are ripe for picking.

Make everything you do for the fall season come alive with color.



There's a great assortment of products to sell which will maximize your efforts and profits.

DON'T SKIP ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

Fall Harvest Products

- + Pumpkins
- + Painted pumpkins
- + Gourds
- + Fall squash
- + Plants: mums and kale
- + Indian corn
- + Straw bales
- + Corn stalks
- + Sunflowers
- + Bonfires
- + Leaves and grasses

Foods

- + Cider
- + Donuts, especially Apple Cider Donuts
- + Specialty coffees
- + Roasted sweet corn
- + Funnel cakes
- + Kettle corn
- + Hot cocoa with cooler weather
- + Chili
- + Apple or other fritters
- + Brats and sausages
- + Cookies and candies in Halloween themes (pumpkins, witches, ghosts, etc.)

Retail Products

- + Pumpkin cutters
- + Trick or treat buckets and bags
- + Home décor items with Halloween/Fall themes
- + Yard stakes with Halloween themes
- + Halloween candies
- + Strings of outdoor lights in Halloween/Fall themes
- + Scarecrows

DECORATING YOUR AGRITOURISM BUSINESS

Turn your property into a sea of fall colors, using huge piles of pumpkins and corn stalks. Everything you sell for outdoor decorations should be displayed throughout the agritourism business. Put scarecrows everywhere with pumpkins all around. Take a wagon and fill it with pumpkins. Paint big straw bales with pumpkin faces, ghosts and witches.



PUMPKIN PATCHES

Families LOVE to pick their pumpkins directly from the patch, especially taking a wagon ride to the field (see Page 27 – Wagon Rides). You want to have the patch visible when customers arrive, so they see a field of orange.

PUMPKIN PRICING

There are two ways to price your pumpkins:

1 By Size:

Small, medium and large.

You put like-sized pumpkins in big piles, or when they come from the patch the clerk will visualize the size.

2 By Weight:

You must have a scale and weigh every pumpkin sold, per pound.

This is the way it is usually done in the grocery store, and it maximizes the value. However, it requires a scale and takes more check-out time. Note: Kansas requires every commercial weighing or measuring device, excluding gas pumps, to be tested by a licensed service company *each* year.

agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/weight-measures/scales

ACTIVITIES FOR THE FALL SEASON

- + Pumpkin painting
- + Apple bobbing
- + Making scarecrows
- + Bobbing for donuts (hung from a string off a tree limb)
- + Costume contests
- + Apple-pie eating contests
- + Find the secret pumpkin in the patch
- + Best decorated pumpkin contest
- + Scarecrow contest (best homemade scarecrow)
- + Entertainment (music, barn dancing, square dancing, theatrical performances)
- + Contests (mother-child look-a-like, longest beard, etc.)
- + Train or barrel rides
- + Pig races
- + Games
- + Craft making
- + Demonstrations such as a cider press
- + Wagon rides
- + Hayrides
- + Bonfires with marshmallow roasting
- + Pony rides
- + Children's activities: clowns, face painting, balloon animals, puppet shows, story tellers
- + Pumpkin sling shot or catapult
- + Big straw mountain for jumping
- + Mazes (see Mazes, page 35)
- + Haunted graveyard (tombstones "Here lies Ned, he lost his head", etc.)
- + Wildlife watching
- + Jump Pads
- + Corn Bin
- + Old equipment slides
- + Photography contest
- + Paintball gallery

HOURS OF OPERATION

Since this is a family activity, for the most part, you must be open Friday afternoon through Sunday at dusk. If traffic warrants it, consider staying open weekdays.

Schedule weekdays for school educational tours or field trips, scheduling by appointment only. Keep in mind there will be cancellations or "no shows." Consider a cancellation fee. Many of these tours or special events use an online booking service, but remember to keep your customers happy so they will return year after year.

PRICING

If you develop these activities as part of the fall season, the best approach is to charge an admission fee, rather than a fee for each activity. For just a few activities, charge a base per person fee. If you offer many activities and special entertainment, you can go higher. Typically, the price of admission does *not* include pumpkin sales, spooky rides, activities that requires additional staff such as ziplines, pony rides, gem mining, haunted barns/buildings or special events. Show your different fee packages at the admission gate and in promotional material as a courtesy for your visitors.

SPONSORSHIP

OF THE FALL SEASON

For the fall season, you may have a chance to create a partnership with a radio or TV station or newspaper or your local implement dealer such as Kubota, especially if you purchase your equipment from them. A sponsor is a great way to spread the word about your agritourism business.

What sponsors get from you

Halloween has become so popular and such big business that the media likes to be part of it. You can offer them a good, wholesome Halloween partnership that families can enjoy together.

As part of the sponsorship, they would expect to put up signs; have their logo included on all fall season advertising, printed materials and on your website; get pumpkins and tickets to give away; have a booth on the property where visitors can get information and giveaways; get a significant number of free passes, etc.

What you get from sponsors

Some sponsors will give you cash for naming rights. A media sponsor should also give you many "free" mentions throughout the days and weeks of the fall season. Thousands and thousands of viewers, listeners and readers will hear about your agritourism business. A media sponsor may also give you prizes for giveaways and links to their websites.

How to approach sponsors

You need to approach potential sponsors at least six months prior to the fall. For your local implement dealer, a good time to mention a sponsorship would be when you are purchasing new equipment from them. For media, speak with the marketing or promotions director.



Gary's Berries And Corn Maze in Grantville, KS

SPOOKY HAY RIDES

- + Spooky hay rides are generally held at night, from dark until 10 to 11 p.m.
- + Your target audience is families, so make these fun and spooky, but not gory and scary.
- + Hayrides can go through a cornfield or through the woods.
- + Have haunted music playing through the areas where the wagon travels.
- + You can create a tunnel to go through with strings hanging down that will touch the visitor's faces.
- + You can trip animated scenes so suddenly a witch stirring a "witch's brew" or a mannequin with an axe through its head is illuminated. Or use live actors in dark clothes that jump out of nowhere.
- + Create a graveyard scene for the wagon to ride through. Again, this should be more fun than frightening.

Pricing

Depends on the length of the ride and the type of "haunting."

SPOOKY BARN OR BUILDING

- + Haunted barn or buildings run throughout the day and evening.
- + Using a barn, a pavilion, a machine shop, etc., create a haunted environment that visitors walk through.
- + Create scenes throughout the building, such as witches stirring a bubbling (dry ice) black kettle, somebody with an ax in his head, etc.
- + Since you will attract families, this should be fun and spooky, but not frightening for children.

Pricing:

Depends on how sophisticated the effects are and how many scenes you offer.

ZOMBIE PAINTBALL

- + Utilize your corn maze for this after-dark event.
- + Use trailers equipped with paintball guns fastened to the rails and loud "zombie" type music.
- + Place old machinery, mannequins and costumed real zombies throughout the field along a cleared path as targets.
- + Admission fee includes X number of rounds of paintballs.
- + Have a bonfire for guests who have paid and are waiting to ride with s'mores and hot chocolate available for purchase.

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CHAPTER

HOSTING GROUPS & SPECIAL EVENTS

Many agritourism businesses offer groups the chance to gather on their property for parties, reunions, company picnics and many other kinds of events.

In fact, some owners never open to the public, but group events are the only agritourism activity they offer.

Group activities are pre-scheduled and often booked for a minimum fee, so you know exactly how much food to prepare and how much you will make for each event.



TYPES OF EVENTS & GATHERINGS

- + Farm to Table Dinners
- + Picnics
- + Family or class reunions
- + Birthday parties
- + Anniversary parties
- + Weddings
- + Barbecues
- + Retreats
- + Team building

FEES

In general, fees for group events are charged on a per-person basis, plus any additional costs such as entertainment, special decorations, etc. When developing the price per person, it should include:

- + Food costs (see Pricing, Page 28)
- + Labor (set up, serving, clean up)
- + Basic activities (see below)
- + Basic decorations
- + Table cloths, napkins, wet wipes, etc.
- + Rental items (tables, tents, silverware, serving dishes, space heaters, etc.)
- + General physical costs (trash pick up, electricity)

Property rental fees

Some owners charge groups a rental fee for the property, above and beyond the other costs for food, entertainment, service, drinks, etc. The worst mistake is to charge a low rental fee and then allow the group to provide its own food. Why? Because you make the most profit on food service.

ACTIVITIES

For group events, you want to offer a few simple activities that are included in the basic price-per-person (so consider this when you're developing your pricing structure).

- + Wagon or carriage rides
- + Horseshoes
- + Volleyball
- + Softball
- + Badminton
- + Croquet
- + Washer or bean bag toss
- + Board games

TYPES OF GROUPS

- + Convention groups and/or spouse groups
- + Tour groups
- + Not-for-profit groups
- + Corporations and businesses
- + Associations
- + School groups
- + Church groups

ENTERTAINMENT

Many groups want entertainment beyond the basic activities. You should arrange for all entertainment and mark up the charges to the client, so you get compensated for your work. Typical markup for entertainment is 10 to 20%

- + Music (live or d.j.)
- + Dancing
- + Children's activities: face painting, magicians, storytellers
- + Pony rides
- + Arcade games
- + Bingo
- + Mystery theatre

FOOD

Most of the profit made in hosting group events is through food service. The best way to approach food service is to develop several different menu "packages" and let the client choose one of the options. This way you can price each package with good profit margins. (See Fees to be sure your price-per-person reflects costs beyond food.)

Food Safety

The Kansas Department of Agriculture administers Licensing and Food Safety regulations in Kansas. Be sure to follow all food safety regulations for the preparation of food as stated per their regulations. agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/food-safety-lodging/food-safety-licenses

Hiring a Caterer

If you are just starting out, you may not want to handle all the food preparation, cooking, serving, licensing and food safety regulations yourself. If you do hire a caterer, you work directly with him to develop the different menu "packages." He should be charging you a wholesale price, and then you may charge your customer a retail price, possibly 3 times the wholesale rate. This is standard practice and pricing structures are subjective dependent on your business and locale. (Review Fees, on this page, to be sure your price-per-person reflects costs beyond food.)

MINIMUM FEES

Whether you are hosting a group with 10 people or 1,000 people, there are certain built-in costs that must be covered, including set up, clean up, electricity, garbage hauling, etc. Therefore, you should charge a minimum fee. For example, you may determine that \$1,000 is the minimum for which you want to open your property to a group. If you are charging \$20 per person, then the group must have at least 50 people or it must pay \$1,000 minimum fee. This is important if you want the business to be profitable.

DEPOSITS & CONTRACTS

When hosting group events, you need a basic contract the customer signs indicating what you are providing and what they are to pay. A few weeks before the event, the customer should give you a guaranteed head count, which is the number of people they guarantee will attend. They are then responsible to pay for this number of people regardless of how many actually show up. Of course, if more people attend, you add plate fees to the final invoice. Based on the guaranteed head count, you should receive 50% of the total as a deposit, at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled date.

RESTROOMS

For simple gatherings, you can provide portable restrooms with at least one that is handicap accessible. As your offerings become more sophisticated, you will need to have permanent restrooms. It is also important to have multiple restrooms for large groups.

Be sure to check your local planning and zoning regulations prior to any construction projects.

WHERE TO HOLD THE EVENT

If your property will be open to the public during group events, you need to provide some privacy for the group. Create a separate area for the event and use signage to indicate "Private Party."

In case of rain, you must have a way to keep the group dry, such as:

- + Existing building
- + Renovated barn
- + Tent
- + Pavilion

ALCOHOL

It is your decision whether to provide alcohol at group events. Keep in mind, however, you will be competing with other locations that do offer liquor as part of their package. Have a discussion with those signing the contract to know when their guests need to be shut off from alcohol.

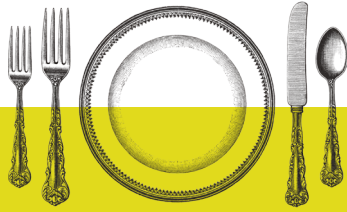
- + To serve alcohol, most counties require you get a single-day or special-use liquor license. Check your local regulations.
- + During the day, offering beer and wine is rarely a problem, especially during family-type group events.
- + During the evening, liquor can cause more problems, especially during adult group events.
- + Charge per head as part of the package or charge per drink.
- + Charge more for liquor during night events.

HOURS

You set specific hours – a starting and ending time – for each event. You can usually "turn" the property twice in a day, offering groups events from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and then from 4 to 7 p.m. This gives you enough time to clean up from the first and set up for the second group.

MARKETING TO GROUPS

- + Create a brochure or flier to promote what you offer and be sure to include your website and social media links.
- + Create a separate "price sheet" including menu choices.
- + Develop a mailing list of potential customers. (For example, compile a list of companies in your area with more than 300 employees, or make phone calls to these businesses to get the name of the person in charge of company events.)
- + Send your brochure to your mailing list.
- + Be sure your website has a separate page to describe group events.
- + Work with the Chamber of Commerce or tourism authorities to be sure they know what you offer.
- + For children's group events, create a special flier and post it at dance studios, soccer parks, churches, grocery stores, etc. Send the flier to local girl/boy scout groups, 4H clubs, etc.



FARM TO TABLE DINNERS

- + Have elegantly set tables in your barn, corn field or on the open prairie. (Have an inclement weather back-up plan.)
- + Hire a locally renowned chef to prepare a gourmet meal using products from local farmers from appetizers to dessert.
- + Partner with a Kansas winery and spirits producer for a signature drink or wine.
- + Decide on the number of guests you want to host and then advertise with on-line pre-paid ticket sales with a deadline a couple of weeks prior to the event.
- + Have your service staff professionally attired and ready to provide quality service for your guests.



Manna Meadows in Bonner Springs, KS

WEDDINGS

You should host weddings only if you understand this requires a great deal of personal attention to meet the expectations of the bridal couple and their families. Since this is such an important day to them, they want everything to be *perfect*.

- + Weddings usually require higher quality service, including tables with linen cloths, nice seating, special lighting, flowers, decorative touches, etc.
- + Most wedding customers want permanent restrooms. If you only provide the portable type, be sure the bride knows this as soon as she contacts you.
- + The bride, groom and their families will make very specific requests which you need to make every effort to meet.
- + Be sure to charge accordingly to cover the food, decorations, entertainment and extras that a wedding requires.
- + As with other events, have a contract prepared and signed to manage the expectations of the bridal couple and family, but to also ensure you are paid for your services. The contract (Sample Contract in Resources Guide, Page 116) should spell out the wedding date, the deposit, when payments are to be made and final settlement. Build in a clause for cancellations and refund of monies deposited. You have held the date for the couple and may not be able to rebook with a cancellation. State when the venue is open for the couple to decorate and clean up, unless you provide those services. State very plainly the hour they have to be off the premises with added costs for time over your closing time. Many venues have weddings scheduled daily, so the bridal couple will have a very short window to decorate and have everything removed from the property, to prepare for your next event. A contract needs to state your alcohol policy – are guests allowed to BYOB or do you serve all of the alcohol from a bar run by your staff.
- + Have a prepared list of local wedding vendors, caterers, florists and photographers to offer suggestions for the couple.

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CHAPTER

STAFFING



YOU CAN'T DO IT ALL!

