

2016-2017 Agritourism Workshops: Post-Workshop Evaluation



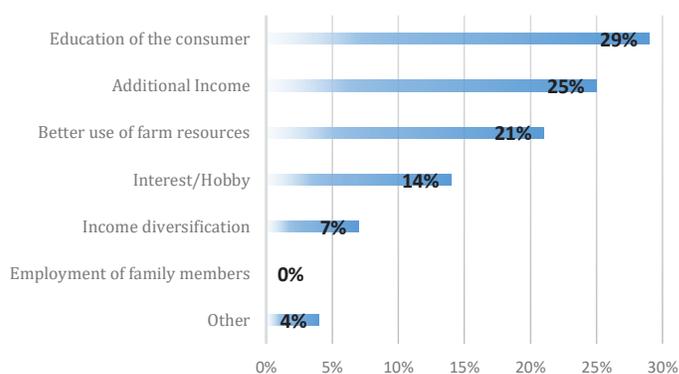
In November 2016 and March 2017, the LSU AgCenter offered two agritourism workshops series titled “Managing Financial and Legal Liabilities” and “Safety and Emergency Management,” respectively. These educational workshops were part of the , Enhancing Louisiana Agritourism: Managing Financial and Legal Liabilities grant, funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Southern Risk Management Education Center (SRMEC).

A post-workshop evaluation was conducted in October 2017, 11 months after the November workshops and six months after the March workshops. A Qualtrics survey was used to implement the evaluation, and we followed Dillman’s approach. We sent an email informing participants of the upcoming evaluation, which was followed by the survey. A postcard reminder of the evaluation was sent after a week and a half, which was followed by the second round of the survey. In what follows we present information collected through the evaluation, 15 responses total. The survey was distributed to all workshop participants. The response rate was low, but that was expected. Our first round of workshops was not well attended because of inclement weather and agritourism operators having to cope with the aftermath of the flooding Louisiana faced in summer 2016. Our second round of workshops attracted many county agents, international students and faculty, who constituted 50 percent of our workshop attendees. A copy of the evaluation is included at the end of this document.

The post-workshop evaluation participants were asked to identify themselves. Five participants identified as “a farmer already conducting agritourism,” and four indicated they were “farmers interested in starting an agritourism operation.” Three of the participants identified as “industry partners including tourism, insurance, and banking.” Two participants identified as land owners, and one identified as a student interested in agritourism. Eight participants indicated they are engaged in agritourism and agritourism activities — four for less than two years, one between three to five years and three for more than 10 years. Ninety-two percent of the participants were white, and 39 percent were male. Eighty-one percent of the participants were over 45 years old.

Evaluation participants indicated the main reason they were interested in agritourism and/or having an agritourism operation was to educate the consumer. The second most popular reason was that participants saw agritourism as a mean to generate additional income. The third most popular reason was that agritourism may be a way to better use farm/ranch resources. Participants were less likely to have an interest in agritourism as a hobby, and our participants did not consider agritourism as a means to employ family members on the farm.

Figure 1. Reasons you are interested in agritourism



Participants were asked to indicate which workshops they attended.

Workshop	Number of Participants	Percentage
Financial and Legal Liabilities—Crowley, November 8, 2016	6	32%
Financial and Legal Liabilities—Bossier City, November 10, 2016	3	16%
Safety and Emergency Management—Homer, March 7, 2017	2	10%
Safety and Emergency Management—Albany, March 9, 2017	7	42%

The remainder of this report provides information regarding the topics we emphasized in the workshops. The results are presented by topic.

Managing Financial and Legal Liabilities workshops

Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with eight statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Eight participants responded this question. All individuals engaged in agritourism activities and all attended the workshops. Table 2 presents the information from participants regarding a set of statements and respective answers.

