

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>).

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
<p><u>Missing from Asset Map:</u> 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)</p> <p><u>Missing from the Asset Map (cont):</u> Foggy Bottom Vineyard Gary Midkiff (berries & fruit-Rich Creek) Spruce Run Tree Farm (Newport) Palisades Restaurant Ganoë's Organics (Narrows) Sugar by Suzanne Jean Lucas – Goat Farm</p>	"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	
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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 Coucil
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.