When you're the owner of a business, you may want to manage every single detail. After all, you know exactly how you want everything done.

By being involved in every decision and every action at your agritourism business, you're using up precious time and energy that needs to be spent on planning for the future and taking care of the big picture.

Many farmers/ranchers are more comfortable in "doing" something rather than "managing" somebody else to do it. But they must get accustomed to this new role as the activities and enterprises on the farm grow.

When owners try to handle every detail, they end up giving up time with their families, losing sleep to put in extra hours and worrying about how everything will get done.

Recent research showed that the most important reason people choose agritourism destinations are:

- 1 Friendliness of Staff**
- 2 Scenic Appearance of the Agritourism Business**
- 3 Variety of Activities**
- 4 Presence of Farm Animals**

Your goal is to develop the new business. Too often, what gets in the way are many tasks that are completely non-agriculture related, where you may not have much experience.

- + Marketing your business
- + Food service
- + Purchasing retail products
- + Payroll and record keeping

You can give these tasks to family members, if they are qualified or willing to take on the responsibility. This is a good way to involve your next generation. Or, you can hire a qualified person for these duties.

Many believe in starting a new business, hiring staff is something that is not affordable. However, paying for services that will help grow the business will mean more revenue overall and allow you time to manage your operation and allow family time.

HIRING EMPLOYEES

Most agritourism businesses rely on outside workers to fill different staff positions in an agritourism operation. It is preferable to hire adults, but often, especially if you're operating mostly during the summer, you will rely on hiring teen workers.

Employee Manual

Be certain of the laws and regulations in Kansas for hiring full and temporary employees. The Kansas Department of Labor would be able to assist you so you know you are in compliance.

If you establish your employee expectations within a manual prior to hiring staff, it will save a lot in the long run. What do you find acceptable in an employee? Will you allow employees to have exposed tattoos, nose rings, fluorescent hair color, mohawks, etc. as an employee of your business? Spell this out from the beginning. Will you provide shirts for your staff so guests

will recognize them if they need assistance? When are pay days?

When hiring, make it known up front the expected work schedule. Your busiest time may be evenings and weekends – the same time as prom, homecoming, tournaments, kids or grandkids activities. Are they willing to give these activities up to be a reliable staff member? Are you willing to give them time off for their "once in a lifetime" events?

What are your cell phone, smoking and break policies for your employees? Will you allow your employees a discount for your food products while on duty? Will

you have a way for them to "clock" in and out? How about discounts for themselves or their families? If you have this all together in writing prior to hiring, it will be a long-term time saver for you.

If you have mechanical amusement rides such as a jumping pillow or bouncy house that requires daily inspections and staff on hand, train them properly for these duties. Make sure your employee knows how your equipment is operated, how to turn it on and off, maintenance needs to keep it running safely for your visitors, required daily documentation needed, etc.



*Somerset Ridge Vineyard & Winery
in Paola, KS*

Where do I look for employees?

In today's business climate, whether you're looking for staff in a large urban area with a big employee pool or in a small rural community with only a few candidates, the best way to find the best workers is the same!

- + Ask your current employees if they know anybody good who is looking for work.
- + Ask friends, church members, etc. if they know any good people looking for work.
- + Post a flier at church, at the supermarket, at the senior center, etc.
- + For teen workers, inquire at the local high schools, talk to the principals, guidance counselors or specific teachers of students that would be great employees.
- + Attend community job fairs.
- + Post on social media you are hiring.

Referral Program

Your best people know the best people. Have a referral program so that when one employee recommends a friend, and that friend stays for 30 days, the employee gets a \$25 cash bonus or something of similar value.

The application form

You must have an application form to get basic information and to have a background file on each person. Ask about past job and salary history. Ask for references. If you'll be interviewing teens, ask plenty of background questions regarding any clubs they belong to, leadership positions they've held in school or community groups, awards they've won, etc.

Hire for personality, train for tasks!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

Are they outgoing?

Do they speak up and say, "Hi, I'm Sue Smith here to apply for a job?" Or are they shy and awkward? Remember, your staff will be interacting with hundreds of customers whose experience will be affected by that interaction. Outgoing people do best in these situations.

Are they friendly?

Do they smile a lot? Something as basic as a genuine smile can tell you a lot about their personalities, their energy level and their attitude.

Do they make eye contact?

Do they make eye contact with you when they speak? If not, they may have self-esteem problems that will cause other kinds of problems in their work.

How are they dressed?

Are they dressed neatly and appropriately for an interview at your venue? There are a lot of styles that may be fashionable, but how an individual presents themselves at an interview says a lot about them. They know the appropriate way to act in different situations.

THE INTERVIEW

Screen applicants thoroughly, verify information and check identification and references. Check their public social media pages to see if they have questionable content or activist group connections.

If possible, have several different people talk to each candidate separately. This will give you different perspectives on the applicant. Include an excellent worker from your staff.

If it's a teen applicant, ask a good teen worker to participate in the interview process. A peer may have better insight into a candidate. Also, ask about their activities at school, church or in the community. Kids who are very involved are often the best workers. But remember, you'll have to schedule around their busy life.

What to ask

You want the applicants to talk as much as possible to find out if they're articulate (which means they'll be able to talk to the customers), how they think (so you can get an idea of how they'll handle challenging situations), if they seem to be giving you straight answers (an indication whether they may be trustworthy), etc.

The interview gives you a chance to learn more about the individual. So, ask open-ended questions, such as:

- 1 What was your best previous job experience? What did you do there and why did you like it?
 - 2 Why did you leave your previous job?
 - 3 Why are you applying here? Why would you like to work at this agritourism business?
 - 4 Ask questions related to specific skills that will be needed on the job.
 - 5 Ask if they have any scheduling conflicts.
- 6 Tell me about a situation you were in where somebody pushed you into doing something you didn't want to do. How did you handle it?
 - 7 What class did you get the best grade in and what would your teacher from that class say about you?
 - 8 What class did you get the worst grade in and what would your teacher from that class say about you?
 - 9 Give me an example of one of your most exciting moments?
 - 10 What made you the happiest this year?
 - 11 What made you the angriest this year?
 - 12 What would your mother or father tell me about what drives her or him most crazy about you?
 - 13 What would your mother or father tell me about what makes her or him the proudest of you?

Teen Questions

SET THE BAR HIGH FOR YOUR EXPECTATIONS

During the interview, go over the general mission and culture of the agritourism business, the dress code, the hours of operations and how you create work schedules. Explain the worst part about the job, so candidates can be prepared for reality. End by talking about the best parts of the job and how much other people have enjoyed the experience of working on the agritourism business. Go with your instinct – if something doesn't seem right with a potential or current employee, investigate further.

TRAINING EMPLOYEES

- + Develop a good group orientation program prior to the start of your season. If you add new workers during the season, do the orientation one-on-one.
- + Be sure your employees know the "story" about your farm family because visitors will ask. Familiarize them with the farm animals, including their care. If you have crops visible at your agritourism business, tell them about the crops so they will be able to share the information with visitors.
- + Many businesses use videos for training staff. These can be set up on a computer, shown with a projector for a large group or viewed individually through a medium such as YouTube, made private for your business.
- + Review expectations to reinforce what is expected of your employees and why.
- + Explain how your employees will get information about what's going on at the agritourism business each day. Prepare a daily tip sheet for employees to check about special activities, the schedule of events, special foods or produce ready for u-pick. Keeping your employees informed and up-to-date means they will be able to keep your customers informed.
- + If you have animals, provide training and updates on proper animal handling and training. Require employees to report any animal abuse to management immediately. After you have gone over these rules along with all other employee rules, have your employees sign an employment agreement that includes your animal care policy.

Training Process

The best training for learning a new task involves five steps. It really works.

- + Explain the task
- + You demonstrate the task
- + They try the task
- + You observe
- + Give immediate feedback by rewarding or re-directing

Let's say you're teaching a worker how to use the cash register:

1. First, explain how to use the register.
2. Then, you demonstrate how to use the register.
3. Next it's his/her turn to try to operate the register.
4. You just observe.
5. Now give immediate feedback:

If it was done right, give strong verbal reward. "That's great." Or, "You catch on fast."

If it wasn't done right, then re-direct. "Remember to hit the clear key before you enter the purchase." And begin the process again with your demonstrating the task.



Hildebrand Farms Dairy in Junction City, KS

UNIFORMS

- + Uniforms are a must for workers who are dealing with the public because it's hard to maintain dress codes.
- + Uniforms help identify the employees.
- + Uniforms give your operation a more professional appearance.
- + Keep it simple: matching shirts and hats imprinted with the name/logo of the agritourism business. Aprons, if needed. Pants should be the employee's own clean jeans and tennis shoes. If you are open during the summer, will you allow shorts? Identify appropriate length, maybe khaki only?
- + The employer pays for the first uniforms (one hat and two or three shirts) and the employee can buy more.
- + Have name badges for each employee who works with the public, which can also help the employee feel a little more responsible.

CHECKING IN WHEN THEY'RE WORKING

About a week or two after an employee has been trained and started working, check in and ask him/her if there are any problems. This shows your respect.

As you see problems arise, handle them immediately, but not by chastising anyone in public. Again, this shows respect.

For example, if a group of your workers are chatting rather than working, just say very casually, "Hi. How's it going? Looks like things are slow. This would be a great time to check the task list and tackle getting a few things done."

You're showing respect, but giving direction, too.

Showing respect to your workers will reap lots of rewards for your business. Respect is one of the biggest motivators for workers ... more than money!

TIME
SPENT
WITH
EMPLOYEES
WILL
PAY OFF

While it is a big task to find the right employees and take the time to train them, it is worth every minute.

As your business grows, you must rely more on the staff to make sure everything is running smoothly and that customers are being well serviced. Your immediate connection through time and respect to each employee will ensure they give each customer that same respect back.

REWARDS

Giving employee rewards – both verbal and non-verbal – is an excellent idea.

Catch your workers doing something right – and praise them.

Give lots of verbal rewards to employees when they're doing something well, especially taking initiative. Say, "You're doing a great job." "Thank you for coming in at the last minute when John got sick." "You handled that customer very well."

Create a reward program for the season. Give a nice prize to workers based on:

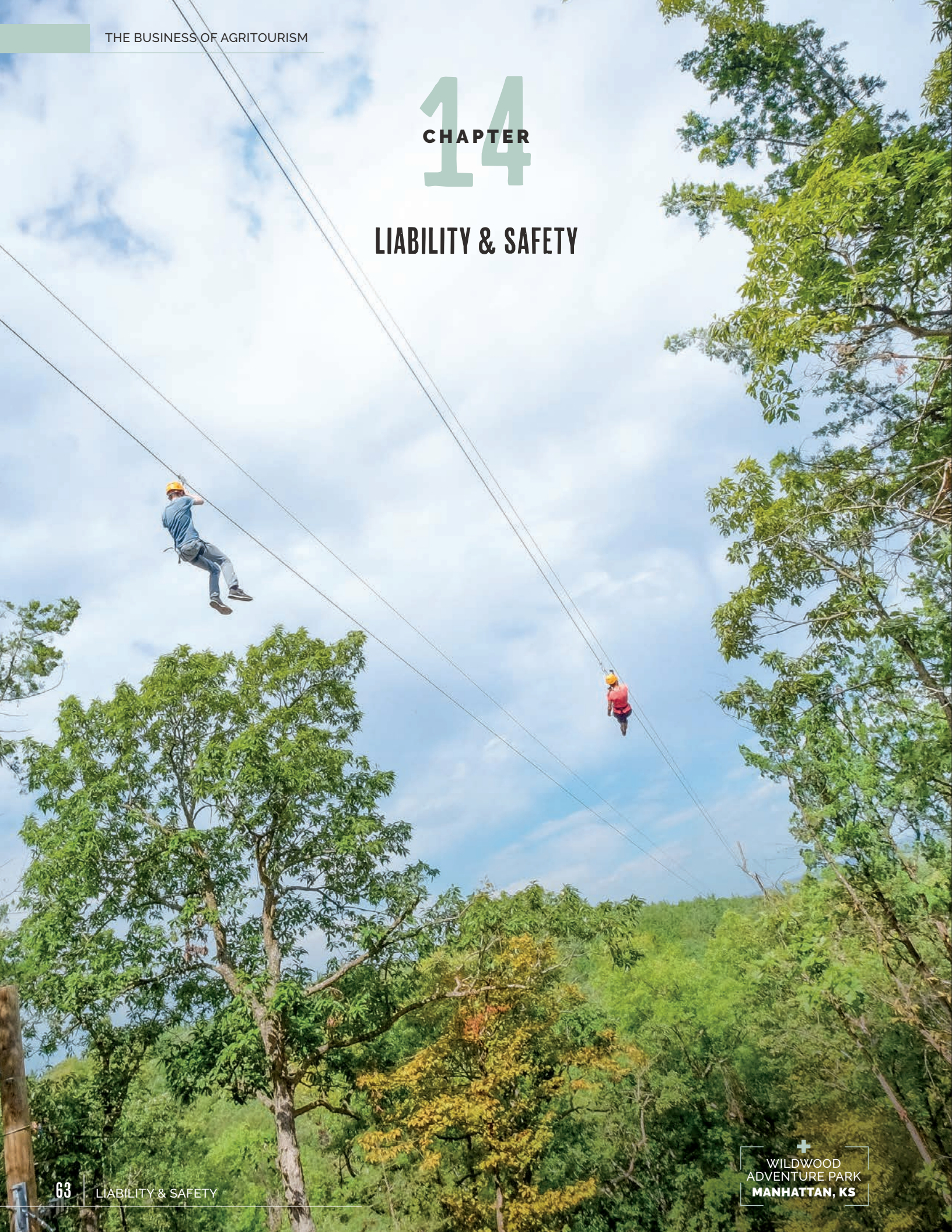
- + Arriving on time every day
- + Wearing a clean uniform every day
- + Never missing a scheduled shift
- + Most positive customer feedback

The reward should be something significant enough to be meaningful to the workers. You can give them an option of five prizes and let them choose which one they want.

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CHAPTER

LIABILITY & SAFETY



LIABILITY INSURANCE

When you invite visitors onto your property for an agritourism experience, you do take on some responsibility for their safety. While few people ever get hurt or injured at an agritourism business, it is important to know that your general farm insurance policies do not cover guest accidents. The concern about liability is if visitors come to your agritourism operation and hurt themselves, they could sue you. To protect yourself fully, carry liability insurance, have a current registration certificate and a posted Agritourism Warning sign as stated under the Agritourism Protection Act.

How to get liability insurance

- + Start by contacting your current agent to see if he can help you obtain this insurance.
- + Insurance carriers are not always familiar with agritourism and you may need to educate your agent about what you are going to be doing and offering.
- + Invite the agent to visit your property.
- + Demonstrate that you are dedicated to safety. Show him around your property so he can see for himself there are no big risks associated with your operation.
- + Let your insurance agent become a partner in creating a safe environment. Ask him for ideas on how to make the property safer. The more he sees your commitment to minimize risks, the more he will work with you.