Statements	Number of adults selecting Agree & Strongly Agree	Percentage of people
Business structures, i.e.,: sole proprietorship, general partnership, registered limited liability partnerships, limited liability corporations provide a layer of protection to the agritourism operator.	6	75%
There is no such thing as 100 percent liability protection for agritourism.	8	100%
The Louisiana Agritourism Limited Liability Law, while protecting you from inherent risks involved in agritourism, does not eliminate the need for liability insurance.	8	100%
The Louisiana Agritourism Limited Liability Law provides certification for agritourism operators who successfully complete a "plan of operation," place signs in recommended locations and add the "warning language" to contracts.	7	87.5%
Following best management practices outlined in the "Agritourism Best Management Practices & Plan of Operation" publication by the LSU AgCenter can reduce negligence on the part of the agritourism operator.	8	100%
Monitoring financial position and recording the business financial trends decreases financial risk.	5	62.5%
Maintaining a good set of financial records, i.e., balance sheet, statement of owner's equity, income statement and cash flow statement, is important to identify financial risks.	7	87.5%

Respondents were asked if they have used any recommendations, material and resources introduced at the workshop. Potential answers included "Yes," "No, not yet, but I plan to soon," and "No, and I do not expect to." Table 3 presents the respective information.

Statements:	Yes	No, not yet but I plan to soon	No, and I do not expect to
Have you contacted your attorney?	1 (16.67%)	1 (16.67%)	4 (66.67%)
Have you contacted you insurance agent?	2 (28.57%)	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.86%)
Have you reviewed your liability insurance policy?	4 (57.14%)	1 (14.29%)	2 (28.57%)
Have you conducted a liability audit/risk assessment?	1 (12.50%)	3 (37.50%)	4 (50.00%)
Have you reviewed your financial records?	3 (50.00%)	2 (33.33%)	1 (16.67%)
Have you written a plan of operation for certification?	2 (25.00%)	2 (25.00%)	4 (50.00%)
Have you updated your plan of operation?	1 (12.50%)	3 (37.50%)	4 (50.00%)
Have you visited the LSU AgCenter Agritourism website?	5 (62.50%)	1 (12.50%)	2 (25.00%)

Safety and Emergency Management workshops

Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with six statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Nine participants responded this question — all individuals engaged in agritourism activities who attended the workshops. Table 4 presents the information from participants regarding a set of statements and respective answers.

Statements:	Number of adults selecting Agree & Strongly Agree	Percentage of people
I have a better understanding of safety management.	7	77.7%
I have a better understanding of how to prepare for and respond to an emergency on the farm.	7	77.7%
There is no such thing as 100 percent liability protection for agritourism.	7	77.7%
I am better prepared to address safety issues on my agritourism operation.	6	66.6%
A scheduled walk-through of my operation before guests arrive is a good preventive measure to ensure my guest's safety.	6	66.6%
My employees and visitors are safer.	5	55.5%

Respondents were asked if they have used any recommendations, material and resources introduced at the workshop. Potential answers included "Yes," "No, not yet, but I plan to soon," and "No, and I do not expect to." Table 5 presents the respective information.

Statements:	Yes	No, not yet but I plan to soon	No, and I do not expect to
Have you reviewed the safety information shared in the workshop that is pertinent to your farm (walk-throughs)?	4 (44.44%)	2 (22.22%)	3 (33.33%)
Have you revised and/or updated your farm safety/emergency management procedures?	3 (33.33%)	3 (33.33%)	3 (33.33%)
Have you discussed your liability/insurance coverage with your agent?	4 (44.44%)	2 (22.22%)	3 (33.33%)
Do you have a plan for medical and/or disaster emergencies?	4 (44.44%)	1 (11.11%)	4 (44.44%)
Have you used the safety checklists?	3 (33.33%)	3 (33.33%)	3 (33.33%)
Have you used the safety signs or other resources?	4 (44.44%)	2 (22.22%)	3 (33.33%)
Have you written a plan of operation for certification?	3 (33.33%)	1 (11.11%)	5 (55.56%)
Have you updated your plan of operation?	4 (44.44%)	2 (22.22%)	3 (33.33%)
Are you considering using social media to advertise your operation, or if you were already using it, have you increased your usage?	4 (44.44%)	1 (11.11%)	4 (44.44%)
Have you visited the LSU AgCenter Agritourism website?	5 (55.56%)	2 (22.22%)	2 (22.22%)

