

## **A Research Study on Development of Agritourism Business in Gurugram District (Haryana)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Agriculture is the backbone of Haryana state and its economy is purely agrarian in nature. Because of bad climatic conditions, now-a-days farmers are incurring loss in agriculture and the main reason is failure in monsoon. Therefore, it is the need of the hour that how to support farmers by incorporating innovative ideas and technology which are to be implemented to support our farming sector. Green revolution contributed significantly and led to high results. The latest concept in our country on agriculture is agritourism i. e. tourism activities taking place in farms. So here, the tourist will get a first-hand experience about agricultural activities along with celebrating fairs and festivals relating to agricultural. Because of rapid urbanization, many of our children living in metro cities have a very little idea about agricultural practices and rural life experiences. Hence, agritourism can successfully bridge this gap. This research study explained the significance of agritourism for the betterment of economic development. Primary data were collected from leading agritourism farm owners in the district of Gurugram and chi-square methodology of data analysis was adopted. Therefore, this research paper identified the hindrance that came on the way of successful agritourism development and management. Thus, concluded that agritourism industry in India has a huge potential to contribute significantly towards the standard of living of farmers and at the same time it will also act as a growth engine for developing the economy of rural India successfully.

**Key words** : Agritourism, fairs, festivals, green revolution, urbanization

### **INTRODUCTION**

Haryana is known for its agrarian economy. Agritourism is one of the innovative concepts to the farmers not only for Haryana but also for all states of India. Agritourism supports farmers continuously to uplift their economical status and at the same time will enhance the farmer's standard of living. Agritourism is an innovative tourism business which is being performed in the cultivable land or any other place which is purely agriculture-based. Agritourism purely gives new experiences to the visitors and at the same time an extra income to the farmers or the farm owners. Tourists get a new experience due to change in atmosphere. Rural culture fairs and festivals add colours to the agritourism activities. Agritourism gives following assistance to the farmers and farm owners; gives extra monetary benefits, direct selling of agricultural products to the tourists and to show agricultural work and local culture to the tourists. In agritourism rural cuisine, comfortable rural accommodation and rural games are very much

essential to satisfy the needs of tourists. Various processes of cultivation like pure agriculture, fishing, sericulture, floriculture, bee-harvesting and some other areas like birds growing can be incorporated and will add charm to the site seeing for tourists. Cattle growing and dairy products making can also be added to the trip. Organizing variety of local, traditional and cultural shows will definitely attract more tourists to an agritourism destination. Tourists must get a real time experience while involving themselves in the day-to-day village life. Tourists will get a breath of fresh air, spectacular natural surrounding and various other avenues in the destination. The agritourists can directly meet local artisans, carpenters and blacksmith, etc. and can purchase locally made handicrafts which may enrich their destination experiences. Agritourism sites can be planned along with local famous historical monuments where different fairs and festivals showcasing the local culture can easily be shown to the tourists. This will add more colour to the agritourism centers. Some of the farmers in

agritourism centers develop their unique agri-products along with handicrafts to attract tourists. Community participation cannot be neglected in agritourism.

Haryana is the first state in India which has developed agritourism policy for farmers and farm owners which helped farmers and farm owners to generate extra revenue. Haryana has successfully developed its hinterlands into tourist hotspots. The Haryana state has more potential in having large variety of forests, farm lands, hill stations and reservoirs to fulfil the needs of agritourism. Varieties of crops are being cultivated in the state of Haryana. Haryana is the rich reservoir of its traditional cultures, values, ethics and ethos. Because of different religions several fairs and festivals are being celebrated which are linked with agriculture like Lohri, Baisakhi, Teej, Basant Panchami, Diwali, Makar Sankranti and Holi, etc. The data for this research study were obtained from agritourism centers owners, farmers in Gurugram district of the state Haryana, state government office bulletins, e-newsletters, research thesis, books and magazines.

Agritourism is considered as the fastest growing industries in the tourism sector. It is a growing division of the tourism industry that has been driven by the restructuring of the agricultural industry.

The benefits of agritourism projects in Nagpur district were highlighted by Shembekar and Joshi (2016). Agritourism is beneficial to both farmers as well as tourists (Chase *et al.*, 2018). Agritourism represents an important factor for rural development offering great opportunities for sustaining income and social security (Chaini and Kumar, 2021). In her article, Upadhyaya (2015) discussed about the various products which could be offered in agrotourism. Agritourism is the latest concept in Indian tourism sector, which mainly occurs in farms (Chatterjee and Durga Prasad, 2019). The social development and economic benefits of agritourism were reviewed by Dangi (2018) and Ammirato *et al.* (2020).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Gurugram district in the state of Haryana was selected for the field survey and direct conversations with farmers, farmhouse owners and other top Government officials to

add for the study purpose. The Stratified Random Sampling method was used. Entire sample size for the study was divided into three parts.

