

Introduction to Agritourism – Lesson Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the concept of agritourism and its role in modern agriculture. Students will learn how farms and agricultural businesses diversify their income by providing tourism-related experiences such as farm tours, festivals, and educational activities. The lesson will help students understand the economic, environmental, and community benefits of agritourism.

Background Agricultural Connections

Agritourism combines agriculture and tourism by inviting visitors to experience farm life, agricultural production, and rural culture. Many farms use agritourism to supplement their income due to fluctuations in commodity prices, weather challenges, and rising production costs. Examples include pumpkin patches, corn mazes, farm stays, petting zoos, farmers markets, and pick-your-own crop experiences.

Agritourism supports local economies by attracting visitors to rural areas, creating jobs, promoting local food systems, and helping preserve farmland. It also increases public awareness of agriculture and helps consumers better understand where their food comes from.

Grade Levels 10th–11th Grade (Agriscience, Agricultural Education, or Career and Technical Education courses)

Lesson Length 1 class period (45–60 minutes)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Define agritourism and explain its purpose.
2. Identify at least three examples of agritourism activities.
3. Describe how agritourism benefits farmers and local communities.
4. Explain how agritourism can educate the public about agriculture.
5. Brainstorm ideas for agritourism activities that could occur on a farm in their community.

Materials and Equipment Needed

- Computer and projector
- Whiteboard or smartboard
- Markers or dry erase markers
- Agritourism photos or short video clips
- Student worksheet (agritourism brainstorming activity)
- Sticky notes or index cards
- Internet access (optional)

Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare a short presentation or slideshow introducing agritourism.
2. Gather images or short video clips of agritourism activities such as corn mazes, pumpkin patches, farm tours, and farmers markets.
3. Print worksheets for the brainstorming activity.

4. Write the lesson objectives and essential questions on the board.

Essential Question:

How can farms use tourism to support agriculture and educate the public?

Activities and Procedures

1. Bell Ringer / Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Ask students to respond to the following question on the board:

“Have you ever visited a farm for fun or entertainment? What did you do there?”

Students share a few responses with the class.

2. Introduction to Agritourism (10 minutes)

Teacher presents a brief explanation of agritourism including:

- Definition of agritourism
- Examples:
 - Pumpkin patches
 - Corn mazes
 - Farm tours
 - U-pick farms
 - Farm festivals
- Why farmers offer agritourism
- Economic and educational benefits

3. Class Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask students the following questions:

- Why might farmers want to invite people to their farms?
- How could agritourism help farmers make more money?
- How might agritourism change people's understanding of agriculture?

Write key ideas on the board.

4. Agritourism Brainstorm Activity (15–20 minutes)

Activity: “Design an Agritourism Idea”

1. Divide students into small groups (3–4 students).
2. Each group imagines they own a farm.
3. Students brainstorm three agritourism attractions they could offer.

Examples:

- Corn maze
- Strawberry picking
- Farm animal petting area
- Farm-to-table dinners
- Sunflower photo fields

Students record their ideas on the worksheet and answer:

- What activity would visitors do?
- What season would it happen?
- How would it help the farm make money

5. Group Sharing (5–10 minutes)

Groups briefly present their agritourism ideas to the class.

The teacher highlights creative ideas and connects them back to real agricultural practices.

6. Closure / Exit Ticket (5 minutes)

Students answer on an index card:

1. What is agritourism?
2. Name one example of an agritourism activity.
3. One way agritourism benefits farmers.

Collect cards to assess understanding.

References / Resources

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Agritourism resources
- National Agricultural Law Center – Agritourism legal and economic information
- National FFA Organization – Agricultural education materials
- State Cooperative Extension Services
- Agricultural education textbooks and curriculum guides