

Increasing Farm Viability Through Agritourism and On-Farm Direct Sales

An Oregon Producer Survey

As part of a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture-funded grant, a multi-state research and extension team conducted a [national survey](#) of farms that are open to visitors for product sales or experiences. The goal of the survey was to better understand the types of experiences and products offered, the economic viability of agritourism enterprises, and ways to support a healthy future for producers and their communities. The online survey was open from November 2019 to February 2020.

In Oregon, we collected 191 responses from farmers, ranchers and vineyard operators who offered agritourism experiences and product sales. Of these, 166 responses provided enough detail to constitute data used in this report. For socio-demographic information of respondents, please see the [full Oregon report](#).

Note: Since the survey was conducted in the winter of 2019–20, responses reflect the state of agritourism in Oregon before the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR OREGON:

- Today, in Oregon, just over 1% of the population lives on farms, and fewer than 20% of the population lives in rural areas. On-farm agritourism experiences help provide the remaining small farms with additional revenue streams, while also educating visitors from urban areas about the importance of farming.

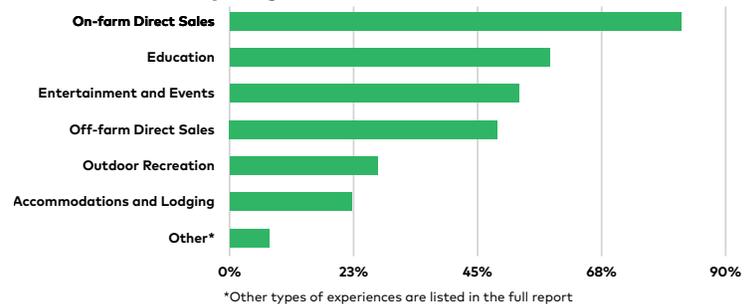
“It is more than just profits. It’s really important today, if you have the attitude to do it, to open your door to people who aren’t in farming and ranching, to help them see the truth about the good work farmers and ranchers do. It’s really important that the voice of the ranchers and farmers, the real people that do the work, be heard by most people who don’t.”

~ Oregon livestock producer

- Oregon agritourism operators reported 2,028,516 visits in 2018 with an average of 12,226 visits annually per farm, with 34% of visitors traveling from 50 miles away or further.

- 23% of farms and ranches reported a gross revenue of \$25,000–\$99,999 from agritourism sales and services.
- 43% of farms are open to visitors 261-365 days each year; 21% keep their farms open 101–250 days each year and 36% open seasonally for 100 days or fewer each year.
- Many farmers and ranchers in the study reported supplementing on- and off-farm product sales with experiences such as visits with the farmer or rancher, farm tours, refreshments, train rides, etc. In addition, many of the farmers and ranchers sold standalone services including education, outdoor recreation such as hiking or hunting on their property, and in some cases, lodging to provide a multi-day experience.

Types Of Agritourism Experiences Offered By Oregon Farmers And Ranchers



- 88% of operators ranked “building goodwill in community” as an important or very important motivator behind offering agritourism activities on their farms and ranches.
- When asked about the types of support that have helped to increase success with their agritourism operation, respondents ranked information around how to operate legally and navigate liability the highest, followed by social media marketing and management support and marketing plan development assistance.
- Respondents ranked regulations and permitting as “very challenging” when asked about barriers to achieve success.