If you can't find liability insurance

- + Call your county Farm Bureau insurance agent to find out if they cover agritourism. (See Resource Guide, Page 112)
- + Talk to other agritourism businesses to find out who their carriers are.
- + Call your extension agent to see if he/she knows carriers that include agritourism coverage.
- + Try different insurance agents to see if they can cover your operation.

Business Structure

Along with liability insurance and a current Agritourism certificate and posted Agritourism warning sign, also consider your business structure.

For example, if your business is set up as a "sole proprietor," then everything in your name is at risk. Many agritourism business owners prefer to set up the business as a "Limited Liability Corporation" (referred to as LLC) which protects their personal assets such as their house and cars. There are other types of incorporations, so check with your lawyer and accountant to be sure you are adequately protected.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Most agritourism business owners are concerned about the cost of liability insurance, when it may be as low as a few hundred dollars a year, especially if you are just starting an agritourism operation.

SAFETY

FIRST

For every activity offered on your property, you need to ask yourself, "How can I make this safe for my visitors and staff?" Be vigilant when surveying your property. You might be used to the barbed wire fence lying on the ground, but what would happen if a visitor stumbled onto the wire?

Tips for land safety assessment:

- + Walk your property and view your agritourism business through the eyes of a visitor. Also, ask a friend to walk your property looking for hazards.
- + Don't be negligent by leaving around old equipment, irrigation piping or anything a guest could trip over.
- + Keep your workshop and shed doors locked and closed and mark any buildings that might be "off limits" to the visitors with a sign that reads: "CLOSED TO VISITORS" or "EMPLOYEES ONLY."
- + Ask a teacher to come and inspect the petting corral or other areas where small hands may be touching and playing.
- + If you have a barnyard with animals, be sure the visitors remain outside of the pens.
- + Have an attendant with your visitors as they are petting and feeding the animals.
- + Don't leave keys in farm vehicles where a guest could start the motor.
- + Don't leave ladders in the u-pick fields.
- + Fill any potholes in traffic areas where visitors will be walking, so there are no sprained ankles.

IT IS YOUR
JOB TO
MAKE YOUR
PROPERTY
SAFE FOR
VISITORS.

Train your staff about safety:

Make sure your employees are always on the lookout as visitors participate in your activities to be sure they are following safe practices.

- + Designate an employee to be the "First Responder." This person must take a course, usually offered by area hospitals or Emergency Management Service units or the Red Cross.
- + Hold employee safety classes (often a requirement of your insurance carrier) to teach them how to handle emergency situations.
- + Have a professional First Aid Box and be sure each employee knows where it is located.



Pome On The Range Orchards & Winery in Williamsburg, KS

KANSAS AMUSEMENT RIDE ACT PERMIT PROGRAM

The Amusement Ride Law requires individual businesses to register and apply for a permit to operate amusement rides in the state. These regulations apply to amusement rides including certain water slides and inflatable devices. Tractor-operated wagons, hayrack rides and horse-drawn wagons/carriages are not included. <https://www.dol.ks.gov/ish/amusement-ride>

“Amusement ride”

means any mechanical or electrical device that carries or conveys passengers along, around or over a fixed or restricted route or course or within a defined area for the purpose of giving its passengers amusement, pleasure, thrills or excitement **including, but not be limited to:**

- + ferris wheels;
- + carousels;
- + parachute towers;
- + bungee jumping;
- + reverse bungee jumping;
- + commercial zip line;
- + tunnels of love;
- + roller coasters;
- + boat rides;
- + water slides that are at least 35 feet in height and that use water to propel the patron through the ride;
- + inflatable devices;
- + trampoline courts;
- + go-karts;
- + equipment generally associated with winter activities, such as ski lifts, ski tows, j-bars, t-bars, chair lifts and aerial tramways; and
- + equipment not originally designed to be used as an amusement ride, such as cranes or other lifting devices, when used as part of an amusement ride.

“Amusement ride”

does not include:

- + games, concessions and associated structures;
- + any single passenger coin-operated ride that: (i) Is manually, mechanically or electrically operated; (ii) is customarily placed in a public location; and (iii) does not normally require the supervision or services of an operator;
- + non-mechanized playground equipment, including, but not limited to, swings, seesaws, stationary spring-mounted animal features, rider-propelled merry-go-rounds, climbers, slides and physical fitness devices;
- + antique amusement rides;
- + limited-use amusement rides;
- + registered agritourism activities;
- + any ride commonly known as a hay-rack ride in which patrons sit in a wagon or cart that is then pulled by horses or a tractor or other motor vehicle;
- + any ride commonly known as a barrel train, which has a series of handmade cars fashioned from barrels that are connected and pulled by a tractor or other motor vehicle; or
- + a home-owned amusement ride, owned by an individual and operated solely within a single county for strictly private use.

Please be advised that even though antique amusement rides, limited-use amusement rides, and registered agritourism activities do not fall under the definition of an amusement ride, all antique amusement rides, limited-use amusement rides, and registered agritourism activities that otherwise meet the definition of an amusement ride must be permitted by the Kansas Department of Labor before they can be operated in Kansas. Hayrack rides and barrel trains are not required to be permitted by the Kansas Department of Labor.

Amusement Ride Permitting Program

All amusement ride owner registration and applications for amusement ride permits will be processed through the Amusement Ride Permitting Program. K.S.A. 55-1601, K.S.A 44-1620

KANSAS AGRITOURISM PROMOTION ACT

32-1430. Citation of act. This act may be cited as the agritourism promotion act. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 1; July 1.

32-1431. Purpose. The purpose of this act is to promote rural tourism and rural economic development by encouraging owners or operators of farms, ranches, and rural attractions, including historic, cultural, and natural attractions, to invite members of the public to view, observe and participate in such operations and attractions for recreational or entertainment purposes. This act shall be liberally construed to effectuate that purpose. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 2; July 1.

32-1432. Definitions. As used in K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1430 through 32-1438, and amendments thereto: (a) "Agritourism activity" means any activity which allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including, but not limited to, farming activities, ranching activities or historic, cultural or natural attractions. An activity may be an agritourism activity whether or not the participant pays to participate in the activity. An activity is not an agritourism activity if the participant is paid to participate in the activity. (b) "Inherent risks of a registered agritourism activity" means those dangers or conditions which are an integral part of such agritourism activity including, but not limited to, certain hazards such as surface and subsurface conditions; natural conditions of land, vegetation, and waters; the behavior of wild or domestic animals; and ordinary dangers of structures or equipment ordinarily used in farming or ranching operations. "Inherent risks of a registered agritourism activity" also includes the potential of a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or

others, such as failing to follow instructions given by the registered agritourism operator or failing to exercise reasonable caution while engaging in the registered agritourism activity. (c) "Participant" means any person who engages in a registered agritourism activity. (d) "Registered agritourism activity" means any agritourism activity registered with the secretary pursuant to K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1433, and amendments thereto. (e) "Registered agritourism location" means a specific parcel of land which is registered with the secretary pursuant to K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1433, and amendments thereto, and where a registered agritourism operator engages in registered agritourism activities. (f) "Registered agritourism operator" means any person who is engaged in the business of providing one or more agritourism activities and is registered with the secretary pursuant to K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1433, and amendments thereto. (g) "Secretary" means the secretary of wildlife, parks and tourism. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 3; L. 2012, ch. 47, § 102; July 1.

32-1433. Registration of agritourism operators. (a) Any person who is engaged in the business of providing one or more agritourism activities may register with the secretary of wildlife, parks and tourism. The registration shall contain all of the following: (1) Information describing the agritourism activity which the person conducts or intends to conduct. (2) Information describing the location where the person conducts or intends to conduct such agritourism activity. (b) The secretary shall maintain a list of all registered agritourism operators, the registered agritourism activities conducted by each operator and the registered agritourism location where the operator conducts such activities. Such list shall be made available

to the public. The secretary, in conjunction with other agritourism and rural economic efforts of the secretary, shall promote and publicize registered agritourism operators, activities and locations to advance the purpose of this act by promoting and encouraging tourism. (c) Registration pursuant to this section shall be for a period of five years. (d) No fee shall be charged to persons registering under this section. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 4; L. 2012, ch. 47, § 103; July 1.

32-1434. Warning notice requirements. (a) At every registered agritourism location, the registered agritourism operator shall post and maintain signage which contains the warning notice specified in subsection (c). This section shall be deemed satisfied if such signage is placed in a clearly visible location at or near the registered agritourism location. The warning notice specified in subsection (c) shall appear on the sign in black letters, with each letter to be a minimum of one inch in height. (b) Every written contract entered into by a registered agritourism operator for the providing of a registered agritourism activity shall contain in clearly readable print the warning notice and language specified in subsection (c). (c) The signs described in subsection (a) and the contracts described in subsection (b) shall contain the following warning notice: WARNING Under Kansas law, there is no liability for an injury or death of a participant in a registered agritourism activity conducted at this registered agritourism location if such injury or death results from the inherent risks of such agritourism activity. Inherent risks of agritourism activities include, but shall not be limited to, the potential of you as a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to your injury or death and the potential of another participant to act in a negligent

manner that may contribute to your injury or death. You are assuming the risk of participating in this registered agritourism activity.

(d) Upon request, the registered agritourism operator shall provide to any participant a written description of the registered agritourism activity, as set forth in the registration pursuant to K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1433, and amendments thereto, for which this act limits the registered agritourism operator's liability at the registered agritourism location. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 5; July 1

32-1435. Assumption of risk by participant; pleading. Except as provided in K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1436, and amendments thereto, any participant is assuming the inherent risks of a registered agritourism activity when such participant engages in such agritourism activity. In any action for damages arising from the operation of a registered agritourism activity, the registered agritourism operator, pursuant to K.S.A. 60-208, and amendments thereto, shall plead an affirmative defense of assumption of risk by the participant. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 6; July 1

32-1436. Liability of operator. Nothing in this act shall prevent or limit the liability of a registered agritourism operator if: (a) The registered agritourism operator injures the participant by willful or wanton conduct; or (b) the registered agritourism operator has actual knowledge of a dangerous condition in the land, facilities or equipment used in the registered agritourism activity or the dangerous propensity of a particular animal used in such activity and does not make such dangerous condition known to the participant and such dangerous condition causes the participant to sustain injuries. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 7; July 1.

32-1437. Same; limitation of. Any limitation on legal liability afforded to a registered agritourism operator

by this act shall be in addition to any other limitation of legal liability otherwise provided by law. Nothing in this act, nor failure by any person to comply with the provisions of this act, shall be construed to limit, restrict or impede the application of K.S.A. 58-3202 et seq., and amendments thereto, to any person, and a registered agritourism operator entitled to coverage under K.S.A. 58-3202 et seq., and amendments thereto, shall be entitled to the full limits of liability afforded under K.S.A. 58-3202 et seq., and amendments thereto. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 8; July 1.

32-1438. Kansas income tax credit allowed for certain costs of liability insurance for corporations; report to legislature. (a) For taxable years commencing on and after December 31, 2003, December 31, 2004, December 31, 2005, December 31, 2006, and December 31, 2007, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax liability of a taxpayer imposed under the Kansas income tax act, an amount equal to 20% of the cost of liability insurance paid by a registered agritourism operator who operates an agritourism activity on the effective date of this act. No tax credit claimed pursuant to this subsection shall exceed \$2,000. If the amount of such tax credit exceeds the taxpayer's income tax liability for such taxable year, the amount thereof which exceeds such tax liability may be carried over for deduction from the taxpayer's income tax liability in the next succeeding taxable year or years until the total amount of tax credit has been deducted from tax liability, except that no such tax credit shall be carried forward for deduction after the third taxable year succeeding the taxable year in which the tax credit is claimed. (b) For the first five taxable years commencing after a taxpayer opens such taxpayer's business, after the effective date of this act, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax liability of a taxpayer imposed

under the Kansas income tax act, an amount equal to 20% of the cost of liability insurance paid by a registered agritourism operator who starts an agritourism activity after the effective date of this act. No tax credit claimed pursuant to this subsection shall exceed \$2,000. If the amount of such tax credit exceeds the taxpayer's income tax liability for such taxable year, the amount thereof which exceeds such tax liability may be carried over for deduction from the taxpayer's income tax liability in the next succeeding taxable year or years until the total amount of tax credit has been deducted from tax liability, except that no such tax credit shall be carried forward for deduction after the third taxable year succeeding the taxable year in which the tax credit is claimed. (c) The secretary of wildlife, parks and tourism shall adopt rules and regulations establishing criteria for determining those costs which qualify as costs of liability insurance for agritourism activities of a registered agritourism operator. (d) On or before the 15th day of the regular legislative session in 2006, the secretary of commerce shall submit to the senate standing committee on commerce and the house standing committee on tourism and parks a report on the implementation and use of the tax credit provided by this section. (e) As used in this section, terms have the meanings provided by K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 32-1432, and amendments thereto. (f) For tax year 2013 and all tax years thereafter, the income tax credit provided by this section shall only be available to taxpayers subject to the income tax on corporations imposed pursuant to subsection (c) of K.S.A. 79- 32,110, and amendments thereto, and shall be applied only against such taxpayer's corporate income tax liability. History: L. 2004, ch. 97, § 9; L. 2012, ch. 135, § 4; L. 2013, ch. 133, § 14; July 1. Section was amended twice in the 2012 session; see also 32-1438a

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CHAPTER

FINANCES



FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

There are many things which may contribute to the costs when considering starting an agritourism business. Before you make any final decisions, take some time to do your homework and calculate financial projections. The goal of this exercise is to ask yourself: "Will this business be able to sustain itself financially?"

Are you diversifying a current farm operation on farm ground you already have, or purchasing property to begin your agritourism business? Before you begin to invest any resources in an agritourism operation, check with your county planning and zoning office to discuss your plans. At the time of publishing, about half of the 105 Kansas Counties are zoned. Even if you reside in a non-zoned county you will want to do your best to be a good neighbor and ensure the safety of your guests.

If you live on a county road, paved or gravel, the increase in traffic to your property may be an issue with your neighbors who will complain to planning and zoning. Where will your visitors park, what about restroom facilities? Is your driveway wide enough to handle bus traffic? Are you converting a barn or shed where you currently store farm equipment into a wedding or reception venue? Have you thought about fire and safety codes for that building in which you're considering having a number of guests at one time? Is access clear for emergency services to enter the property, if needed?

In some counties, you may find the county will no longer classify the property/structures of your agritourism business as Ag land but will change the use to Commercial/Industrial. You may also be taxed as a retail/commercial business. These are all considerations for you as you build your financial projections.

It is very difficult to precisely determine projected income for a new business because you don't know what the customer base will be. Check with the Kansas Small Business Development Center and local tourism authorities to help gauge potential consumer interest.

The formula is simple – it's figuring it all out that is more complex.

Projected Income

A way to project potential income from your business is to determine the number of customers you can best predict will visit your operation and how much they will spend while they are there. These are best guesses at three levels: conservative, most likely and optimistic

Start-up Expenses

These are costs that are required for you to open your door for business. Many of these are one-time expenditures.

