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Popular Article

## Spatial And Temporal Dimension of Agro Tourism In Post Independent India

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### Introduction

Agriculture is the primary sector that supports the Indian economy. Agriculture provides a livelihood for approximately 85 percent of the population in India, either directly or indirectly, and accounts for nearly 26 percent of the country's gross domestic product. More than 350 million tonnes of food grains are produced by 110 million farmers who live in 0.625 million villages across the country. These farmers feed the nation. Agriculture in India is considered a cultural tradition rather than a job or a business. The addition of new activities that generate income to those that already exist in agriculture would, as a result, almost certainly result in an increase in the contribution of agriculture to the national GDP. A number of significant efforts are being put in this direction, and one of the activities that is being considered is agritourism. Agro tourism has spawned an offshoot known as agritourism, which has enormous potential in India because of the country's vast agricultural landscape. Agritourism is one viable option for developing nations like India and other Asian economies that rely heavily on agriculture as their primary source of income. This is because agriculture is the primary occupation of the majority of the population in these nations. Agritourism is just one of the ways that these nations can diversify their sources of revenue.

A visit to a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness operations for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active participation in the activities of the farm or operation is an example of agricultural tourism. Agricultural tourism is a concept borrowed from the concept of "holidays." Agritourism, in its broadest sense, refers to the practise of luring tourists and vacationers



to a location or locations that are primarily utilised for agricultural purposes. Agritourism, on the other hand, is typically conducted on a modest scale, has a limited impact, and places an emphasis on education. The majority of Maharashtra's farms are run by their landowners, which means that there are virtually infinite opportunities for individuality and customization. There are numerous agritourism activities that can be carried out successfully with only a modest number of farm workers. For instance, farm tours, bed and breakfasts, tractor or bullock cart rides, grapes, mangoes, and other horticulture farms, by product farms, birds and animal zoos, and a great deal of other activities can be run with very little additional investment in labour.

People often refer to tourism as a tool for alleviating poverty, increasing employment opportunities, and fostering long-term human development. In 2017, the tourism industry was directly responsible for the creation of 21.5 million jobs. In addition to fostering national integration and international understanding, tourism also provides financial support for regional arts and crafts as well as cultural pursuits. 11.23 million people travelled to India from other countries in the year 2017, according to official statistics. Even though India holds only 1.75 percent of the global tour market, the country brings in Rs 32,000 crores thanks to its participation in this market. There are 120 million visits made by tourists from within their own country. In order to foster domestic tourism, the Government of India has prioritised the development of infrastructure, product development and diversification, the creation of eco-adventure sports, cultural presentations in expensive accommodations, the streamlining of facilitation procedures at airports, the development of human resources, the promotion of public awareness and participation, and the felicitation of private sector participation.

### **Need and Importance of Agri tourism**

It is believed that participating in agrotourism is the best way to learn about the traditional agricultural farming activities, which not only brings us much closer to mother nature but is also an extremely important component of living a life that is compatible with the environment on this planet. The cities of India are currently struggling with the problem of overcrowding as well as environment pollution. It is now commonly accepted wisdom that a break from the frenetic pace of life in urban areas can be had through the practise of agrotourism. Because of this, agrotourism, ecotourism, and rural tourism are quickly becoming some of the most important subsectors of the tourism industry in India. The vast majority of studies have conclusively demonstrated that agrotourism is of critical significance and is essential on the grounds that: One form of tourism that does not negatively impact



the environment is known as agrotourism. The farmers now have access to an additional source of income as a result of this. The rural way of life is elevated as a result, and new employment opportunities are made available at the community level. Those who live in cities can take advantage of this to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Those who live in the area benefit from an improved quality of life as a result. The village atmosphere, local cuisine, culture, and art are all things that can be experienced by tourists thanks to this. Rather than acting as a passive spectator, it anticipates that the tourist will actively participate in the activity, which helps to strengthen the connection between the guest and the host. It is environmentally friendly, which is very important in the current environmental scenario. It acquaints tourists with rural life and the roots of early civilization. In the current climate of the tourism industry in India, it possesses a significant amount of potential for growth. It is a less expensive gateway of tourism, and the cost of accommodation, food, travel, and recreation is very less in Agro-Tourism when compared to any other type of tourism.

It broadens the tourist base by increasing the scope of tourism due to the fact that it is cost effective. In the current global scenario, there is a significant appetite for it. It provides all opportunities to people of all ages, including children, young people, middle-aged people, and older people, and it does so at a cost that is more affordable for the entire family. · It acquaints visitors with rural games, traditional clothing, festivals, and cuisine. It brings tourists closer to nature and offers them a variety of entertainment options to enjoy while they are there. It is a source of knowledge that can provide information about plants, animals, raw materials such as handicrafts and woods, the rural lifestyle, and the languages, culture, and tradition of the people who live there. This subset of the population may be able to have their inquisitiveness sated by participating in agrotourism, which typically centres on farming communities, rural settings, and agricultural pursuits. It is a way for tourists to consider agrotourism as a means of searching for peace and tranquilly in their vacations. · It brings tourists very close to nature, and the fields, birds, animals, mountains, and bodies of water, as well as the villages, provide a completely different atmosphere to the urban population, allowing them to forget about the busy and hectic life they lead in the city. Guests are given the opportunity to travel to rural areas and spend time with their families as a result. It raises urban children's awareness of rural life and their knowledge of agricultural science, and it can be effectively used as an educational and training tool to educate urban tourists. It offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities to city dwellers by way of festivals and handicrafts.



