



FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

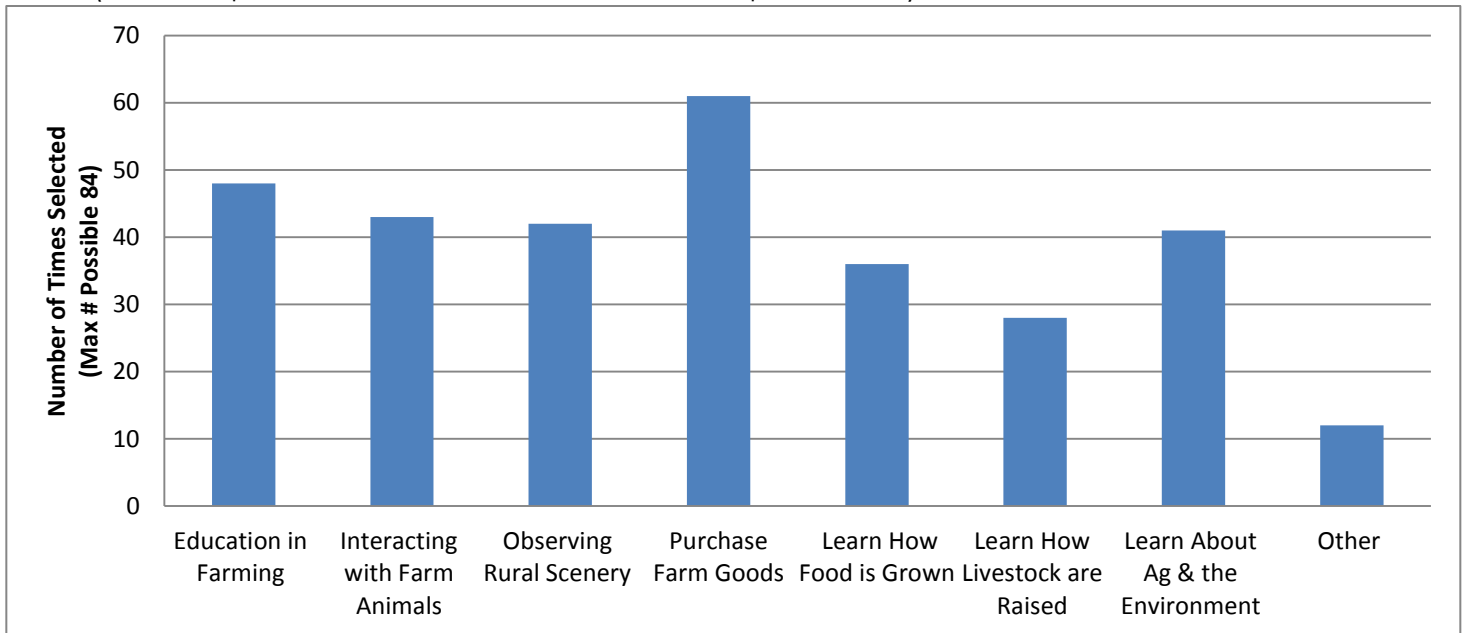
THE VOICE OF AGRICULTURE

Agritourism and the Florida Consumer

Florida is a unique state when it comes to agritourism due to the variety of natural resources and commodities. There is opportunity for agritourism growth within Florida, as it combines both of the state's leading industries, tourism and agriculture. Agritourism can encompass countless activities ranging from outdoor recreation, like hunting and fishing, to educational experiences, like farm tours and skill building classes, to on-farm sales, such as produce stands and U-Pick operations. Agritourism can even include special events like fall harvest festivals or barn dances. Agritourism is essentially a way for consumers to experience an area's local agriculture and all it has to offer. The following data was collected by surveying randomly selected non-agricultural, associate members (or consumers) of Florida Farm Bureau about their Agritourism experiences.

What Do Consumers Want From Their Visit?

When respondents were asked what they would hope to gain from visiting an agritourism location and what factors would ensure a satisfying visit, the top five words used were Education, Farming, Food, Learn and Experience. The general consensus of most respondents is that agritourism should be an educational and engaging agricultural experience where they learn about farming. Consumers want to learn how food is grown, and have the opportunity to experience life on a farm, as well as have the opportunity to purchase farm fresh goods. The chart below summarizes topics consumers are interested in. (Note: Respondents were allowed to select multiple choices)



Agriculture and Agritourism Knowledge

- 90% of respondents believe agriculture is a large industry in Florida.
- 60% of respondents are familiar with the term agritourism.
- 62% of respondents reported visiting an agritourism operation before; with the majority (64%) reporting they are very likely to visit agritourism locations again. For respondents that have not visited agritourism locations before, the major reasons given were that they were unaware of agritourism or of any locations to visit (59%) or

that they were simply not interested in visiting (25%). Other reasons included too far/inconvenient locations or high travel and entry costs to the agritourism location. The majority only reported being somewhat likely to visit in the future (46%).

Trends When Visiting Agritourism Locations

- 30 minutes to an hour is the average distance most respondents are willing to travel to an agritourism location both locally and on vacation.
- 1-2 hours is the expected visit length at an agritourism location both when visiting locally and on vacation.
- \$6-\$10 per person admission is the maximum cost most consumers are willing to pay.
- 31% of respondents reported being more likely to visit an agritourism location that was nearby other typical Florida vacation spots (e.g. Disney, NASA, Busch Gardens) 52% reported they may visit, 17% reported being not likely to visit.
- When asked if they would be willing to use farm based lodging, 35% reported they would stay, 48% reported they may stay, and 17% reported they would not stay. This indicates there is a potential market for operators interested in expanding their agritourism operation to encompass hospitality services.

Factors Influencing Agritourism Visitation

Respondents were provided with a list of items and asked to indicate if each item was a factor they considered when deciding to visit a location and to rank it based on importance. The following were determined to be the five most important factors to consumers when visiting an agritourism location: **Clean Restrooms, the Ability to Purchase Farm Fresh Produce, the Ability to Use Credit or Debit Cards to Make Purchases, a Convenient Location, and Food Available Onsite.**

- 86% of respondents indicated that they would be more likely to visit a location that offered special and/or seasonal events (e.g. farm picnic days, a haunted barn during fall, Christmas light display during winter, etc.)
- 75% of respondents feel that it is important agritourism locations have special play/learning opportunities for children.
- When asked if they would consider utilizing an agritourism location for a special occasion such as a wedding, party or a meeting, 24% reported being very likely, 20% reported being likely, 31% reported being somewhat likely, and 23% reported not very likely.
- **96% of respondents expect to purchase agricultural goods if they are available.** It is highly recommended for operators to offer farm fresh products for sale at their operation.

Social Media and Online Influence of Visitation

- The preferred online resources were ranked by consumer as: 1-the Operation's Website, 2-Travel Website Listing, 3- Social Media (e.g. business pages or ads)
- 87% of respondents listed Facebook as their preferred social media platform.
- Respondents were asked to rank the different media based on how likely they would be to visit an operation on it alone, the results are summarized in the pie chart to the right. Clearly, word of mouth is the most useful tool for recruiting new customers.

Likelihood to Visit an Agritourism Location Based on Different Media Sources