Operating Expenses

These are ongoing expenses, year to year, that fully cover all anticipated costs.

$$\text{REVENUE} - \text{COSTS} = \text{PROFIT OR LOSS}$$



Stone Pillar Vineyard & Winery in Olathe, KS

PROJECTED INCOME

Projected Income is determined by multiplying the anticipated Number of Visitors by the anticipated Dollars Spent per Person

$$\text{PROJECTED INCOME} = \text{NUMBER OF VISITORS} \times \text{DOLLARS SPENT PER PERSON}$$

How to determine "Number of Visitors"

- + Research the number of visitors who are coming to your geographic area by checking with the Chamber of Commerce, local tourism authority or area colleges.
- + Research the number of people traveling the roads in your area by reviewing the traffic flow maps at the Kansas Department of Transportation website: ksdot.org/bureaus/burtransplan/maps/MapsTrafficDist.asp
- + Consider the population within a 100-mile radius of your operation.
- + Consider if there are other tourist attractions in your area, other hotels or motels in the area, other businesses or colleges/universities that might host meetings.
- + Remember, the more remote your location, the fewer people you are likely to attract.

How to determine

"Dollars Spent per Person"

- + Check with your local tourism authority to see if they have any figures on how much people spend on tourism in your area.
- + Check with the Chamber of Commerce to see if they have economic impact information that can help you.
- + The farther people travel, the more they tend to spend on entertainment.
- + The more product and food and activities you offer, the more potential sales you can expect per person.

PROJECTED INCOME	CONSERVATIVE	MOST LIKELY	OPTIMISTIC
YEAR 1	\$	\$	\$
YEAR 2	\$	\$	\$
YEAR 3	\$	\$	\$

PROJECTED START-UP EXPENSES

- + Write down all anticipated expenses you think will be necessary to open the doors of your agritourism business.
- + Be as realistic as possible, especially about labor costs.
- + Most people grossly underestimate how much labor these start-up tasks require because projects usually take much more effort and time than originally anticipated.

Examples of Start-Up Expenses

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| + Construction – new build or remodeling expenses | + Sportsman equipment to rent (fishing gear, canoes, guns, etc.) | + Lodging fixtures (beds, linens, tableware, etc.) |
| + Marketing including brochures | + Farm stand or tent | + Parking area |
| + Barnyard for animals | + Fixtures for retail operation | + Permits |
| + Computer | + Grounds improvements (building repairs, fencing, etc.) | + Picnic tables |
| + Point of Sales Systems (POS) | + Inventory for retail operation | + Plumbing |
| + Utilities – electricity, water, internet, propane, sewer, waste disposal | + Labor for start-up projects | + Restrooms |
| + Equipment | + Landscaping | + Signage |
| + Food preparation – commercial kitchen, packaging | + Legal fees | + Scales for produce sales |
| + Garbage cans | + Licenses & Permits | + Seeds or plants costs |
| | + Livestock (horses, petting farm animals) | + Website |
| | | + Miscellaneous |

There are always some unknown expenses in starting a new project. Be sure to allocate money for undetermined contingencies.



Glaciers Edge Vineyard and Winery in Wakarusa, KS

PROJECTED OPERATING EXPENSES

Once you are up and running you will have ongoing or direct expenses that also need to be projected. Whether you have one guest or 1,000, you will have costs associated with this new venture.

Examples of Operating Expenses:

- + Accountant
- + Activity expenses (creating corn maze, building wagons, etc.)
- + Annual permits, licensing, inspection fees
- + Building maintenance & repairs
- + Computer updates & repairs
- + Food, cleaning supplies, packaging
- + Gas, diesel & oil
- + Insurance
- + Interest expense
- + Inventory for retail sales
- + Labor
- + Legal
- + Machinery & equipment including upkeep
- + Marketing including social media
- + Payroll
- + Payroll taxes
- + Petting farm supplies
- + Portable restrooms
- + Postage
- + Property maintenance & repairs
- + Property taxes
- + Supplies
- + Telephone
- + Communication devices for staff
- + Uniforms
- + Utilities
- + Waste disposal
- + Miscellaneous

Remember most new businesses don't make money their first year or second or sometimes, even the third. Be financially prepared to handle a loss as you build your customer base.

AGRITOURISM CASH FLOW

SALES/ INCOME	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
LEVEL 1 CONSERVATIVE			
LEVEL 2 MOST LIKELY			
LEVEL 3 OPTIMISTIC			

EXPENSES	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
START UP EXPENSES			
ADVERTISING			
BARNYARD FOR ANIMALS			
FLYERS/BROCHURES			
COMPUTER			
POS SYSTEM			
ELECTRICITY			
FARM STAND OR TENT			
FIXTURES FOR RETAIL OPERATION			
LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS			
RETAIL INVENTORY			
LABOR FOR START-UP PROJECTS			
LEGAL FEES			
LICENSING FEES			
INSPECTION FEES			
LIVESTOCK			
LODGING FIXTURES			
PARKING AREA			
PERMITS			
REMODELING EXISTING BUILDINGS			
NEW CONSTRUCTION			
RESTROOMS			
SIGNAGE			
RENTAL EQUIPMENT			
WEBSITE			
MARKETING/ SOCIAL MEDIA			
TOTAL START UP EXPENSES			

BORROWING MONEY

Frequently, agritourism business owners choose to fund their start-up expenses from personal funds. If you are not comfortable doing this, consider other sources.

If you work through a lending institution, educate your banker about what you're doing by inviting him or her to your property.

- + Agricultural lenders
- + Farm Credit: farmcredit.com/state/kansas
- + Farm Service Agency (USDA): fsa.usda.gov/index
- + Network Kansas: networkkansas.com/capital
- + Kansas Small Business Administration: kansassbdc.net
- + US Small Business Administration: sba.gov/funding-programs
- + USDA Rural Development (check out available monies through your local office): rd.usda.gov/ks
- + Friends & family
- + Traditional bank loan
- + Kansas Tourism – Attraction Development Grant: https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/kansas/2022_ADGP_Guidelines_and_Application_Exhibit_A_0cb2ddba-a39d-4f88-85d3-c154ade15d08.pdf

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CHAPTER

GRANTS

There are a few grant and/or loan applications available to assist those interested in developing an agritourism business on their farm.



MAHAFFIE STAGECOACH
STOP & FARM HISTORIC SITE
OLATHE, KS



For the latest information on available grant funding opportunities, including deadlines and types of funding available can be found at **Kansas Tourism**, (785) 296-8951, or information may be found under the "Travel Industry" tab on the TravelKS.com website. travelks.com/industry

Periodically, other entities such as the Kansas Department of Agriculture, the Kansas Department of Commerce or the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) may offer grants to assist agritourism businesses. It is recommended to sign up for newsletters from these entities to keep abreast of grant or loan funding information.



National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame in Bonner Springs, KS

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CHAPTER

REGULATIONS, PERMITS & MORE

Before proceeding with a new enterprise, you need to become familiar with city, county and state regulations that will govern your operations.



ZONING

Are you in a Kansas county that is zoned? Fifty percent of the 105 Kansas counties have zoning.

For the most part, farms and ranches are in areas that are primarily zoned for agricultural use. This means as you add activities, enterprises, signage and buildings as part of an agritourism operation, you will need to determine if you are within current zoning regulations if you are in one of the zoned counties in Kansas.

- + Get a copy of your county zoning regulations from your local planning and zoning department if applicable.
- + If the regulations don't cover your situation clearly, talk it over with your County Extension agent.
- + Review your idea with your representative on the county commission and your planning commissioner.
- + You may need to seek a zoning variance.

LICENSES

Depending on the kind of operation you have, there are a variety of licenses that may be required. (See Resource Guide, Page 106)

- + Business license (Kansas Secretary of State)
- + Hunting/Fishing licenses (Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks)
- + Outfitter licenses (Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks)
- + Lodging licenses (Kansas Department of Agriculture)
- + Restaurant licenses, food safety, catering processing and handling, lodging, (Kansas Department of Agriculture)
- + Liquor licenses, wineries, hard cider, distilleries and mead production (Kansas Department of Revenue – Alcoholic Beverage Control) ksrevenue.org/pdf/hbfarmwineries.pdf
- + Specialty crops, food products, specialty shops, cider mills, farmers market (Kansas Department of Agriculture)
- + Amusement Rides (Kansas Department of Labor) hay rack rides and barrel rides are exempt. Registered agritourism business permits and licensing fees are reduced.

TAXES

Sales taxes are paid by customers, although you collect them. These are not considered part of the operating expenses and will not affect your profit margin. There may be taxes levied by local, county and the state that affect your business, including:

- + Sales taxes (local, county & state)
- + Employee payroll taxes
- + Transient guest taxes related to lodging

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There may be state regulations and codes pertaining to health and safety issues in your operation. Check out the Kansas Department of Health & Environment website: kdheks.gov. Some of the issues may be:

- + Sanitation
- + Fuel tanks above or below ground
- + Water Safety
- + Environmental regulations

Other resources:

- + Fire safety (Kansas Fire Marshall's Office) firemarshal.ks.gov
- + Kansas Agriculture Emergency Response Corp agriculture.ks.gov/kaerc
- + Kansas One Call – Always call before you dig. Dial 811 or kansasonecall.com

It is a good idea to welcome local Emergency Management personnel to your business so they are aware of the layout of property in case of an emergency.

ACCESSIBILITY

You will be attracting a great variety of visitors to your operation, including people with disabilities. The law that addresses accessibility is called the American with Disabilities Act. (ADA). Small operations sometimes are exempt from these regulations, but it is your job to research what you are required to provide. For complete information on how to comply with the ADA, check ada.gov.

In Kansas the Great Plains ADA Center is available gpadacenter.org for a local reference or you can contact the ADA hotline at 1-800-949-4232 with questions or consult your attorney.

PERMITS

You may need special permits to run different aspects of your agritourism operation. Check with the appropriate office in your city/county government prior to investing any funds or doing any work to see what is required.

Here are some examples:

- + Building Permits
- + Festivals and special use permits: if your property is not zoned for large crowds, you may need a one-time permit that allows you to hold a large event.
- + Liquor: if you are offering liquor as part of a packaged group event, you may need a special liquor permit through the Alcohol Beverage Control. Kansas Department of Revenue.
- + Roadside stand: if you plan to be open for a few months a year, selling homegrown products, you may need a retail permit.
- + Access permit for widening or installation of a driveway from a state or county road.
- + There may be other situations related to your agritourism operation that require a permit of some sort.

INSURANCE

For liability insurance, see Chapter 14 – Liability Insurance. However, agritourism activities most likely will require additional insurance coverage beyond your existing home and farm insurance.

The Kansas Amusement Ride Statute 40-4802. Same; financial responsibility requirements. No amusement ride, antique amusement ride, limited-use amusement ride or registered agritourism activity shall be operated in this state unless at the time of operation the owner has in effect an insurance policy insuring the owner and operator against liability for bodily injury to persons arising out of the operation of the amusement ride, antique amusement ride, limited-use amusement ride or registered agritourism activity. The insurance policy shall be written by an insurance company doing business in Kansas, or by a surplus lines insurer. Such insurance policy shall:

(a) (1) For an owner or operator of an amusement ride, provide for coverage in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence with a \$2,000,000 annual aggregate, except that this requirement shall be satisfied if the owner of such amusement ride is the state or any subdivision of the state and such owner self-insures, or participates in a public entity self-insurance pool in accordance with K.S.A. 75-6111, and amendments thereto; or

(2) for an owner or operator of an antique amusement ride, limited-use amusement ride or registered agritourism activity, provide for coverage in an amount not less than \$750,000 per occurrence with a \$1,000,000 annual aggregate; and

(b) name as an additional insured any person contracting with the owner for the operation of the amusement ride, antique amusement ride, limited-use amusement ride or registered agritourism activity.

It is recommended to consult with your local insurance agent for their recommendations, but also talk with other agritourism businesses in your state to see who provides the best option for insurance coverage for the following:

- + Fire
- + Additional vehicles
- + Burglary & vandalism
- + Business interruption

VALUE-ADDED SERVICES

Nutrition labeling, taste test panels, and shelf life studies are all important services to food entrepreneurs when preparing to market their products.

Kansas State University, Department of Animal Sciences and Industry provide resources through the Kansas Value Added Foods Lab to potential manufacturers including:

- + Food Product Development from Concept to Commercialization including Feasibility Studies
- + Process Authority services: *"... a processing authority is a person who has expert knowledge of thermal processing requirements for low-acid foods packaged in hermetically-sealed containers or has expert knowledge in the acidification and processing of acidified foods ..."* as defined by the Institute of Thermal Processing Specialists
- + Nutrition Facts Panel Generation and Ingredients Listing
- + Chemical and Physical Testing: *pH (acidity), Brix (percent solids), Aw (water activity), Color Analysis, Microbiological Testing, Accelerated Shelf-life Testing*
- + Regulatory Compliance: *Label Review, Nutritional Analysis*
- + Sourcing of Ingredients and Packaging Materials
- + Educational Opportunities for Food Processors such as: *Short courses, On-site employee training, One-on-one Consultation, GMPs (Good Manufacturing Practices) training, HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points)*

For more information on the Value-Added Foods Lab, call 785-532-1668.

Before any food product is made, many business decisions must be made. Researching the business structure, making a business plan, selecting a location, and more make up the foundation of a successful business.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Lodging Program, agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/food-safety-lodging is responsible for food processors and food manufacturers in Kansas.



This includes meat and poultry, weights and measures, and pesticides, agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/meat-and-poultry-inspection. They may be reached at 785-564-6700



— FROM THE LAND OF —
KANSAS

The From the Land of Kansas™ agriculture. ks.gov/divisions-programs/agricultural-marketing-advocacy-and-outreach-team/from-the-land-of-kansas trademark program's goal is to help businesses that grow, produce, process or manufacture products in Kansas. In addition, the program works with and supports restaurants using Kansas products and retailers selling Kansas agriculture products and ingredients. To become a From the Land of Kansas member or for further questions call 785-564-6759

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CHAPTER

MARKETING



WHAT IS MARKETING?

Marketing sounds complicated, but its goals are simple:

- + Make customers aware of your business
- + Motivate customers to visit your business
- + Encourage customers to make purchases while they are at your business
- + Excite customers to want to share their experience and your business
- + Pinpoint what people want and are willing to pay

There are hundreds of college textbooks about marketing. We've refined the approach to marketing, so it is easy to follow for agritourism businesses – especially for those with very limited budgets.

Marketing that's easy to understand ... easy to follow ... and easy to afford!

In fact, it's as easy as pie ... the Eckert's Farm Marketing Pie.

Jane Eckert developed the agritourism marketing method after many years of successfully marketing her family farm – Eckert's Farm, in Belleville, Illinois.

Today Eckert's family farm attracts more than 500,000 visitors yearly!

If you don't want to focus on marketing or don't think you can do it yourself, hire somebody to help you. Marketing is the key to making sales soar!

HOW MUCH TO SPEND ON MARKETING

Typically, start-up agritourism operations should expect to spend 10 - 25% of total sales on marketing, and more mature operations will spend between 4 and 10%.

MARKETING IS A MUST

Marketing is the step many farmers and ranchers going into agritourism are least familiar with. If you want to increase revenues, this is probably the most critical step.

