

# AG Strategies

Agriculture Business Strategies

October 2005

Agdex 888-8

## ***Opportunities in Ag Tourism Ventures***

*The purpose of this factsheet series is to help producers and processors understand the key elements needed to manage a business. The factsheets also discuss some of the essential components used to develop a business plan and assess the profitability of a business venture.*

According to recent research, there is a growing demand by the travelling consumer for ag tourism experiences. For more information about the research, visit the *Alternative Agriculture Markets Study* is available at: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/afu9649](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/afu9649)

There are many types of ag-tourism opportunities a farm or ranch operation can diversify into. These include attractions, events and services. Careful consideration is required to determine the most appropriate venture for the farm, the area and the operator.

Before making a choice, a farmer or rancher must consider:

- the operation's physical resources
- marketing knowledge and resources
- management and labour
- financial resources
- the personal suitability of the operator and other family or farm members to a particular option

The farm operator also needs to consider why he/she wants to diversify into an ag tourism venture. Is it to:

- satisfy personal interest?
- increase income and, if so, by how much?
- increase awareness and accessibility of other products or services?
- provide an opportunity for other family members for on-farm work?

Following is a list of potential ag tourism ventures:

### **Accommodation**

- bed and bale
- bed and breakfast
- bunkhouse stay
- cabins
- campsites
- elder hostel
- farm houses
- guest ranch
- hay loft lodging
- hunting lodge
- inn
- RV hook-ups
- working ranch
- youth camp

## **Retail**

- antiques store
- country crafts
- farm direct store
- farmers' market
- flea market
- flower/herb store
- fruit stand
- honey house and pollen products
- tack store

## **Food and beverage**

- bakery
- chuck wagon dinners
- country restaurant
- cured/smoked meats
- food festivals
- fudge shop
- gourmet dining
- ice cream stand
- kettle corn
- picnics
- regional cuisine restaurant
- roasted sweet corn
- wineries

## **Entertainment**

- "adopt a pumpkin" and watch it grow
- "rent the farm"
- apple bobbing
- balloon rides
- bonfires
- breakfast with Santa
- cattle drive
- children's games
- concerts
- contests – e.g. pie baking, pumpkin carving
- corn, bale and hedge mazes
- costume contests
- cowboy poetry
- early morning u-pick club
- Easter egg hunts
- egg painting
- face painting
- farm museums
- goat and pig races
- haunted house/barn/hayride
- horse-drawn wagon rides
- horse-power farming

- kid's "farm" playground area
- peddle tractors
- petting zoo
- pick-your-own fruit and produce
- plant your own tree
- pony rides
- pumpkin patch
- rent a tree
- scavenger hunts
- sleigh rides
- square dancing
- stage shows
- story telling
- tractor rides
- train rides
- u-cut Christmas trees
- u-cut flowers
- u-dig root crops
- u-fish
- u-grow vegetables

## **Agriculture tours**

- bus tours
- crop tours
- farm/ranch tours
- greenhouse tours
- guided crop tours
- jeep tours
- orchard tours
- processing tours
- school tours
- self-guided driving tours
- sustainable ag tours
- technical tours
- wildflower tours
- wildlife and fish habitat tours

## **Classes, workshops and retreats**

- blacksmithing
- bread making
- cheese making
- cider making
- cooking
- cow/goat milking
- doll and toy making
- dried flowers arranging
- drying herbs
- fly fishing and tying clinics
- food preserving, canning and smoking

- gardening
- jam and jelly making
- lectures on herbs
- log home building
- lumberjack skills
- nature study
- photography
- pie making
- plant identification
- pruning
- pyrogy making
- quilting
- ranch skills
- rug making
- saddlery
- sausage making
- sketching and painting
- soap making
- wheat weaving
- whittling
- wine making

### **Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife-Related**

- archery
- baseball fields
- bird watching
- camping
- canoeing and kayaking
- cattle sorting
- cross-country skiing
- fishing
- guided nature walks
- habitat-improvement projects
- hang-gliding
- hiking
- horseback riding
- hunting
- ice fishing
- ice skating
- llama treks
- miniature golf
- mountain biking
- nature photography
- off-road ATV, snowmobile, motorcycling
- outfitting
- paint ball

- rappelling
- recording animal sounds
- rock climbing
- rock collecting
- sledding
- snowshoeing
- star gazing
- trail rides
- trap and skeet shooting
- tubing and rafting
- turkey shoots
- wilderness experiences
- wildlife viewing

### **Festivals and events**

- anniversary festivals
- antique shows
- barn dances
- blossom festival
- chilli cook-offs
- Christmas tree lighting
- classic car shows
- conventions and meeting facilities
- corporate picnics
- country music festivals
- craft fairs
- cultural and ethnic festivals
- cutting horse events
- family reunions
- fine art shows
- flea markets
- flower shows
- fruit festivals
- harvest festivals
- historical re-enactments
- horse shows
- produce festivals
- quilt exhibitions
- rodeos
- scarecrow festivals
- seasonal festivals
- theatrical productions
- weddings

## **Demonstrations**

- animal birthing
- animal feeding
- blacksmithing
- border collie sheep herding
- cattle roping and branding
- cooking demonstrations
- cow and goat milking
- flour milling
- grain threshing
- harvest techniques
- sheep shearing
- wool spinning
- vintage farming

## **For additional information**

For more information on choosing a specific venture consult the following Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development factsheets:

- *Decision Making: Will You Start a New Enterprise?* (Agdex 811-5)
- *Personal and Family Considerations: Where do You Want to Be?*( Agdex 1834-10)
- *Identifying Alternatives: What are the Possibilities?* (Agdex 811-2)
- *Marketing: Will it Sell?* (Agdex 848-5)
- *Production Requirements: Do You Have the Resources?* (Agdex 811-4)
- *Financial Feasibility: Can You Afford to Do It?* (Agdex 811-3)
- *Profitability: Will it Make Money?* (Agdex 811-6)

For more information on ag tourism development go to: [www.agtourism.ca](http://www.agtourism.ca) or contact a new venture specialist at the Ag-Info Centre at 1-866-882-7677.