Module 15

Agritourism Glossary

-A-

Ag Enhancement and Diversification Program (AEDP)

Grant and loans program for farms introducing a diversification to their current agricultural operation.

Agricultural Marketing Resource Center (AgMRC)

https://www.agmrc.org/

A national information resource for value-added agriculture.

Agricultural Products

Includes but is not limited to, crops (corn, wheat, hay, potatoes); fruit (apples, peaches, grapes, cherries, berries, etc.); cider; vegetables (sweet corn, pumpkins, tomatoes, etc.); floriculture; herbs; forestry; husbandry; livestock and livestock products (cattle, sheep, hogs, horses, poultry, ostriches, emus, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, milk, eggs, and fur, etc.); aquaculture products (fish, fish products, water plants and shellfish); horticultural specialties (nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, flowers and Christmas trees); maple sap, etc.

"Agricultural Tourism", "ag-tourism" and/or "agri-tourism"

The practice of visiting an agribusiness, horticultural, or agricultural operation, including, but not limited to, a farm, orchard, winery, greenhouse, hunting preserve, a companion animal or livestock show, for the purpose of recreation, education, or active involvement in the operation, other than as a contractor or employee of the operation.

Agricultural Zoning

An important part of the local zoning mix as it provides the community with balance by designating a portion of the land to farming and some of its related activities.

Agriculturally Related Products

Items sold at a farm market to attract customers and promote the sale of agricultural products. May include, but are not limited to, all agricultural and horticultural products, animal feed, baked goods, ice cream and ice cream based desserts and beverages, jams, honey, gift items, food stuffs, clothing and other items promoting the farm and agriculture in Michigan, and value-added agricultural products and on-site production.

Agriculturally Related Uses

Activities that predominantly use agricultural products, buildings or equipment, such as pony rides, corn mazes, pumpkin rolling, barn dances, sleigh/hay rides, and educational events, such as farming and food preserving classes, etc.

Agritourism

Defined by the State of Michigan as "the practice of visiting an agribusiness, horticultural, or agricultural operation, including, but not limited to, a farm, orchard, or winery or a companion animal or livestock show, for the purpose of recreation, education, or active involvement in the operation, other than as a contractor or employee of the operation."

Agritourism Operation

A separate business area of a farm centered around a specific area of agritourism such as a farm stay, u-pick fruits and vegetables, corn maze, farm market, and more. A farm can have multiple agritourism operations. For purposes of this toolkit, these operational areas are discussed as module topics.

American Disabilities Act (ADA)

www.ADA.gov

Compliance with the American Disabilities Act, a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. The ADA guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to enjoy employment opportunities, purchase goods and services, and participate in state and local government programs.

Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft 365 Copilot, and Mailchimp to help with brainstorming, writing, or content creation and design.

-B-

Business Plan

A formal document of your business goals, the reasons why you feel they are achievable, and your plan for reaching those goals.

-C-

Christmas Tree Farm

A farm that invites customers to pick or buy Christmas trees on their farm.

Churn Rate

The guest defection rate (churn rate) for agritourism businesses, currently at 15%.

Club Apple

A patented apple variety that can only be grown and marketed by a select group of licensed growers under a strict licensing agreement. Club apples are proprietary - meaning a central organization, or "club," controls production, marketing, and distribution to enforce quality and consistency. Club varieties include Honeycrisp, Pink Lady, Jazz, Envy, SweeTango, HoneyBee, and Cosmic Crisp.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

CSA is a farm business model where consumers sponsor the farm's growing season costs by purchasing a membership in the farm, and in return receive a share of the season's harvest. The farmer commits to supplying a sufficient quantity, quality and variety of products on a predetermined basis.

Conservation Easement

A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement that allows a landowner to limit the type or amount of development on their property while retaining private ownership of the land.

Corn Maze

A maze cut out in a cornfield that customers can navigate through.

Customer

The person on the receiving end of your operation's products and services. Also referred to as a guest, client, or visitor.

Customer Service

Customer service is defined as how an organization interacts with customers before, during and after a sale.

-D-

Demographics

The quantifiable statistics of a given population. Commonly examined demographics include gender, age, ethnicity, knowledge of languages, disabilities, mobility, home ownership, employment status and even location.

Demonstration Farm

A working farm that invites visitors on their property to see or experience the farm. Examples of demonstration farms include but are not limited to dairies, conservation farms, and cattle ranches.