If you are uncomfortable handling the marketing yourself, or no one in your family wants to take on the task, then hire a professional. You do not want to approach a large firm, as your efforts will be too minimal for them. However, there are many qualified marketing professionals who work on a project basis (freelancers) or very small firms that will be happy to take on your business.

Where to find professional marketing help:

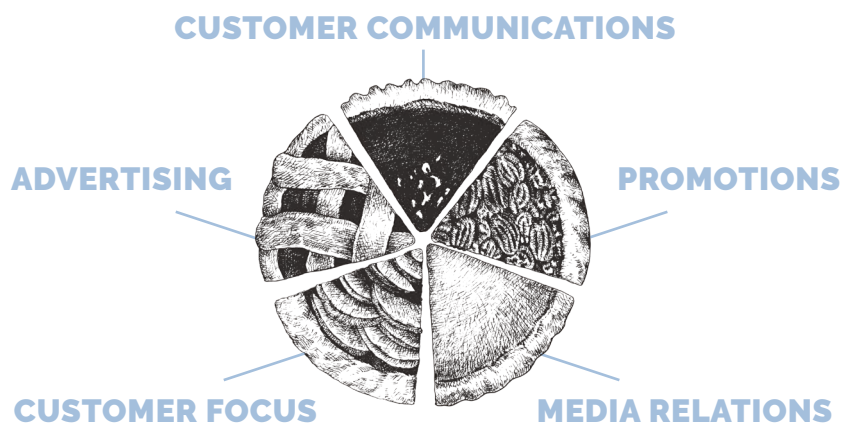
- + Ask friends who run their own businesses who they use
- + Ask local organizations who they use – in fact their marketing director might do some freelance work
- + Call area colleges or technical schools

What to ask in your interview with marketing professionals

- + Ask to see samples of their work
- + Ask for references
- + Ask how they charge, either by the project or hourly rate. It is preferable to be charged a project fee, for example, to write a brochure, to create your website, to write media releases, etc.

Marketing is a must ... even if you hire a professional to do it for you.

THE ECKERT'S FARM MARKETING PIE



The key elements to marketing for agritourism businesses are Promotions, Customer Communications, Media Relations, Advertising and Customer Focus.

This obviously will vary based on the type of business you are running and the type of clients you are trying to attract.

1

NUMBER

PROMOTIONS

DEFINITION

Promotions are creative ways to excite the public about visiting your business and encouraging them to buy more while there. Promotions require more creativity than budget.

SO, WHAT IS A PROMOTION?

You may never use the word "promotions," but you probably are participating in promotions every day!

Do you ever ...

- + collect frequent flier points to get a free airline ticket?
- + use a coupon to save money at the store?
- + accumulate points through purchases at your drug store, gas station, coffee shop etc. ... toward future discounts?
- + buy one pizza and get the second one free?

These are all forms of promotions. At an agritourism business, promotions are one of the easiest and most effective ways to boost revenue – and best of all, there are hundreds of promotions that are simple to follow and inexpensive to do!



Flying 5A Ranch/Champ & Company in Concordia, KS

WHY DO YOU USE PROMOTIONS?

- + Use to create awareness of your agritourism business
- + Use to motivate people to visit your agritourism business
- + Use to build business during slow sales times
- + Use to introduce new products and services

HOW MUCH SHOULD A PROMOTION COST?

The best part of promotions is that, for the most part, they require very little cash to implement. You may have the cost of printing sign-up slips or buying a few prizes or paying for products in tastings, but these should be very minimal.

Here are some of the basic promotions that you can use:

Contests

Contests are designed to find a "winner" in some kind of special event or particular situation. Winners are awarded a prize, which can be as simple as a blue ribbon, a little more valuable such as a gift certificate, or very elaborate such as a vacation trip. (For example, Best Apple Pie Contest or Halloween Costume Contest or Mother-Daughter Look-A-Like Contest.)

Special Pricing and Discounts

Reduced pricing and special discounts on products and activities. Use this during slow periods or to get different people to try your products. Do not use discounts as standard policy.

Guests and

Celebrity Appearances

A special guest or celebrity makes an appearance at your business as part of a special event or festival.

Tasting Samples of

Food Products

Give customers free samples of food products that you sell.

Drawings

The public gets an opportunity to win a prize.

Loyalty Programs

A loyalty program is anything that gets the customer to make repeat purchases because there is a "pay off" in free products when they reach a certain level of purchases.

Liquidation

Drastically reducing prices in order to sell seasonal or slow-moving merchandise, such as Halloween gift items after October 31.

Early Bird Specials

Discounted pricing and special offers to people who shop or eat during the hours when the business is generally not busy (could be early, late, or a special day).

Sponsorships

Getting other businesses or companies to become associated with an activity or special event on your property. They become a sponsor by paying you money for the privilege of promoting their business at your agritourism business, or by co-paying for advertising and marketing costs, or by offering you in-kind products or services (such as a TV station broadcasting advertisements about you.)

Couponing

Offering people a coupon that gives them a discount for purchase or admission.

Did you know you can place a coupon for free on the TravelKS.com website: assets.simpleviewcms.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/kansas/Adding_Offer_Individual_be27ef8f-e280-4e24-815d-df314c1d4143.pdf.

Charitable Donations

Donating gift certificates or products to be given away or auctioned at charity events.

Public Events and Parades

Participating in local or regional public events, such as the Chili Cook-Off, Taste of the City, Christmas Festival, Rallies for Athletic Teams, Kids Fairs, Women's Fairs, Family Day at the Military Base, Hot Air Balloon Races, Homecoming Events, Thanksgiving Parade, Labor Day Parade, St. Patrick's Day Parade, etc. Anywhere there are large groups of people congregating is a great place to have a booth and get out information about your agritourism business.

Become a Local Expert

You or a staff member become the "expert" in a particular subject related to something you do on the farm and then make speeches or presentations to different groups in the community, sometimes at large gatherings like the Garden Show.

2

NUMBER

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

DEFINITION

Customer Communications are a way to stay connected to your customers, in order to develop a relationship between them and your business. The stronger that relationship is, the more money they will spend with you.

TYPES OF CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

- + Social Media
- + Websites
- + Brochures
- + Fliers
- + Postcards
- + Newsletters (e-mail or US post)
- + Telephone Answering Machine

HOW DO YOU STAY CONNECTED?

THROUGH WEBSITES, NEWSLETTERS, FLIERS & BROCHURES

WORDS THAT SELL THE EXPERIENCE

In all your customer communications, you want to emphasize the key characteristics that make your operation special and valuable to the visitor. These words should also help create the concept of the experience people will have while visiting.

Farm:

family fun, fresh, homegrown, picked today, u-pick, country flavor, rolling hills, wide open spaces, authentic working farm, etc.

Ranch:

western hospitality, beautiful trails, scenic, rugged, cowboys, horses, corral, authentic working ranch, unsurpassed views, western style, down home, etc.

Hunting & Fishing:

natural habitat, abundant wildlife, stocked streams, world-class adventures, etc.

Lodging:

quiet, peaceful, country, antique-filled, beautiful gardens, hide-away, luxurious, rustic, close to attractions, etc.

Restaurant:

farm to table, Kansas sourced food, fresh grown vegetables, organic, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA

One way to grow a dedicated audience and following is by using social media. Keep people informed on what's happening at your business. Share when you're having events or if new retail/produce is available for purchase.

Be timely and consistent, post at least once a week.

STEP

1

Identify the best social media platform for you

- + There are a number of options; Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.
- + Research each option, view how other agritourism businesses are using them.
- + Don't try to do them all at once, start with one and then once you feel ready continue to add others.

STEP

2

Put together a plan for your social media content

- + Look ahead and write out a calendar for each month of the year. This will help you know what to post and when.
- + Types of posts: events, what's happening at the agritourism business, promote new retail/produce, meet the team, holiday activities, special promotions, behind the scenes, educational, and the list goes on.
- + Decide who will be managing your accounts and posting; yourself, a staff member or hiring someone.

If you have a new social media manager or are hiring one:

- + At first review their posts to make sure they are accurate, and the messages convey what you want them to.
- + Review the social media plan with them.
- + Where can you find social media managers? Check with local colleges in the marketing or mass media department. Or, if your community has a small business center, they could help you.

STEP

3

Create a budget

- + It's free to create a social media account but managing an account can take time and resources, which can be costly.
- + Consider your time. You may feel it's worth hiring someone to handle social media.
- + To build your audience or to highlight events or retail, you may want to consider creating social media ads.

YES, YES, YES YOU NEED A WEBSITE.

WEBSITES

A website is an absolute necessity. Today, not having a website is like not having a telephone! Consumers rely on the internet to get information, as well as to organize family activities and trips.

You can develop a basic website for relatively little money. You can do it by yourself or hire a website developer to create it for you.

STEP

1

Research existing websites of agritourism businesses

- + Check out farmstop.com or nafdma.com and you'll see some of the best examples throughout the United States.
- + In Kansas, look at travelks.com to see what people in the state are doing.

STEP

2

Decide if you will create the website yourself or hire a developer

If you want to create it yourself ...

- + There are several website builders that you can use to create your website; WordPress, Wix, Weebly, and Squarespace to name a few.
- + Creating a website requires getting an address (called a domain registration), a technical connection to the internet (hosting), writing copy and posting it on the website.
- + You will have to pay for a domain name and for a hosting site

If you hire a designer to create your website ...

- + To find somebody, ask friends who have business websites
- + Look on websites of local merchants and businesses. If you like the website, call and ask who developed it
- + Check with local colleges in the computer department
- + A designer will charge you for his work, and you also will pay for a domain name and hosting site

HIRE A WEBSITE DESIGNER

Ask around or call the area college or high school computer instructor for names. A very simple website should cost from \$500 to \$1500. The cost goes up as you get more sophisticated.

What should the website include?

1 Make the site very, very easy to use. Make it easy for visitors to find information quickly, especially the most obvious information like directions to your agritourism business.

2 The whole look of the website should visually convey the look of your agritourism business. Whenever possible use photographs of your business, farm, and events. High quality, or professional, photographs would be best. Customers want to visually experience your business before they visit. If your business doesn't look the same in person as it did on your website guests may feel misled.

3 Highlight your family! One of the reasons people flock to an agritourism business is because of the family who owns it. Visitors love seeing pictures of your family and learning about the history of your Agritourism business.

**DON'T TAKE
YOUR TIME.**

**A WEBSITE COULD
BE YOUR MOST
IMPORTANT
MARKETING TOOL.
GET TO IT AND
KEEP IT UPDATED!**

4 Update, update, update! Keep your website fresh by adding new photos. Be sure to keep your "Calendar of Events" current and eliminate dates that have passed. Update hours of operations as they are changed or as prices increase, etc.

5 If you hire a designer to create your website, be sure you can type in changes yourself. This will save you money!

6 Here are some basic elements that should be part of every agritourism business website:

- + At the top or bottom of every page, display your logo, address, phone number and hours of operation. This sounds so obvious and yet many sites don't include this on every page. Make contact information very clear.
- + Use happy, upbeat, fun photos on every page. People want to see where they're going and what activities they'll be doing.
- + Have a separate button for "Directions and Map." Be sure the map is extremely easy to follow, and the directions are very specific, with the number of miles between each direction.
- + If your business is "by appointment only," consider simply having a "contact us" page and don't show your address. This helps avoid having unexpected visitors at your door.
- + Have a separate button entitled "About our Family" and include photos, even pictures from the founding generations!
- + Have links to your social media accounts.
- + Have a separate button for "Calendar of Events" that includes festivals, concerts, and special activities.
- + Have a separate button for "School Tours" and/or "General Tours" if you offer them.
- + Have a separate button for "Country Store" or special retail offerings.
- + Have a separate button for "Contact Us" as a way to send e-mails to you.
- + Have a separate button to "Sign up for our Newsletter."
- + Have a separate button for "Coupons" or "Discounts" and give a decent offer such as 2-for-1 admission on certain dates.
- + Have a separate button for "Lodging" if you offer it.
- + You may have other enterprises or offerings that need a separate button. This may be a corn maze, trail rides, prairie heritage events. Just be sure the website user gets a quick idea of everything you have to offer.

7 You can have "links" from your website to other websites that would interest your visitors. These should include travelks.com (the state's travel website), your local tourism authority, the city chamber of commerce, and any other associations that apply such as Kansas Bed & Breakfast Association, Kansas Outfitters Association, Kansas Sport Hunting Association, Agricultural Associations, etc.

BROCHURES & PRINTED MATERIALS

Brochures

Get a nice brochure created. It pays to hire a good designer. Be sure to include your name, address, map, directions and website address. Some agritourism businesses do not put their address down, just contact information. They may just be open seasonally. Only use pictures that “pop” off the page and make your agritourism business look great. Better to use fewer pictures that are really good than more pictures that are mediocre.

Brochures are often put into display racks, where only the top 1/3 can be seen. Be sure that this area very clearly describes what you offer. Be sure the word “AGRITOURISM,” “FARM” or “RANCH” is easily read on the top of the brochure.

Fliers

Fliers can be created very inexpensively. They need to be attractive with easy-to-read graphic design. You can create the design on your computer, or work with a business center. They're inexpensive to reproduce, so use them whenever you want to get out the word about your agritourism business, special events, festivals, etc.

Where to distribute

brochures & fliers:

- + At your agritourism business (especially fliers of upcoming events, handed to people as they leave or put into shopping bag)
- + Through the mail
- + Through state welcome centers
- + Through state and local tourism authorities
- + At events off your property
- + At businesses close to your property, if they will let you (often in return for you distributing their brochures)
- + Public libraries and schools
- + Community bulletin boards



To have your brochures displayed in the Kansas Travel Information Centers (TICS), they should be professionally produced, error free, grammatically correct and printed on paper stock of sufficient weight to prevent drooping in a rack. To get your brochure approved for display, contact Kansas Tourism.. (Kansas Travel Information Center in Belle Plaine, KS)

Postcards to targeted audiences

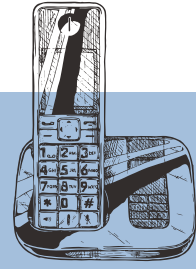
Use a postcard to communicate about very specific events (such as Mother's Day activities) or seasonal events (Cowboy Days, Haunted Hayrides).

To use postcards effectively, you need to have a very focused or targeted mailing list of visitors who have indicated their interest in that particular event.

For example, ask people to sign up for a mailing list when they are at your business. Be sure your sign-up form has a box for your customer to check that states they approve you sending them mail and/or email. Then create a colorful postcard to be sent to this list a few weeks before you open in the fall. You want to match the right customer to this postcard. You do not want to mail out massive numbers of postcards to a general audience. This would be a waste of money.



Kerby Farm Pumpkin Patch in Bonner Springs, KS



TELEPHONE ANSWERING SYSTEM

Don't forget the obvious. Be sure the message on your answering system gives your hours, special activities, list which products are ripe at your stand/store or in u-pick. Also, when a "real" person answers the phone, make sure he or she knows the same information by posting "cheat sheets" by each phone.

NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters give you ongoing contact with your customers, so you keep them excited about your agritourism business and aware of everything that's happening all season. Your newsletter can be sent by U.S. Mail or through e-mail.

