



**TRAVEL  
OREGON**

# **AGRITOURISM CUSTOMER SERVICE BASICS**

**FEBRUARY 2019**



**OREGON  
food trails**

# GUEST EXPERIENCE

- Make a positive impression.
- Be authentic.
- Be a good listener.
- Identify and anticipate needs.
- Guests should feel appreciated.
- Help guests understand your procedures.
- Appreciate differences.
- Know how to apologize.
- Give more than expected.
- Get regular feedback.
- Treat employees well.
- Need customer service training? Check out [ORLA's Guest Service Gold program.](#)







# FIRST IMPRESSIONS

**It's about preparation and presentation!**

- Make a positive impression from the first thing they see to the food and activities they enjoy.
- Remember that you have a role in the visitor's trip memories.
- Your relationship with your customer actually begins with their first introduction to your business, whether through marketing, an article, social media or your website.
- The impression develops as they contact you for reservations or more information.
- Control the message at every step.

# CURB APPEAL

What will they see when arriving at your farm, ranch or business?

Who might not want to stay at your farm or ranch stay, bed and breakfast or glamping location?

Take a fresh look at your surroundings and try to view them through the eyes of a visitor. You may have become jaded to what you see every day. Farms and ranches are busy places that are very hard to keep picked up and clean. If you have livestock, you know that challenge is even greater.

It would take more time and employees than most of us have to keep things ship-shape, but if you focus on keeping the areas directly around where visitors will stay or spend time neat and attractive, it will make a positive and lasting first impression.



# ADAPTING TO THE LAND

- Clear the path and clean up the logical backdrop for your obvious photo subjects.
- A little bit of clean-up and creating a great photo spot makes a big difference.
- The two characters on the right are very photogenic, but the pen and fences didn't allow for a good pic.
- Make sure your favorite "heeler" doesn't try to herd the guests. We all love our cow dogs, but a nip on the back of the leg usually spells trouble.



# ACCESSIBILITY

Can people with limited mobility experience what you have to offer? Are there adaptations you can make that will allow more people to enjoy the pleasures of country life?

Consider:

- Smoother walking surfaces in the lawn and barnyard
- Arranging furniture to accommodate wheelchairs
- Gates and doors that are wide and easy to open and close
- Ramps instead of, or in addition to, steps
- Level thresholds
- Grab bars in guest bathrooms
- Tables that accommodate people who are in wheelchairs
- Modified experiences or activities

For everyone's safety, look for and remove exposed nails, broken steps, protruding boards and wires hidden in the grass.



# CUSTOMER SERVICE 101

## GREAT HOSPITALITY STARTS WITH A GREAT ATTITUDE

- Smile! In person, a genuine smile says “You’re welcome here!” When talking on the phone, a smile on your face can be heard in your voice.
- Every encounter is an opportunity to enhance the visitor’s experience.
- Word-of-mouth referrals are the most effective marketing tool. Helping visitors have a quality experience makes it more likely they will recommend that others visit your business and Oregon.
- Arm yourself with knowledge – be the local expert visitors are seeking with insider recommendations.
- Keep conversations friendly and avoid the controversial when possible. Follow the guest’s lead in selecting topics.
- Go the extra mile for your tourism partners – they will do the same for you.



# HOW WILL THEY FIND YOU?

## ENTRYWAY AND ON-SITE SIGNAGE

- When guests are on your property, they will benefit from signs and symbols that direct them to points of interest, inform them of off-limits areas, highlight safety notices and guide them back to the guest facilities.
- Make sure your property is clearly marked with durable signage.
- Inform guests about where and where not to park.
- Keep it positive!
- When you have to post or state a warning, humor is fun – but make sure visitors know the risks are real.





# SUCCESSFUL SERVICE AT EVENTS

## CONSIDER THE BASICS:

- Be sure to connect with your local regulatory and government agencies to see if there are event restrictions or rules in your community.
- Consider a trial run or soft opening, depending on your event type.
- Make sure you have enough staff on hand who can talk about the history of the farm as well as provide a helping hand.
- Have well-positioned signage that directs visitors to the right location.
- Anticipate safety issues, and have precautions established.
- Follow up with participants to keep them engaged through communication – you want to be able to invite them back again!



THANK YOU