Additional information

Managing Financial and Legal Liabilities workshops

- Participants were asked to denote whether they have implemented any changes in their operations after attending the "Managing Financial and Legal Liabilities" workshops. Responses included:
 - * "Yes."
 - * "No."
 - * "I was able to find a commercial liability policy."
 - * "We have not started the operation."
 - * "Not yet."
 - * "No, but I now know the risks I am taking. To fully implement all of the excellent ideas presented and to buy additional liability insurance would exceed the revenue generated. I have a simple operation and pay close attention to parking cars, helping people on and off buses and generally limit their access to dangerous situations. I post the revised statute signs and accept the risk."

- Participants were asked whether they have shared information with others and, if yes, to indicate the number of people. Some indicated yes, and, from those who provided a number, 24 more people were notified or gained access to our workshop materials and resources.

Safety and Emergency Management workshops

- Participants were asked to denote whether they have implemented any changes in their operations after attending the “Safety and Emergency Management” workshops.

Responses included:

- * “Yes”
- * “No”
- * “Yes, advanced preparation.”
- * “More attention to detail.”
- Participants were asked whether they have shared information with others and, if yes, to indicate the number of people. Some indicated yes, and, from those who provided a number, 15 more people were notified of or gained access to our workshop materials and resources.

Certification for agritourism operations

The survey asked participants to denote whether there are certified agritourism operators according to the 2008 Agritourism Limited Liability Law (La. R.S. 9:2795.5). Fourteen out of the 15 participants answered this question. Four (29 percent) answered “Yes” and 10 (71 percent) answered “No.”

Advertising methods for their operation

The next question provided a list of resources commonly used to advertise agritourism operations. Participants were asked to select the resources they would use, and we intentionally provided more items for online marketing (e.g., Facebook) than traditional marketing options (e.g., newspaper). Table 6 shows the results:

Method	Number of adults	Percentage
Facebook	7	30.43%
Twitter	1	4.35%
Blog	0	0%
Website	5	21.74%
Instagram	0	0%
Pinterest	0	0%
Newspaper	1	4.35%
Radio	0	0%
TV	1	4.35%
Word of mouth	8	34.78%

Summary

Two agritourism workshop series, titled Managing Financial and Legal Liabilities and Safety and Emergency Management, were held in November 2016 and in March 2017, respectively. The workshops were funded through NIFA and SRMEC. Fifteen people participated in the post-workshop evaluation survey. This is a significant number considering the attendee profile — more than 50 percent were county agents and students — our workshops attracted.

Acknowledgments

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- The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Southern Risk Management Education Center for funding these workshops.
- Our grant collaborators: Annie's Project, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, National Agricultural Law Center and the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety.
- Our November workshop speakers: Rusty Rumley with the National Agricultural Law Center, Rene Simon with Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and Randall Whitehead with Louisiana Farm Bureau Insurance Companies.
- Our March workshop speakers: Marsha Salzweidel with the Marshfield Clinic and the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety and Tanya Ruffin with the LSU AgCenter.
- Our local agritourism speakers: Kevin M. Berken, Mary Nesbitt and Candy Wilkins for sharing their experience in agritourism.
- Our hosts for the November 2016 workshops: LSU AgCenter H. Rouse Caffey Rice Research Station and the LSU AgCenter Red River Research Station.
- Our hosts for the March 2017 workshops: Hill Farm Research Station and Mrs. Heather's Farms.
- First South Farm Credit and Louisiana Land Bank for providing refreshments for our workshops.
- Our hosts for the steering committee meetings and the steering committee members for their input and for promoting these workshops.
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Partners

Special thanks to the partner agencies providing support for these events:



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