Newsletters are NOT junk mail. You ask customers if they want to receive your newsletter, which immediately makes it valuable to them.

Advantages of Newsletters

- + Stay in touch with your best customers so he/she will return
- + Create enthusiasm and awareness of activities, special events, etc.
- + Create customer loyalty
- + Help with customer retention
- + Offer relevant, timely information
- + People keep it for future reference or pass it on to family and friends

Creating a database of customer names

You must have an updated list of customers in order to send out newsletters. To create a database:

- + Create a simple sign-up slip/form asking for name, address and e-mail address. Again, you will want a box for your customer to check that gives approval for you to send them mail/e-mail. Place these slips by cash registers and other locations throughout the property and use them when you are making appearances at public events.
- + Have visitors to your website sign up electronically.
- + To encourage sign-ups, have a drawing for some kind of product and ask people to complete the slip to participate in the drawing. Be sure the slip asks, "Do you want to receive information about our upcoming events and specials and agree to receive email notifying you of such?"
- + Be sure to assign a staff member to keep the database current. Don't waste time and money on outdated addresses.

NEWSLETTERS SENT VIA EMAIL VS U.S. MAIL	EMAIL	U.S. MAIL
COST	Very little cost	Postage & Printing – significant as list grows
FREQUENCY	Often	Less Often
CONTENT	Shorter articles	Greater depth of articles
PHOTOS	Limited	Extensive
SPEED	Fast, write it today and send it today	Long lead time
FAST BREAKING NEWS	Immediately	Impossible
POSTING NEWSLETTER ON WEBSITE	Very easy and quick	A lot of trouble
MANAGING ADDRESSES	Easy	More time consuming
FEEDBACK FROM READERS	Easy, immediate	Very seldom happens



Washington Creek Lavender in Lawrence, KS

Mailing Lists

You need to create a mailing list of all present customers and add potential customers, too. Keep a sign-up list by the register. Or use a drawing for a prize in order to get people to fill out a slip with their name, street address and e-mail address. Be sure to ask on these slips "Would you like to receive our newsletter?" Also, visitors on your website can sign up to receive your newsletter.

List Manager

Assign somebody to keep the list updated by adding new names and deleting addresses from returned mail.

Topics to include in newsletter:

- + Specific address is an option, you can also have a "contact us," especially if you are a seasonal business or by appointment only such as a B&B.
- + New and/or ongoing activities including hours, prices
- + Calendar of Events
- + U-pick ripening calendar
- + Information on special events, festivals, etc.
- + Hunting and fishing reports
- + Interesting stories about the family or the agritourism business
- + Recipes

3

NUMBER

MEDIA RELATIONS

DEFINITION

Media Relations is a way of sending out news releases to inform TV stations, newspapers, radio stations and magazines about what's happening at your agritourism business in the hope they will include a story about you in their news coverage.

By sending a news release to the media and letting them know what's happening at your agritourism business, you let *them* spread the word about you. This costs virtually nothing from your budget.

News coverage is one of the most effective ways to motivate families to visit your agritourism business. It usually works better than advertising. Best of all, it's free!

A news release can be very, very simple.

WHAT KIND OF TOPICS SHOULD I COVER IN A NEWS RELEASE?

Write a news release about festivals, cattle drives, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, haunted attractions, special baked goods, wine tastings, cattle drives, prairie grass burning, etc. Also, don't forget celebrations and milestones, like anniversaries, new additions, or attendance records. Anything special that's going on at your agritourism business should be written up in a news release.

WHO SHOULD BE SENT THE NEWS RELEASE?

- + Target the media according to the audience you want to reach. For example, if you're trying to pull visitors from Kansas City or Denver, send the release to them along with your local media outlets.
- + Email the release to all the media that reaches your target audience. Here is who should be on the mailing list:

TV: assignment editor, producers of morning and midday news shows, newsroom director, website and/or social media manager

Newspapers: general news editor, photo editor, community calendar editor, travel editor, digital media manager, and specialty editors, as appropriate, such as food editor, home and entertainment editor, business editor

Radio Stations: news director, promotion director, community calendar director, digital media manager

Magazines: news editor, community calendar editor, digital media manager

- + Also email releases to organizations that have newsletters, blogs, and websites, including Convention and Visitors Bureau, special interest bloggers, tourism outlets, community websites, and even politicians. Include on your own social media sites and you can forward your press release to social media accounts by direct message.
- + Remember the Calendar of Events. These are very short listings in newspapers and sometimes on TV and on the radio about what's happening in the area. The editors of these lists RELY on information from you and use it almost every time you send it!

THE BIG SECRET.

The media needs story ideas from you as much as you need them to publicize your agritourism business!

WHO ARE THE MEDIA?

TV NEWS, RADIO SHOWS, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, BLOGS, AND WEBSITES

FOLLOW UP, FOLLOW UP, AND FOLLOW UP

After you have sent a media release, you want to follow up with a phone call.

- + Call the news desks at the TV stations and the major newspapers
- + Verify the release was received
- + Answer any of their questions

SEND A BASKET OF GOOD WILL

- + To make sure the television stations know you, send baskets of food pertaining to your agritourism business or special event (e.g. popcorn to promote your corn maze, jerky to promote Cowboy Days, baskets of apples for the start of u-pick apple season, etc.) Put a few extra copies of the media release in each basket.
- + Be sure your agritourism business logo is on the basket, if possible.

INVITE THEM TO YOUR AGRITOURISM BUSINESS

- + Take them on a guided tour. The better they know your business the better they can promote it and write about it.
- + Invite them to experience it on their own with a complementary pass or a night stay.
- + Personalize the experience for them.



Prairie Fire Winery in Paxico, KS

Sample Press Release

If not on company letterhead insert business name/logo

News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jane Doe
(123) 456-7891

The 50th Kansas Sunflower Festival Begins

Doe's Farm is in Full Bloom

Your City, Kan. –Kansas sunflower fields are at their peak and Doe's farm will be celebrating their 50th Sunflower Festival this year August 29 & 30. The Sunflower Festival will be open from Monday – Saturday, 9 AM – 8 PM at 1234 Hill Road in Your City, Kan.

Visitors will relish the beautiful fields of golden petals as they turn toward the sun each day. Doe's farm will have wagon rides, sunflower picking, photo opportunities and wholesome family fun. Visitors will also enjoy fresh lemonade, food trucks and shopping in their General Store. There will be plenty of sunflowers and activities for the whole family to enjoy.

John Doe Senior and his wife, Jane, established Doe's family farm in 1925. Since then, the farm has been handed down through generations and fourth-generation owners are Jake and Jane Doe and their children. The family started the Sunflower Festival in 1969 with the idea of providing families the opportunity to explore the beautiful Kansas' state flower in masses. For more information visit their website at www.janesfarm.com

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Sample Calendar Listing

If not on company letterhead insert business name/logo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jane Doe

Cell (123) 456-7891

Work (123) 456-7891

Email myfarm@global.com

Kansas Sunflower Festival

August 29 & 30

Jane's Farm

Kansas sunflower fields are at their peak! Enjoy wagon rides, sunflower picking, photo ops and family fun. Fresh lemonade, food trucks and shop in our General Store. Plenty of sunflowers and activities for the whole family.

Visit Jane's Farm in Sunny Your Town. Event hours are 9 AM – 8 PM.

Call for directions: (123) 456-7891

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123 Hill Road, Sunny, KS 12345 • Phone (123) 456-7891 • Fax (123) 456-7891

Visit our website at www.janesfarm.com

4

NUMBER

ADVERTISING

DEFINITION

Advertising is when you pay a newspaper, radio station, TV station, billboard company, digital ad service, etc. to run a printed design or video that you submit about your agritourism business.

Traditionally, agritourism businesses have relied on paid advertising as their main way of reaching customers. But on a small budget, advertising cannot be very effective. Why? Because in order to be effective, paid advertising requires a lot of repetition to be sure the audience really gets the message.

With a one- or two-shot media placement, it's risky that you've actually reached your targeted audience.

With the Eckert's Farm Marketing Pie, in most cases paid advertising and media should be the last strategy you use.

WHERE TO ADVERTISE:

- + Social Media
- + Websites
- + Travel publications
- + Newspapers
- + Television
- + Radio
- + Magazines
- + Billboards
- + Local businesses
- + Community websites
- + Special interest publications

CAUTION

IT'S EASY TO BUY PAID ADVERTISING, JUST BE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PAYING FOR.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE?

- + What is the audience of this media?
- + Does this audience match my target audience? Age, gender, interests, hobbies, families, etc.
- + How many of my target customers will actually see, hear or read my ad?
- + Do other similar businesses advertise with this media?

Do your own research and make your sales reps do their homework and explain things clearly. Remember, a salesman's first goal is to sell you media space or time. He or she may not have your best interest at heart. You must become a savvy media buyer.



Bourgmont Winery in Bucyrus, KS

CREATING THE AD ITSELF

Once you've chosen where to advertise, the quality of your ad will also affect its ability to deliver customers. Many media outlets offer help in creating the ad, whether it's print or even television. Often this can be negotiated to be included in the price of the media buy.

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD PRINT AD

Some agritourism businesses rely on newspaper or other print advertising. Be sure your ad is effective by following these points:

- + Keep the copy to a minimum
- + Keep the design simple – cluttered ads are not effective
- + Use only one or two graphic elements
- + Make the name of your agritourism business stand out
- + Give a phone number and website address where people can get more information
- + Use a simple direction finder such as "2 miles east of Highway 40"

5 NUMBER

CUSTOMER FOCUS

DEFINITION

Ultimately all your marketing comes down to one thing: THE CUSTOMER. It is your job to know your customers and take care of them well.

Accomplished through commitment to simple service techniques and research, customer focus can have a big impact on increasing your revenues.

You did a great job getting people to your agritourism business. How your staff treats them will determine if they come back or tell their friends to visit.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

All your efforts have paid off! Your agritourism business is overflowing with visitors. They have arrived with their families, bright and early, ready to have a great country experience.

Now what matters is how they're treated!

- + Is the owner and his/her family mixing with the crowd and engaging them in conversation?
- + Can the staff answer visitor questions?
- + Is the staff dressed in clean, wrinkle-free uniforms?
- + Is the staff friendly and having fun with the customers?
- + Are the customers greeted when they enter the store?
- + Can customers find everything they want to buy?
- + Is the staff eager to help customers at the farm stand or store?
- + Are the cowboys chatting about their jobs with the kids?
- + Is your hunting guide knowledgeable about where to find deer?
- + Are the lines to your concessions moving swiftly?
- + Be sure to thank your customers for their business and welcome them to come again. Many Agritourism businesses have a sign as you leave with "Thank you for visiting (farm name)."

"Customer service" isn't just an empty phrase. Think about how you want to be treated and be sure your customers are getting that kind of attention and help.

**SINCE YOU'RE A
FAMILY BUSINESS,
YOU NEED TO GO THE
EXTRA MILE.**



JUST KEEP TALKING TO YOUR CUSTOMERS AND ASKING KEY QUESTIONS.

This is often the best way to pinpoint improvements and changes that need to be made.

CUSTOMER SURVEYS & RESEARCH

Do you really know who your customers are? The only way you'll know is by asking them through customer surveys and research.

Talking to Customers

Customer research can be as simple as talking to your customers and asking them what they like and what they don't like.

- + "What else would you like to see us offer?"
- + "How was your service today?"
- + "Are there any other activities you'd like to see us offer?"
- + "What was your favorite part of your visit?"
- + "How did you like the entertainment?"

Customer Response Cards

Have some simple cards printed up with basic questions, such as:

- + What prompted your visit today?
- + How was your service?
- + What was your favorite activity?
- + Did you bring children with you and what ages are they?
- + Rate the quality of the lodging/food/activity?

Satisfaction Surveys

You can conduct some customer satisfaction surveys as visitors enter or leave the property or they can take a survey home to mail back to you. If you have captured their email address with a sign-up sheet, you can send them a link to an online survey they can take at their convenience. Possibly add an incentive such as all completed and returned surveys will be placed in a drawing for a season pass for the next season. These are the kinds of questions to include:

- + Zip code
- + Male/female
- + Age (ask by range 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55+)
- + How many are in the party?
- + How many children and what age?
- + How did you learn about us (have boxes to check off such as radio, newspaper article, social media ad, friend's social media post or word of mouth)?
- + What prompted your visit (have boxes to check off such as "day in the country," "fresh produce," "family fun," etc.)?
- + How long were you at our agritourism business/farm/ranch/bed & breakfast/winery?
- + What activities did you most enjoy?
- + How would you describe your satisfaction with your visit today?
- + How was the quality of the food?
- + Was the price of admission a good value (if you charge admission)?
- + If you could give us one idea of how we could improve the experience today, what would it be?

CUSTOMER REVIEWS & TESTIMONIALS

Customer Review Websites

There are a number of websites and social media pages where customers can leave a review of your business. These sites include:

- + TripAdvisor
- + Yelp
- + your agritourism business Facebook page, Twitter, Instagram

You'll want to keep an eye on these accounts and make sure to respond in a timely and professional manner to all reviews – whether positive or not. Thank those who leave a positive review and ask to use it as a testimonial on your website and social media account.

If someone leaves a less than positive review, consider it an opportunity to improve your operations and gain their business back. Do reach out to them and ask if you could contact them by phone to discuss. Do not engage them in an argumentative manner. If comments get out of control, you have the option to turn them off. Some agritourism businesses do not allow comments at all on their Facebook page.

Word of mouth is still considered one of the best marketing tools you have. Today, your customers will share their experiences not just with family and friends but also outside of their close network when they share it on personal social media accounts and review sites.

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CHAPTER

MAKING THE TOURISM CONNECTION



RESPONDING TO WHAT VISITORS WANT

When first starting out, create one or two activities or events and see how visitors respond. You will need to be attentive to what they say about your operation and be willing to change according to their responses.

You also will need to be aware of travel trends and special times of the year and adjust your offerings accordingly so you can bring in more revenue. A growing trend among travelers is that they want authentic experiences. Don't just show them how – also provide them with hands-on opportunities.

Examples:

- + Girlfriend getaways
- + Family spring break trips
- + Multi-generational travels (grandparent, parents and children all traveling together)
- + Portrait/Commercial Photography (children, families, senior)
- + School Field Trips

IDENTIFYING TYPES OF TRAVELERS

Individual Travelers

- + People on day trips
- + People visiting family and friends in the area
- + People passing through while traveling from city to city or state to state
- + Destination travelers seeking a particular experience
- + International travelers (see below)
- + Upscale travelers (see below)

Group Travelers

- + Local groups on day trip (church groups, clubs, school field trips)
- + Convention groups in your region
- + Statewide meetings (trade associations, athletic competition, boat or car shows, etc.)
- + Motorcoach tours (see below)
- + Trade or business-related groups (international, ag/commodity groups, travel writers, etc.)

Motorcoach Tours:

One of the most lucrative target audiences in tourism is the motorcoach industry. Every year travelers spend billions of dollars on tours they take from a motorcoach company. This industry is a world unto itself and requires very specialized marketing. As a small tourist destination, it is best to reach the motorcoach operators by working through tourism organizations. The Kansas Tourism division will also provide motorcoach leads, which you can then pursue on your own.