Direct Marketing

Sales and marketing communication that feature direct interaction between a company and its customers without any distribution intermediaries.

Direct-to-Consumer Sales

Sales channels for farms to sell their goods and products directly to consumers. Examples are farm stands, farm markets, farmer's markets, community supported agriculture, and online.

Direct-to-Institutions Sales

Sales channels to K-12 schools, colleges or universities, hospitals, workplace cafeterias, prisons, foodbanks, large employers, etc.

Direct-to-Intermediate Markets Sales

Businesses or organizations in the middle of the supply chain marketing locally- and/or regionally branded products such as distributors, food hubs, brokers, auction houses, wholesale and terminal markets, and food processors.

-E-

Economic Impact Study

Research into the dollars generated by an industry and how these dollars impact the economy through direct spending and the indirect impact of additional job creation and the generation of income and tax revenue.

Equine Agritourism

Opportunities for visitors to come interact with horses on the farm. Types of equine agritourism can include trail riding, horseback riding lessons, dude ranches, horse camps, boarding facilities, and equine therapy farms.

-F-

Family Farm

Any farm in which the majority of the business is owned by an operator and any individuals related to them by blood, marriage, or adoption, including relatives who do not live in the operator's household. Currently, about 96 percent of all farms are classified as family farms. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 2025.

Farm

A farm is defined as any place from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 2025.

Farm Camp

An educational opportunity for kids to come experience a farm and engage in agriculture practices.

Farm Market

An on-farm location established in accordance with local ordinance and operated in compliance with Act No. 92, the Michigan Food Law, where an individual farmer may sell to the public fruits, vegetables or other agricultural products. On-farm markets may operate intermittently but for licensing purposes will be considered a permanent operation.

Farm Market/On-farm market/Roadside stand

The sale of agricultural products or value-added agricultural products, directly to the consumer from a site on a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation or agricultural land. An on-farm market gives customers the opportunity to purchase produce and/or products on the farm property. Common types of farm markets include farm stands (outdoor booth on the farm) and farm stores (enclosed store on the farm). A farm market is a year-round or seasonal location where transactions and marketing activities between farm market operators and customers take place.

Farm Product

Plants and animals useful to humans produced by agriculture and includes, but is not limited to forages and sod crops, grains and feed crops, field crops, dairy and dairy products, poultry and poultry products, Cervidae, livestock (including breeding and grazing), equine, fish and other aquacultural products, bees and bee products, berries, herbs, fruits, vegetables, flowers, seeds, grasses, nursery stock, trees and tree products, mushrooms and other similar products, or any other product which incorporates the use of food, feed, fiber, or fur as determined by the Michigan Commission of Agriculture & Rural Development.

Farm Service Agency

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/

A federal agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The FSA is responsible for implementing agricultural policy, administering credit and loan programs, and managing conservation, commodity, disaster, and farm marketing programs.

Farm Stay

A farm stay invites visitors to stay on a farm property.

Farm Tours

A farm that engages with visitors by giving them a tour of one or more areas of their farm.

Farm-to-Table Dinner

On-farm dining experience, often including a specialty chef, farm fresh food, and entertainment.

Farmers Market

A location established in accordance with local ordinance and operated in compliance with Act No. 92, the Michigan Food Law, where farmers may transport and sell to the public fruits, vegetables or other agricultural products. Farmers market vendors may operate intermittently but for licensing purposes will be considered a permanent operation.

Fishing (Fee and Lease)

Landowners opening up their pond/lake to visitors for fishing, often for a fee.

Floriculture Farm

A flower farm that invites visitors to come see or experience the flower crop in the field. Floriculture farms may host events and workshops, provide a flower u-pick, and offer photography opportunities.

Frontline Employees

Employees that directly interact with customers in your agritourism operation.

-G-

Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs)
https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/environment/rtf/gaamps

Guidelines developed and adopted by the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development because of the Michigan Right to Farm Act, P.A. 93, enacted in 1981. Farms who follow GAAMPs are afforded a certain level of protection if a nuisance complaint is filed against them.

Geocaching

An outdoor recreational activity in which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver, mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called “geocaches” or “caches,” anywhere in the world.

