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Agrotourism: A Profitable Business Venture

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ABSTRACT

The term Agro tourism is a farm based business. Agro tourism is not only a farm visit to get knowledge but also includes information research sales activities. etc. Agro tourism is an innovative agricultural activity related to both tourism and agriculture. It has tremendous capacity to create additional income source and employment opportunities to farmer. Several countries have transformed their economies by developing their tourism potential. Today the concept of traditional tourism has been changed. Some new areas have emerged like Agro tourism. It direct and indirect benefits to the people or farmer.

INTRODUCTION

Agro tourism refers to any enterprise or business that links agriculture with products, services and experience in tourism. Agro tourism activities that brings visitors to farms. Agro tourism combines agricultural or rural settings with products of agricultural operation all within a tourism experience. Agro tourism means travel organized around farming, small-scale food production or animal husbandry. Visiting a working farm or ranch for the purpose of enjoyment and education are key parts of this often rural experience.

Objectives of agro tourism

- a) Entertainment of tourist.
- b) Health of tourist.
- c) Education in relation to agriculture and rural people.
- d) Farm based agro- eco tourism.
- e) Accommodation of rural people.
- f) Agro-heritage of traditional agriculture.
- g) Food production.
- h) Create agro – trade.
- i) Recreation of outdoor game.

Features of agro tourism

- The agro tourism activity takes place in the accessible locations.
- The architecture of a village is promoted by locally developed accommodation and food facilities.

- It should be more focus on cleanliness and hygiene in the area.
- It should be opened shopping centers of local and organic products.
- It should be on something to see, something to do and something to buy.
- Tours to production center like fruit gardens, goat, poultry and dairy farms, etc.
- It also visits to local places like gram panchayat, school, village river, old religious places, etc. Family and village games like *gilli – danda*, *kabbadi*, wrestling, high jump, long jump, etc.
- It should be arranged with evening entertainment like camp-fire, local and folk-dance songs.

Advantages of agro tourism centers

- Agriculture tourism allows people to stay close to nature
- It carried out different functions or operations, on the farm.
- It brings agriculture sector and service sector closer.
- Cultural transformation between rural and urban people.
- It including social and moral values.
- It satisfy the curiosity of the urban people regarding village and Agriculture.
- It creates employment opportunities to the farmers and youth.
- It provides additional income source for the farmers.
- The urban people can understand the rural life.
- It spreads knowledge about agricultural science among urban people.
- It oriented activities through rural games, festivals, food and dresses for recreation of family.
- It helps to reduce burden of the other traditional tourist centers.

TYPES OF AGROTOURISM

Agrotourism can be classified into following fundamental types

1. Direct-market agrotourism:

It is very common and popular agrotourism. Farmer or owner sells to the customers of various goods such as farm produce, organic and processed products or packed or canned food items direct to the customers either at fair, exhibition, market or on the farm itself. Road side produce station is one of the common examples of this.

2. Experience and education agrotourism :

This form of agro tourism includes hand picking of fruits from orchard, bed and breakfast facilities providing farm working to urban peoples or tourists. They also feel the value of purchasing organic farm products.

3. Event and recreation agro tourism:

It offers generally utilizing the farm land for various purposes like, *hurda- parti*, harvest festival like *Irjeek*, weddings that held on farm, mela, Jaggery preparation, bee keeping, sericulture, etc. It also different recreational activities such as archery, summer camp, horse riding, cart riding for attracting tourists buying organic items that are produced on farm.

Facilities for agrotourism**A. Food :-**

Eating is a compulsory activity of humans and farming is an activity oriented to food production hence there are two dimensions in the field of food agrotourism

B. Restoration :

Break fast, Home made meals

C. Trade :-

Creating trade partnerships with the tourism sector for farmers, artisans and agro -processors.

D. Culinary :

Culinary workshops, Food Festivals, Buying packaged local products, Farmer's market, Tour to food factory, Direct - On farm sales, Agricultural - Roadside stands, Sales - Agriculture related crafts/gifts

E. Outdoor recreation

Horse riding, Wildlife viewing, Wildlife photography, Fishing, Picnicking, Cross-country skilling

F. Entertainment

Agricultural fairs, Local festivals, Special events, Petting zoo, Dog training

CONCLUSION

Agro-tourism is a special form of rural tourism and it could be differentiated with ecotourism. The government should intensively and consistently facilitate the local community especially through capacity building programs related to agro-tourism development. Some corporate social responsibilities (CSRs) activities might become additional financial sources to accelerate and improve the community-based agro-tourism development, sustainably.

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