Upscale Travelers

Today there are many people who enjoy the upscale lifestyle and when they travel they like the best and most sophisticated experience. Whether it's fine linens and gourmet foods at a Bed & Breakfast, or a special farm-to-table dinner prepared by a chef with Kansas food and wine pairings, or a spa weekend in the country, these folks are part of a growing tourism trend. As you develop your operation, consider whether you can carve out an offering that will please this group.

TYPES OF TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS

In Kansas, tourism is a multibillion-dollar industry and there is an entire network of professional organizations designed to promote tourism in your community, region and throughout your state.

They are ready to help you market your agritourism attraction to travelers and even give you tips on how to make guests satisfied with the experience at your destination. They'll help you attract more visitors and grow revenue. As more people know about you, more people will visit.

Professional tourism groups are the best, easiest and least expensive way to let tourists know about your agritourism business.

STATE TOURISM OFFICE

Kansas Tourism, a division of the Kansas Department of Commerce, is the state's travel and tourism office. Its mission is to grow Kansas' economy and improve quality of life for all Kansans through the increase of travel and tourism by promoting the recreational, historic, and natural attractions in the state.

The division is in charge of:

- + Promoting Kansas to individual travelers, the group travel industry, and travel writers
- + Producing the annual Official Kansas Travel Guide (400,000 copies distributed)
- + Hosting of the state travel website travelks.com
- + Publishing the state's premier travel magazine KANSAS!, as well as these supplemental publications: Kansas Outdoors Guide, Kansas State Park Guide and the Byways Guide of Kansas
- + Publicizing tourism through tourism publications, social media, travel websites and blogs, digital media, TV, etc.
- + Marketing Kansas internationally as a travel destination
- + Managing state Travel Information Centers, and partnering with local community Travel Information Centers
- + Administering the Attraction Development and Marketing Grant programs
- + Responding to traveler requests for information about Kansas

See Resource Guide (Page 106) for contacts in the Tourism Division.

LOCAL TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS

The goal of local tourism organizations is to attract more visitors into their communities. Some of these organizations require member fees, but some are free. Most importantly, the staff can make the job of attracting visitors to your agritourism business easier.

These organizations NEED you. The more attractions they can offer tourists, the more tourists they'll attract.

Tourism organizations in your area may go by many names, such as:

- + Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB)
- + Chamber of Commerce
- + Convention and Tourism Bureau
- + Economic Development Organization
- + Tourism Councils/ Coalitions/Associations
- + PRIDE or Main Street Programs
- + Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

REGIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS

The goal of regional tourism organizations is to attract more travelers into their region, this could be by special interest and geography. Most regional organizations require a membership fee to join, which gives them a budget for promotions, marketing, media relations, etc. This kind of marketing can accomplish more for individual operators than they could with their own small budgets.

Regional tourism organizations include:

- + Groups which are associated by geographic locales (Northwest Kansas Travel Council, Visit Kansas I-70, etc.)
- + Highway group
- + Historic/Heritage Coalitions
- + Many others

See the Resource Guide (Page 109) for regional tourism organization contacts.

STATEWIDE ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The goal of all statewide associations and organizations is to attract more tourists from within the state as well as the out-of-state traveler. Most organizations have a membership fee, so they have more budget dollars for promotions, marketing, media relations, etc. than individual operators. These organizations work closely with the Kansas Tourism Division.

Statewide associations and organizations include:

- + Travel Industry Associations
- + Niche Alliances
- + Market specific groups
- + Historic/Heritage Coalitions
- + Many others

See the Resource Guide (Page 108) for statewide association and organization contacts.

NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS

The goal of all national tourism organizations is to attract more visitors throughout the United States and other countries. They provide a network for information on general tourism trends, visitation, economic impact, and other useful information. The state Travel and Tourism Division works closely with these organizations to promote Kansas throughout the United States and to many other countries.

National tourism organizations include:

- + Travel Industry Associations
- + Motorcoach Associations
- + Historic and Natural Resource Agencies and Organizations

See the Resource Guide (beginning on Page 106) for national association contacts.

WHAT TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS OFFER

- + Your agritourism business can be included in their travel publications.
- + Your agritourism business can be included in their professional marketing campaigns.
- + Your agritourism business can be represented at regional and national travel shows and conferences.
- + Your agritourism business activities can be included in media releases, newsletters and calendar of events sent to travel writers and other media.
- + Your agritourism business can be featured on their websites, social media and other digital media.
- + Your agritourism business can be represented to group travel tour operators.
- + Your agritourism business can be included on "FAM" (familiarization) trips, which group tour operators take in order to determine where their groups will stop.
- + Your agritourism business can get information about group tours coming to your area.
- + Your agritourism business brochure can be displayed in travel information centers and offices.
- + Your agritourism business can be included in "packages" for tourists including destinations, attractions and lodging.
- + You can get advice and technical assistance regarding traveler expectations.
- + You can get professional assistance to improve the experience you offer.
- + You can get advice from other members of the tourism industry.

WHAT TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS WANT FROM YOU

- + Commitment to creating a quality experience for your visitors.
- + Commitment to providing good customer service to your visitors.
- + Commitment to hiring and training a knowledgeable and friendly staff.
- + Commitment to having set hours when you are open for business.
- + Commitment to respond to what tourists want, rather than staying stuck on what you want.
- + Commitment to cooperate when asked by the tourism organization.
- + Commitment to long-term involvement in the tourism organization.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS

- 1 Look at the state tourism website to understand what they offer.
- 2 You can also join the Kansas Tourism Industry Facebook group.
- 3 Join all tourism groups appropriate for your operation and location.
- 4 Make an appointment with local tourism organizations so you can meet the staff and tell them about your agritourism business.
- 5 Invite members from local tourism organizations to visit your agritourism business.
- 6 Attend and participate actively in meetings, classes and workshops offered by tourism organizations.
- 7 Attend special events and conferences offered by tourism organizations.

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CHAPTER

RESOURCE GUIDE



STATE OF KANSAS OFFICES

Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services

k-state.edu/kams

1-800-321-3276

K-State Research and Extension
2A Edwards Hall
1810 Kerr Drive
Manhattan, Kansas 66506-4806

- + Provides Kansas producers with legal, financial and mediation services.

Kansas Agritourism Program:

Kansas Tourism

travelks.com/industry/agritourism

785-296-7198

1000 SW Jackson, Suite 100
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Register your Agritourism business, quarterly agritourism meetings
- + Listing of registered agritourism businesses

Kansas Department of Agriculture

agriculture.ks.gov

785-564-6700

1320 Research Park Drive
Manhattan, Kansas 66502

- + Food Safety and Lodging Licenses
- + Ag Marketing
- + Weights and Measures
- + Agribusiness Development
- + From the Land of Kansas
- + Agricultural Workforce Development
- + Agriculture Emergency Response Corps

Kansas Department of Commerce

kansascommerce.gov

785-296-3481

1000 SW Jackson, Suite 100
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Exporting and International Business
- + Minority and Women Business Development
- + KANSASWORKS
- + Rural Opportunity Zones
- + Business and Community Development

Find your Business and Community office here:
kansascommerce.gov/about-us/locations/in-state-business-community-development-offices

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

kdheks.gov

785-296-1500

1000 SW Jackson
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Public Water Supply
- + Geology and Well Technology
- + Municipal Program Section
- + Environmental Remediation, Storage Tanks

Kansas Department of Labor

dol.ks.gov/ish/amusement-ride

785-296-4386

401 SW Topeka Blvd
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Kansas Amusement Ride Act Permit Program

Kansas Department of Revenue

ksrevenue.org

785-296-3909

109 SW Ninth St, Fourth Floor
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Business Tax Information
- + Property Valuation
- + Alcoholic Beverage Control

Kansas Department of Transportation

ksdot.org

785-296-3566

700 SW Harrison
Topeka, Kansas 66603

- + Transportation system information
- + Tourism attraction signage program
- + KanDrive:
kandrive.org/kandrive

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

ksoutdoors.com

785-296-2281

1020 S Kansas Ave, Suite 200
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Wildlife resources, parks and outdoor recreation opportunities
- + Regulations and permits for hunting and fishing, controlled shooting areas

Kansas Tourism

travelks.com

785-296-8478

- + Attraction development grants
- + Tourism marketing grants
- + Kansas travel guide and other publications
- + KANSAS! Magazine
- + Travel Information Centers
- + Public Relations and Travel Development
- + Tourism attraction signage program
- + International tourism marketing
- + Agritourism program
- + Kansas Byways program
- + Ecotourism
- + E-newsletter

Kansas Rural Center

kansasruralcenter.org

info@kansasruralcenter.org

4021 SW 10th St #337
Topeka, Kansas 66604

- + Promotes long term health of the land and its people through research, education and advocacy

Kansas Secretary of State

sos.kansas.gov

785-296-4575

120 SW 10th Ave
Topeka, Kansas 66612

- + Business Registration

Kansas Small Business

Development Center

kansassbdc.net

785-296-6514

800 SW Jackson St, Suite 900
Topeka, Kansas 66612



Indian Creek Bison Ranch in Haven, KS

SMALL BUSINESS HELP – STATEWIDE LOCATIONS

To find the SBDC office in your area for assistance: kansassbdc.net/kansas-sbdc-locations and click on the location nearest you.

Colby, Kansas SBDC

(FHSU region)

785-460-5482
ksbdc@fhsu.edu
Colby Community College
703 Bedker Hall
1255 S Range Ave
Colby, Kansas 67701

Dodge City, Kansas SBDC

(SCCC region)

620-780-0292
ksbdc@sccc.edu
101 E Wyatt Earp
Dodge City, Kansas 67801

Emporia, Kansas SBDC at ESU

620-341-5308
ksbdc@emporia.edu
1 Kellogg Circle
104 Cremer Hall
Emporia, Kansas 66801

Great Plains ADA Center serves Kansas

1-800-949-4232
adacenter@missouri.edu
100 Corporate Lake Drive
Columbia, Missouri 65203

Hays, Kansas SBDC at FHSU

785-628-5615
ksbdc@fhsu.edu
600 Park St
Custer Hall 110
Hays, Kansas 67601

Lawrence, Kansas SBDC at KU

785-843-8844
ksbdc@ku.edu
718 New Hampshire
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Liberal, Kansas SBDC at SCCC/ATS

620-417-1955
ksbdc@sccc.edu
2215 N Kansas Ave
Liberal, Kansas 67905

Manhattan, Kansas SBDC

(WU region)

785-587-9917
ksbdc@washburn.edu
501 Poyntz Ave
Manhattan, Kansas 66502

Overland Park, Kansas SBDC at JCCC

913-469-3878
ksbdc@jccc.edu
240 Regnier Center
12345 College Blvd
Overland Park, Kansas 66210

Pittsburg, Kansas SBDC at PSU

620-235-4921
ksbdc@pittstate.edu
402 N Broadway, Suite B
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762

Salina, Kansas SBDC at K-State Polytechnic

785-368-6508
K-StatePolytechnicSBDC@ksbdc.net

Topeka, Kansas SBDC at WU

785-234-3235
ksbdc@washburn.edu
719 S Kansas Ave, Suite 100
Topeka, Kansas 66603

Wetmore, Kansas SBDC (WU region)

785-207-0267
ksbdc@washburn.edu
334 Second St
Wetmore, Kansas 66550

Wichita, Kansas SBDC at WSU

316-978-3193
ksbdc@wichita.edu
5015 E 29th St N
Wichita, KS 67220

Kansas State Research and Extension at Kansas State University

785-532-5820
123 Umberger Hall
Manhattan, Kansas 66506

+ Find your local Extension program with a click on the map

TRAVEL & TOURISM – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local Chamber of Commerce

Local Economic Development

Associations: *Refer to your city/county on-line directory for industry contacts or call the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism office for referral.*

785-296-8478

- + Promotes economic development and tourism
- + Supports legislation for business
- + Promotion of local attractions, hotels, etc.
- + Newsletters, resource of information and education workshops and seminars

Coronado Crossing

620-629-1342

C.J. Wettstein
cjwpheasant@hotmail.com

Flint Hills Tourism Coalition, Inc

travelks.com/flint-hills

PO Box 244
Alma, Kansas 66401

Glacial Hills RC&D

785-608-8801

gary.satter@glacialhillsrcd.com
PO Box 130
Wetmore, Kansas 66550

- + Business Loan Program

Kansas Cattle Towns Coalition

kansascattletowns.org

785-472-5100

114 ½ N Douglas
Ellsworth, Kansas 67439

Kansas Sampler Foundation

kansassampler.org

620-585-2374

Marci Penner
978 Arapaho Rd
Inman, Kansas 67546

Lake Region RC&D

785-242-2073

Don Stottlemire, President
dons@lakeregionrcd.org

Medicine Lodge Peace

Treaty Association

peacetreaty.org

620-886-9815

PO Box 194, 103 E Washington
Medicine Lodge, KS 67104

North Central Kansas

Tourism Coalition

explorencks.com

Northeast Kansas

Enterprise Facilitation

785-364-0583

- + Free confidential business coaching in Northeast Kansas

Northeast Kansas Travel Council

northeastkansas.org

Northwest Kansas Travel

northwestkansas.org

Post Rock Limestone Coalition

facebook.com/KansasPostRock

LimestoneCoalition
213 S Main St
Lucas, KS

See-Kan RC&D

620-431-6180

871 S Country Club Rd
Chanute, KS 66720

Solomon Valley Highway 24

Heritage Alliance

hwy24.org/about-us.html

South Central Kansas Tourism

visitsouthcentralks.com

Southeast Kansas, Inc

sekinc.org

620-670-4859

PO Box 1262
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762

Southeast Kansas Tourism Region

discoversoutheastkansas.org

Sunflower RC&D

620-896-7678

Dollie Mathes
dollie@sunflowerrcd.com

Tour Kansas

travelks.com/tourkansas

- + Promotion of group tours throughout Kansas

Tourism Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK)

tiak.org

785-233-9465

825 S Kansas Ave, Suite 502
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Visit Kansas I-70

kansasi70.com

- + Marketing and promotion of cities and communities along Interstate 70

Washburn Small Business Development Center

washburnsmallbusiness.com

Western Prairie RC&D

wprcd.com

sandy@st-tel.net

Box 366
Goodland, Kansas 67735

Wild West Country

wildwestcountry.com

- + 22 counties in Southwest Kansas



Big Springs Berries in Lecompton, KS

STATE WIDE RESOURCES

FieldWatch®

fieldwatch.com

info@fieldwatch.com

- + DriftWatch® for Specialty producers
- + BeeCheck® for Beekeepers
- + CropCheck® for Row Crop producers
- + FieldCheck® for Applicators

A voluntary communication tool that enables crop producers, beekeepers, and pesticide applicators to work together to protect specialty crops and apiaries through use of mapping programs. It is not a substitute for any state regulatory requirements. Order drift watch, sensitive crop signs at this website.

