# AGRITOURISM: Linking our Community’s Hidden Gems

## The Definition

Virginia law defined agritourism as *any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity* (Code of Virginia, § 3.2-6400 effective October 1, 2008 - [http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+3.2-6400](http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+3.2-6400)).

For most people, agricultural tourism refers to a visit to a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness operation in order to enjoy, be educated, or become actively involved in the activities of the farm or operation – getting a true farm experience.

## What agritourism operations are missing from the Regional Agritourism Asset Map?

### Contact all of these farms before putting them on the map.

| Add Forestry/Natural Resource opportunities | Ellen Stewart from the Blacksburg Farmers Market can provide a list of vendors with address to fill in the asset map. |
| Horseback riding venues (packages) [know where you are sending your customers to, who are you partnering with?] | Add “The Roost” Blacksburg Farmers Market Store to the Asset Map |
| New Southwest Highlands Wine Trail | Opening Soon: The Black Hen Farm to Table Restaurant on Jackson St. in Bburg |

### Missing from Asset Map:

- Beliveau Estate Winery
- Attimo Winery
- West Wind Winery (Wythe Co)
- Buffalo & More (Riner)
- Cut your own Christmas Tree farms
- Mountain Lake Resort & Restaurant (Giles)
- Newport Convenience Store (Giles)
- Thornspring Farm (Pulaski)
- Draper Merc. Blue Door Café (Pulaski)
- Farriss’ Vineyard
- Floyd Eco Village
- Floyd Farmers Market
- Floyd Country Store
- Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary (Floyd)
- Steele’s Blueberry (Newport)
- Doe Creek
- Giles County Farm Bureau Coop
- Grant’s Grocery (Narrows)
- Missing from the Asset Map (cont):
  - Foggy Bottom Vineyard
  - Gary Midkiff (berries & fruit-Rich Creek)
  - Spruce Run Tree Farm (Newport)
  - Palisades Restaurant
  - Ganoe’s Organics (Narrows)
  - Sugar by Suzanne
  - Jean Lucas – Goat Farm

### “Share the Spare” Partnership with NRV Master Gardener Program & Blacksburg Farmers Market for the collection & distribution of surplus fresh vegetables to local food security organizations.
Lynn Cosell (Wool Fantasy Farm)  
Back County Alpacas  
Harmony Hills (Horse Riding/therapy)  
Forest Farms  
Selah Springs (Riner)  
Nolley Wood Farm (Riner)  
Winter Frost Farms

### How can the agritourism entities in the region be linked or networked?

| Packages (B&B, Wineries, Livestock, Horses, Natural Resources, Local Food, On farm Experiences, The New River) | Blue Ridge Farmers Market Coalition, contact bbfarmersmarket@gmail.com for more info. |
| Crooked Road- add Agriculture to the Heritage of Music trail | Chambers of Commerce |
| This group need to incorporate all types of operations to realize the value of regional assets | So Fresh (website for advertisements/collaboration) |
| Local Government – need to establish and build a good relationship with local branches of Govt. | Need Regional Website w/ Active Calendar |
| Farm to Fork networks, canning & cooking classes- | Appalachian Virginia Food System Council |
| Master Food Volunteers / Master Gardener Volunteers | Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program |
| Caterers, Cake Makers, Local Food Service Providers |

### What is absent from our agritourism offerings and how do we fill those gaps?

| Branding/Label for region – aggregation/infrastructure | Forest/Natural Resource Opportunities |
| Promotion of NRV, not just VT | Horseback Riding |
| On Website - Page for Children’s Programs: Market Kids, 4-H, JR Master Gardener, Seeds, etc. | Farm to Table Restaurants |
| Hunting/Fishing | CSA (community supported agriculture)/ farm share opportunities |
| Tree Farming | Farm Stays |
| Cooking & Serving Food (like B&Bs) work on an exemption. VDACS should do this not the Health Dept. | Commercial Kitchens to prepare value added farm products, host cooking/preservation classes. |