Global Agritourism Network (GAN)

A world-side network of agritourism professionals, scholars, and practitioners. https://agritourism.eurac.edu/gan/

-H-

Health and Wellness Operations

Agritourism activities that focus on holistic health and wellness such as yoga, sound bathing, cooking, hiking, medicinal herbs, and more.

Hunting Leases

Landowners inviting visitors on their land to hunt, usually for a fee.

-I-

Infrastructure

Public services and facilities provided by a government to support the population, including roads, schools, sewer and water systems, and services such as police and fire protection and waste management.

Insurance Claim

A request for payment for damages or loss sustained.

Input Costs

Expenses paid for growing a crop(s) such as seed, fertilizer, electricity, fuel, water, insurance, equipment, and labor.

Insurance Coverage

The dollar amount available from the insurance company to meet liabilities or cover damages as defined by the policy.

Insurance Covered Peril

Something that imperils or causes risk of injury or loss that is eligible for coverage.

Insurance Deductible

The amount specified in an insurance policy that the insured party must pay out of pocket. It relieves the insurer of responsibility for an initial specified loss.

Insurance Excluded Peril

Something that causes risk of injury or loss that is not eligible for coverage. Usually perils not specifically listed as covered are assumed to be excluded.

Insurance Exposure

The potential for damages or loss.

Insurance Policy
Written contract for insurance coverage.

Insurance Premium
The price paid to the insurance company for the policy.

-L-

Large-Sized Farms
USDA ERS classification for farms reporting at least $1 million in gross sales for 2023 and typically has 500 or more acres.

Liability Waiver
A document that visitors sign before entering the farm or engaging in an agritourism activity.

-M-

Market
All existing and potential customers for a product or service.

Marketing
Promotional and educational activities at the farm market incidental to farm products with the intention of selling more farm products. These activities include, but are not limited to, farm tours (walking or motorized), demonstrations, cooking and other classes utilizing farm products, and farm-to-table dinners.

Marketing Mix
The 4 P's of marketing: product, price, promotion and place (distribution).

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
https://www.michigan.gov/mdard
MDARD houses four bureaus and is comprised of eight divisions that use a customer-driven, solution-oriented approach to cultivate and expand new economic opportunities for the food and agricultural sector; safeguard the public's food supply; inspect and enforce sound animal health practices; control and eradicate plant pests and diseases threatening the $104.7 billion food and agriculture system; preserve the environment by which the farming community makes their living and feeds consumers; and protect consumers by enforcing laws relating to weights and measures.

Michigan Food Protection Task Force

A collaborative group of individuals from regulatory, industry, academia, and consumer groups with the overall goal of enhancing outreach, response, integration, and information sharing. In partnership with FDA, the state of Michigan hosts annual Food Safety Alliance Meetings which aim to foster communication, cooperation, and collaboration with industry and regulatory partners to provide a forum for all stakeholders to openly communicate about the food protection system, develop and share resources, identify potential vulnerabilities in our food supply, bolster our ability to respond more rapidly to foodborne outbreaks, and much more.

Michigan Food Safety Alliance (FSA)

A statewide network of food and agricultural stakeholders – Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), Michigan Food Protection Task Force, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Michigan State University (MSU) Extension – operate the Michigan Food Safey Alliance that meet to share information and discuss major issues related to improving and maintaining a safe food supply for Michigan citizens.

Michigan Right to Farm Act (RTFA)

https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/environment/rtf
https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-93-of-1981.pdf

The Michigan RFTA is recognized nationally as a model for resolving disputes that can arise when neighbors or local governments allege that practices on the farm constitute an actionable nuisance. Michigan Right to Farm Act, P.A. 93, was enacted in 1981 and provides a broad definition of a farm, its operations, and its products.

Mid-Sized Farms

USDA ERS classification for farms reporting $350,000 to $999,999 in gross sales for 2023, and typically has 51-499 acres.

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NAFDMA

https://www.nafdma.com/

International Agritourism Association organization focused on agritourism and agritainment. The non-profit trade association was founded in 1986 to support and advance the farm direct marketing and agritourism industries. Members include agritourism operators, entrepreneurial farm families, extension agents, researchers, suppliers, and government officials.

The National Agricultural Law Center (NALC)
https://nationalaglawcenter.org/

Located in Fayetteville, Arkansas, the National Agricultural Law Center serves the nation's vast agricultural community and is a key partner of the USDA National Agricultural Library.