## **Market for Agro tourism**

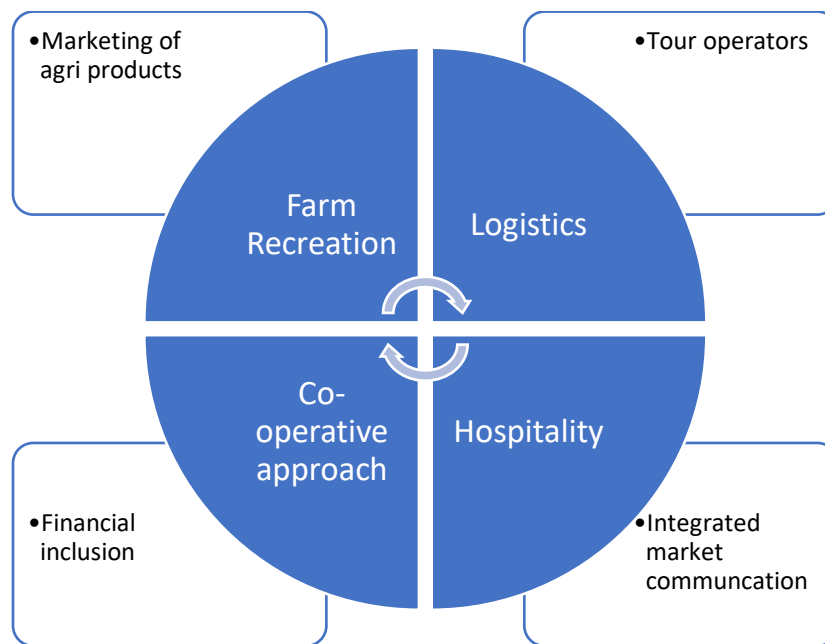
The agritourism market is segmented into activity, sales channel, and region. On the basis of activity, the market is categorized into on-farm sales, outdoor recreation, agritainment, educational tourism, accommodations, and others. By sales channel, it is segregated into travel agents and direct. Region wise, it is analysed across North America (the U.S., Canada, and Mexico), Europe (Germany, the UK, France, Russia, Italy, Spain, and rest of Europe), Asia-Pacific (China, Japan, Australia, India, South Korea, and rest of Asia-Pacific) and LAMEA (Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa)

The on-farm sales segment accounted for approximately one-third half of the global agritourism market share in 2019, and it is anticipated that it will maintain its share throughout the forecast period. On-farm sales are an essential component of agritourism centres, as well as a significant source of revenue. On-farm sales of agricultural products like cattle, wine, and grapes are bringing in a significant amount of revenue for cattle farmers, wine breweries, and grape growers. To boost their earnings from the products they grow themselves, some farmers have begun to operate their very own farm sales chain outlets. On-farm sales can include a wide variety of products, the specifics of which are determined by the farmer's production as well as the type of agritourism operation being conducted. Some examples of these products include grapes, apples, wine, goats, and rural antique show pieces. People are increasingly purchasing goods from on-farm sites because it is an incredible experience for them to pick farm products by hand, and also because the goods are fresh and have not been adulterated in any way. On top of that, people are realising that buying goods from on-farm sites saves them money.

In projects of this nature, where the farmers are the focus of everyone's attention and the activities that are related to them emerge from there, networking is an essential component. Because having a good road and connectivity to the farms is very important, the suppliers of fertilisers and seeds can also act as tour operators to attract visitors from urban areas. These visitors would spread the word about the benefits of visiting the farms. On the other hand, the hospitable nature of the locals would not only encourage more tourists to visit the area, but it would also pave the way for improved distribution of the regional arts and crafts. The majority of city dwellers who take a day trip out to the countryside in search of a change of scenery do so in the hopes of contributing to the local economy by purchasing locally made crafts, which they then take home with them as a memento of their time spent there. The tour operators, the villagers, and the tourists are all connected to one another in some way, making them all part of the integrated communications strategy. The villagers,



the majority of whom are farmers, can organise themselves into cooperatives to strengthen their faith in the viability of the agritourism model as an additional source of income and a more long-term way of life. Even when the monsoons are particularly harsh, the influx of tourists can help keep their income stable. Furthermore, when there are a significant number of villagers in an area, many banks are more likely to be willing to offer assistance in the form of loans and other value-added services. Children tourists will benefit from the final window of farm recreations and the opportunity to purchase fresh farm produce because they will be able to comprehend the entire process while also having fun with it. One of the most important aspects of sustainability is finding a solution to the problem of managing risks, which includes addressing issues such as delayed rainfall, pest epidemics, as well as death and loss of infrastructure. This is where the banks can come to the rescue.



**Opportunities for agritourism challenges and its networking**

**Conclusion**

Agritourism is a niche and emerging market segment of the tourism industry, and it has been gaining significant traction in urban areas. Urban areas have become increasingly interested in agritourism. This can largely be attributed to the rising popularity of farm stays as well as the growing interest among younger generations in rural life and agricultural pursuits. Due to the limited awareness that most people have regarding agritourism, ecotourism, and the other concepts that are closely related to it, travel agents in the agritourism industry play a very important role in the marketing and sale of agritourism packages. The majority of people may have participated in farm stays and activities, but they are unaware that these are examples of agritourism because this sector



of the tourism industry has not yet been fully explored. In addition to selling vacation packages, travel agents educate customers about the various aspects of agritourism, a factor that is expected to contribute significantly to the expansion of the market over the course of the period covered by the forecast.