Respondents having age more than 18 years were selected for the purpose of conducting survey. In addition persons executing agritourism were selected for the study.

Numbers of samples included in this study were : Five agritourism farms, 40 agritourism farm executives and managers and 205 tourists who visited agritourism circuits in Gurugram.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The economic impact and development of agritourism in Gurugram was studied with the help of Chi square test and SWOT Analysis. The Chi square tests revealed that the two groups : financially less successful and financially successful did not differ significantly in any of the months of operation except for the month of June. In the month of June, financially successful agritourism operations were significantly more (Table 1). Almost all the successful agritourism farms were financially sound and their operations used mostly word of mouth as a marketing tool. They used the following marketing promotions : 28% word of mouth, 9% sign boards, 20% newspapers, 8% publications, 4% brochures and 2% agricultural related publications. Trade showed 27% direct mail marketing and 2% was the least used marketing tool (Table 2). Approximately 70% of the financially successful agritourism business operations declared to form partnerships with other business entity to promote their agritourism products and services. The other half (30%) did not take advantage of working with other businesses (Table 3). Major strength, weakness, opportunities and threat can be concluded as given in Table 4.

The agritourism business is booming in our country. The research study pertains to the district of Gurugram in Haryana where the agritourism has a huge potential and lot of opportunities exist towards growth and development of farmers or farm owner's standard of living. Each and every agritourism circuits located in the Gurugram district had a unique feature in itself and each farm was special in nature and entirely differed from

**Table 1.** Development of agritourism in Gurugram district

S. No.	Month	Per cent of tourists	Financially less successful	Financially successful	Chi sq.	Sign
1.	January	6	28.3	29.6	0.0008	0.88
2.	February	7	29.7	32.34	0.155	0.69
3.	March	5	32.9	33.3	0.004	0.97
4.	April	8	41.2	46.8	0.28	0.725
5.	May	18	47.3	68.7	3.08	0.029
6.	June	17	58.8	85.5	6.27	0.019
7.	July	17	85.4	91.7	0.64	0.42
8.	August	16	82.9	88.6	0.49	0.64
9.	September	8	80.8	84.5	0.68	0.63
10.	October	6	74.4	87.5	1.82	0.17
11.	November	5	53.7	62.5	0.58	0.54
12.	December	7	46.4	54.2	0.45	0.62

**Table 2.** Marketing promotion towards agritourism

S. No.	Marketing programme level of participation	Financially successful
1.	Word of mouth	28
2.	Signs	09
3.	Newspaper advertising	20
4.	Tourism-related publications	08
5.	Brochure	04
6.	Agriculture-related publications	02
7.	Trade show	27
8.	Direct mail	2

**Table 3.** Financially successful by working with other business

S. No.	Work with other businesses	Financially successful
1.	Yes	70
2.	No	30

**Table 4.** SWOT analysis of agritourism in Gurugram

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Weakness</b>
Growth of agricultural production increases.	Illiteracy rate of farmers is a major hindrance for development.
Agribased industry becomes more popular.	Poverty in villages is a major challenge.
Agriproducts get global recognition.	Food industry does not support farmers.
Development of infrastructure and other facilities.	Poor farmers are unable to implement more facilities to the tourist people.
Promotion of handicrafts, heritage and culture in the region.	Urgent need of development of facilities in the villages.
	Sometimes inadequate information to the farmers.
	Sudden natural calamities
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Haryana is famous for its agricultural products.	Higher competition from the domestic local markets.
Haryana agriproducts can be exported to international markets.	Steady shifting of people from rural areas to urban.
Growth and development of agritourism lead to more employment and higher standard of living.	Mostly inconsistent agricultural policies.
Using of organic products and development of infrastructure will improve conditions of the local destination.	At times it may create unemployment leading to poverty.

other agritourism circuits, which attracted the tourists. The agritourism operation in agritourism circuits promoted local cuisine, heritage and culture of Haryana. An excellent infrastructure facility is the need of the hour which will lead to success of the farms, whereas many farmers and farm house owners unable to meet the current requirement. Awareness about agritourism must be initiated at the ground level among the farmers and farm house owners. Basic amenities like a hygienic room, dining hall, clean environment, transportation, clean water and electricity facilities to sustain agritourism activities must be provided at the initial level to arouse confidence among farmers and farm house owners. Soft skill training programme is necessity and vital for farmers and farm house

owners for management and communicating with tourists. They must be trained in managing small business entrepreneurs effectively. Various Non-Governmental Organizations must come forward voluntarily for financing such emerging agritourism circuits to make it more feasible and financially viable. Various banks must lend their hand towards supporting the newer projects in terms fund or loan sanctioned to farmers and farm house owners. Every state Government must act proactively for advertising these agritourism circuits by embedding with tourists places of interest. Agriculture farm products counters should be established in every agritourism destinations to sale their unique agriproducts along with local handicrafts. By developing such agritourism circuits our national economy will boost up along with development of local economy in a greater pace.

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