National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS)
https://www.necasag.org/

The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety is dedicated to preventing illnesses, injuries and deaths among farmers and ranchers.

Non-Agriculturally Related Products

Items not connected to farming or the farm operation, such as novelty t-shirts or other clothing, crafts and knick-knacks imported from other states or countries, etc.

Non-Agriculturally Related Uses

Activities that are part of an agricultural tourism operation's total offerings but not tied to farming or the farm's buildings, equipment, fields, etc., such as amusement rides, concerts, etc. and are subject to special use permit.

Nonconforming Use

A use that violates zoning regulations but is allowed to continue because it began before the applicable zoning regulations were enacted.

Nonfamily Farms

USDA ERS classification for farms of any size in which a producer or persons related to the producer do not own a majority of the operation.

-P-

Pinterest

Pinterest is a visual discovery tool that you can use to find ideas for all your projects and interests.

Premises Liability, Michigan
Michigan Trespass Liability Act (MCL 554.583)

Michigan sorts visitors into categories to determine legal protection. Property owners have a responsibility to keep the property as safe as reasonably possible for those with a right to be on the property – for example, employees and customers.

Processed

A farm product or commodity that has been converted into a product for direct sales. Processing may include, but is not limited to, packing, washing, cleaning, grading, sorting, pitting, pressing, fermenting, distilling, packaging, cutting, cooling, 2 storage, canning, drying, freezing, or otherwise preparing the product for sale.

Pumpkin Patches

Farms that grow and sell pumpkins. On-farm pumpkin patches often sell their pumpkins as a u-pick and/or through an on-farm market.

-R-

Rezoning

A change to the official zoning map and/or zoning ordinance that changes the zoning district and accompanying density, use, or other regulations for a parcel or land area.

Roadside Stand

A temporary operation established in accordance with local ordinance and operated in compliance with Act No. 92, the Michigan Food Law, where an individual farmer may transport and sell to the public fruits, vegetables or other agricultural products.

-S-

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The process of improving the volume or quality of traffic to a website from search engines via unpaid/organic search traffic.

Seasonal

A recurrent period characterized by certain occurrences, festivities, or crops; harvest, when crops are ready; not all year round.

Seasonal Sign

A sign erected for a limited period during the year when retailing activities for a particular farm product are available to the public.

Shooting Preserve / Game Farming

The intensive, small pasture production of wild animals for the purpose of hunting, on agricultural land, for a fee, over an extended period within state and federal game laws.

Site plan

A set of documents and drawings that show the proposed physical layout of a development.

Small Farms

USDA ERS classification for farms reporting less than $350,000 in gross sales for 2023 and typically has 50 or less acres.

SNAP/EBT

https://www.fna.usda.gov/snap/ebt

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) / Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is a federal program that assists low-income individuals and families in buying food staples. Accepting SNAP benefits on-farm requires authorization by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and having a machine and software that can process EBT cards.

Social Media

Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques.

Special Use

Use allowed in a zoning district only by obtaining a special use permit and the permission of the local zoning authority.

Strategic Plan

A report that describes a company's mission statement, goals, objectives and strategic actions.

SWOT Analysis

A summary of a company's strengths and weaknesses, and the environmental opportunities and threats that will most influence it.

-T-

Target Market

The group of customers who will be the focus of a company's marketing efforts.

-U-

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) – Michigan District

https://www.sba.gov/district/michigan

Provides services to small businesses including funding programs, counseling, federal contracting certifications, and disaster recovery.

U-Pick

A fruit or vegetable-growing farm that provides customers a hands-on farm experience by inviting them to come pick products from the field to purchase and take home. Common types of products offered at u-pick farms include fruits, vegetables, pumpkins, flowers, and Christmas trees.

-V-

Value-Added Agricultural Product

The enhancement or improvement of the overall value of an agricultural commodity or of an animal or plant product to a higher value. The enhancement or improvement includes, but is not limited to, marketing, agricultural processing, transforming, packaging, and educational presentation, activities and tours that relate to agriculture or agricultural products.

Vineyards and Wineries

Farms and businesses engaged in growing grapes for wine and/or wine making. Many wineries provide on-farm entertainment including, but not limited to, wine-tastings, wine-trails, music, and on-farm dinners.

-W-

Web Analytics

The measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of internet data for purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage.

Winery

The retail and/or manufacturing premises of a small winemaker or winemaker licensee as defined by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission.

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