From the Land of Kansas

fromthelandofkansas.com

785-564-6759 or 785-564-6755

1320 Research Park Drive
Manhattan, Kansas 66502

- + The state trademark program promotes and celebrates agricultural experiences and products grown, raised or produced in Kansas

Kansas Association for

Conservation & Environmental Education (KACEE)

kacee.org

785-532-3322

2610 Claflin Rd
Manhattan, Kansas 66502

- + Kansas leader of conservation and environmental education network, working toward an environmentally literate Kansas

Kansas Association of Counties (KAC)

ks-kac2.civicplus.com

785-272-2585

300 SW Eighth, Suite 300
Topeka, Kansas 66603

- + Represents county commissioners in Kansas



Casa Somerset Bed & Breakfast in Paola, KS

Kansas Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (KARVC)

ksrvparks.com

- + Publishes an annual guide, promotes RV, camping and campgrounds in Kansas

Kansas Bed & Breakfast Association (KBBA)

kbba.com

316-765-8765

info@kbba.com

415 Franklin Ave
Mulvane, Kansas 67110

- + Membership association for B&B innkeepers
- + Facebook presence
- + Annual conference

Kansas Buffalo Association

kansasbuffalo.org

(888) 28-BISON or 282-4766

info@kansasbuffalo.org

- + Improving the buffalo industry in Kansas
- + Education of others about all aspects of buffalo
- + Preservation of the Great Plains heritage

Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry

kansaschamber.org

785-357-6321

835 SW Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66612-1680

- + Promotes a vigorous and prosperous business climate for Kansas
- + Annual conference
- + Lobbying organization

Kansas Christmas Tree Growers Association

kctga.com

- + Membership organization
- + Education for Christmas tree growers
- + Promotion and market development of Christmas tree industry

Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.

kec.org

(785) 478-4554

PO Box 4267
Topeka, KS 66604-0267

- + Subscribes to cooperative principles and seeks to promote and support the cooperative form of enterprise

Kansas Farm Bureau

kfb.org

(785) 587-6000

2627 KFB Plaza
Manhattan, KS 66503

- + Call to obtain County Farm Bureau contacts
- + Membership organization
- + Lobbying organization for agricultural producers
- + Educates and promotes the agricultural industry in Kansas

Kansas Farmers Union

kansasfarmersunion.com

115 E Marlin, Suite #108
PO Box 1064
McPherson, Kansas 67460

Kansas Fruit Growers Association

kansasfruitgrowers.org

- + Membership organization
- + Education of Kansas fruit growers
- + Promotion and market development of the Kansas fruit growers

Kansas Grape Growers and Winemaker's Association

kansasgrapesandwines.com

785-636-5533

Kansas Viticulture and Winery Association

kansasfarmwineries.com

816-223-9919

Kansas Honey Producers

kansashoneyproducers.org

There are multiple Beekeeping Groups around Kansas. You may find the club nearest you here:
kansashoneyproducers.org/affiliates---local---state.html

Kansas Horse Council

kansashorsecouncil.com

785-776-0662

director@kansashorsecouncil.com

8831 Quail Lane, Suite 201
Manhattan, KS 66502

- + Membership organization
- + Represents entire equine industry and interest therein
- + Order Agritourism warning signs: kansashorsecouncil.com/shop/liability-signs

Kansas Humanities Council

humanitieskansas.org

(785) 357-0359

112 SW Sixth Ave, Suite 400
Topeka, KS 66603-3895

- + Creates, sponsors, and promotes humanities programs throughout Kansas

Kansas Livestock Association

kla.org

(785) 273-5115

6031 SW 37th Street
Topeka KS 66614

- + Membership organization
- + Lobbying organization for livestock producers
- + Educates and promotes the livestock industry in Kansas

Kansas Museum Association

ksmuseums.org

316-765-9197

Wichita State University
Public Policy and Management Center (Box 211)
Attn: KMA
1845 Fairmount
Wichita, KS 67260

- + Membership organization
- + Foster and promote interest in advancement of and appreciation of museums in Kansas

Kansas Originals

kansasoriginals.com

(785) 658-2602

ksom@wtciweb.com

233 Hwy 232
Wilson, KS 67490-8704

- + Provides a market for the work of Kansas artists, craftsmen and food producers

Kansas Outfitters Association

kansasoutfittersassociation.com

- + Membership organization
- + Lobbying organization for the livelihood of outfitters
- + Enforces the quality of a reputable outfitter

Kansas Restaurant and Hospitality Association (KRHA)

krha.org

36-267-8383

3500 N Rock Rd, Building 1300
Wichita, Kansas 67226

- + Membership organization
- + Lobbying organization for the restaurant and hospitality industry
- + Educates and promotes the rapidly growing industry of hospitality in Kansas

Kansas RV Parks and Travel (KAN RVT)

kansasrvparks.org

221 N Seventh Ave
Hill City, Kansas 67642

- + Guide for member RV parks and travel

Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association

kscga.org

913-307-7394

agri@ksu.edu

Kansas State Historical Society

785-272-8681

ksks.information@ks.gov

6423 SW Sixth Avenue
Topeka, Kansas 66615

- + Identify, collect, preserve, interpret and disseminate materials and information pertaining to Kansas history in order to assist the public in understanding and appreciating their Kansas heritage and how it relates to their lives

Kansas Vegetable

Growers Association

kvga.org

2021 Throckmorton Hall, KSU
Manhattan, Kansas 66506

- + Membership organization
- + Education of Kansas vegetable growers

Kansas Wildlife and Parks

Wildlife & Habitats

ksoutdoors.com/Wildlife-Habitats

- + Promotion and education regarding nature-based activities and area statewide

Network Kansas

networkkansas.com

Toll-Free (877) 521-8600

PO Box 877
Andover, Kansas 67002-0877

- + Cultivating resources to start and grow small business

United States Department

of Agriculture (USDA)

fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Kansas/index

(785) 539-3531

Kansas State Farm Service Agency
3600 Anderson Ave
Manhattan, Kansas 66503

United States Department

of Agriculture (USDA)

Rural Development

rd.usda.gov/ks

(785) 271-2700

1303 SW First American Place,
Suite 100
Topeka, KS 66604



Good Karma Micro-Dairy in Russell, KS

SAFETY RESOURCES

Integrating Safety into Agritourism

safeagritourism.org

- + Agritourism Safety helps to implement safety strategies to help maximize fun and minimize liability. Tools and resources that help agritourism businesses keep visitors safe with downloadable walkthroughs, checklists and other resources.

[nationalaglawcenter.org/
consortium/webinars/
agritourismrisk](http://nationalaglawcenter.org/consortium/webinars/agritourismrisk)

Zoonotic Diseases

[nationalaglawcenter.org/
consortium/webinars/
zoonotic-liability](http://nationalaglawcenter.org/consortium/webinars/zoonotic-liability)



The Lodge At Arrowhead in Cedar Vale, KS

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/GRANTS

Farmer Veteran Coalition of Kansas

[facebook.com/FarmerVeteran
CoalitionofKansas](https://facebook.com/FarmerVeteranCoalitionofKansas)

Kansas Tourism

travelks.com/industry/grants

- + Attraction Development Grants
- + Marketing Grants

travelks.com/industry/education

- + Educational Scholarships – Free Education Programs/Webinars

SAVE

thesavefarm.org

- + A pathway to farming for veterans and transitioning military members

LENDERS

Frontier Farm Credit

farmcredit.com/state/kansas

- + Supports rural communities and agriculture with reliable, consistent credit and financial services

Kansas Ag Bankers (a division of the Kansas Bankers Association)

ksbankers.com

785-232-3444

- + Represents the Agricultural banks of Kansas

United States Department of Agriculture USDA

[fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-
services/farm-loan-programs](http://fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs)

United States Department of Agriculture USDA

Rural Development

rd.usda.gov

OTHER AGRITOURISM RELATED

North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association –

Farmers Inspired

farmersinspired.com

901 N Pitt St, Suite 101
Alexandria, VA 22314

The MAIZE

themaize.com

888-798-0596

PO Box 367
Spanish Fork, UT 84660

Maize Quest

mazecatalog.com

1-866-935-6738 Ext 102

- + Corn Maze Designs & Agritourism Consulting

National Agricultural Law Center

[nationalaglawcenter.org/
research-by-topic/agritourism-2](http://nationalaglawcenter.org/research-by-topic/agritourism-2)

HAYRIDE SAFETY CHECKLIST

INSPECTION ITEM	PRESENT	NEEDS CORRECTION	DATE CORRECTED
Are all hayride routes regularly reviewed to ensure that none cross public roads or highways?			
Do the hayride routes avoid steep grades or other hazards?			
Does the wagon used for hayrides have sturdy steps and railings?			
Is the wagon inspected before each hayride to check for loose boards, sharp edges, and exposed screws or nails?			
Is the wagon (and tractor if pulled by a tractor) inspected for safe and efficient operation before each use?			
Are harnesses, hitches and safety chains inspected prior to each use?			
If a tractor is used for a hayride, does the tractor weigh more than the gross weight of the wagon?			
Is only one wagon pulled at a time?			
Are guests loaded onto the wagon only after the wagon is hitched to the horses or tractor?			
Does the driver prohibit children from riding up front with him?			
Is the driver a responsible adult, experienced in pulling wagons?			
Does the driver proceed slowly and carefully, prepared to stop at the request of the visitors at any time?			
Do employees ensure that children are accompanied by adults?			
Are the safety rules communicated to the guests once they are seated and ready for the ride?			
Do employees ensure visitors know to remain seated while the wagon is in motion?			

Review Date: _____

Reviewed By: _____

Resources that can be used to address these checklist items are available at safeagritourism.org/Resources. These resources include signs, policies, forms, logs and other items.

National Children's Center for Rural Agricultural Health Safety marshfieldclinic.org/nccrahs

Funding provided by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH award no. 5U540H009568-04)

SAMPLE WEDDING CONTRACT

Your
Logo
Here

Event Application

Doe's Farm
1234 Hill Road
Your City, Kan

Contact Information (Please print clearly)	Applicant Name	Applicant Name
Name		
Street Address		
City, State, Zip		
Preferred Contact Number		
Secondary Contact Number		
Primary Email Address		
Wedding Only-Parent Names		
Contact Number		

If mailing address for deposit refund is different than address written above, please provide alternative address

Event Detail

Rehearsal Date (booked only within 90 days of event date if available)	Event Date	Event Time/Guest Arrival Time	Expected Number of Guests

We have read and understand the pricing, facility and beverage service information. We release any photos of our event for future use by Doe's Farm.

Primary Applicant Printed Name

Signature

Date

Secondary Applicant Printed Name

Signature

Date

Doe's Farm is not responsible for any damage to personal or leased items brought to or left at the farm for your event. Please make arrangements to have all decorating and other event materials delivered and picked up on the day of the event. Additional charges may be incurred for Doe's Farm staff to accept deliveries or pick up of the event material.

Hold the date deposits are non-refundable. Balance due 15 days prior to event. Final invoice will include all applicable taxes and shall be due prior to event. Please note date and bride's name on checks and any correspondence/email.

An itemized bill will be sent for any funds withheld from deposit. Deposits are refunded within two weeks of event date.

Billing correspondence is done electronically.

KEEPING VISITORS SAFE AT YOUR AGRITOURISM BUSINESS

ARE FARM TOURS SAFE?

Farm tours give people of all ages an exciting opportunity to interact with animals face-to-face. This allows people to learn more about animals and agriculture, but it can also put people at risk for becoming ill from farm animals.

WHAT ARE ZOO NOTIC DISEASES?

Zoonotic diseases are infectious diseases that can be spread between animals and people. Some examples include:

- + *Campylobacter*
- + *Salmonella*
- + *E. coli O157:H7*
- + *Yersinia enterocolitica*
- + *Cryptosporidium*

The symptoms can include diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, vomiting, cramps, and bloody diarrhea. People with mild symptoms usually recover without treatment. However, these illnesses can lead to hospitalization.

IS IT COMMON TO FIND THESE TYPES OF GERMS ON A FARM?

Yes, some germs occur naturally in the intestines of healthy livestock and poultry and are passed in the animals' feces. Even if an animal appears healthy, it could still pass these germs to people.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET SICK FROM THESE GERMS?

People get sick from these germs by swallowing them. They may end up on your hands after contact with typical farm and petting zoo animals and their environments. Once the germs are on your hands, you can accidentally transfer them to your mouth while eating, drinking, or during other hand-to-mouth activities such as smoking or thumb sucking.

Young animals are especially likely to have these germs because they have not had a chance to become immune to them.

HOW CAN I REDUCE MY VISITORS' RISK OF GETTING SICK?

- + Position fully stocked handwashing stations with running water and soap where guests will use them after visiting animals. Stations should be accessible to children and persons with disabilities.
- + Hand sanitizer should supplement, not replace, soap and water, because it does not kill parasites like *Cryptosporidium*.
- + Do not allow visitors into pens. Only allow petting of animals over/through barriers.
- + Manure/soiled bedding should not be transported through public areas.
- + Remove from exhibit animals showing signs of illness such as diarrhea, skin lesions, or coughing.
- + Have transition areas between non-animal and animal areas. Signage should be at the entrances (i.e., no food or drink allowed in animal areas). Exit areas should have handwashing stations so that visitors cannot miss them.
- + Keep food, drinks, baby bottles, pacifiers, toys, and strollers out of animal areas.
- + Supervise children younger than 5 years old while with the animals and during handwashing. Young children are more likely to get sick because they are more likely to put their hands in their mouth.

TABLE 1. TYPES OF GERMS COMMONLY FOUND IN FARM ANIMALS

SPECIES	BACTERIA	PARASITE	FUNGUS	VIRUS
CATTLE	<i>Campylobacter</i> <i>Salmonella</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157:H7 <i>Leptospira</i> <i>Coxiella burnetii</i> (Q fever)	<i>Cryptosporidium</i>	Dermatophytosis (Ringworm)	
SHEEP	<i>Campylobacter</i> <i>Salmonella</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157:H7 <i>Coxiella burnetii</i> (Q fever)			
GOATS	<i>Campylobacter</i> <i>Salmonella</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157:H7 <i>Coxiella burnetii</i> (Q fever)			
LLAMAS	<i>Campylobacter</i> <i>Salmonella</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157:H7			
PIGS	<i>Campylobacter</i> <i>Salmonella</i> <i>Leptospira</i> <i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i>		Dermatophytosis (Ringworm)	Influenza
CHICKENS, DUCKS, TURKEYS	<i>Campylobacter</i> <i>Salmonella</i>		Dermatophytosis (Ringworm)	Influenza
RABBITS			Dermatophytosis (Ringworm)	

TABLE 2. COMMON SYMPTOMS IN ANIMALS AND HUMANS

GERM	SYMPTOMS IN ANIMALS	PRIMARY SYMPTOMS IN HUMANS
CAMPYLOBACTER	Diarrhea (cattle, sheep, and goats may have abortions)	Diarrhea, fever
SALMONELLA	Cattle may have fever, diarrhea, and abortion	Diarrhea, fever
<i>E. COLI</i> O157:H7	None	Bloody diarrhea, cramps
CRYPTOSPORIDIUM	Calves may have diarrhea and scours	Watery diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414

