

Business potential of Agritourism for improving the farmers' income in India**Chidanand Patil**

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India is an agrarian driven economy as more than half of its population is still dependent on agriculture as main source their livelihood but this sector is facing disguised unemployment due to lack of opportunities in rural areas, hence, it's important to generate business or employment opportunities in rural areas. Agritourism is the latest concept in the Indian tourism industry, which normally occurs on farms in the villages. It offers people the welcome escape from the daily hectic life in the peaceful rural environment. Agritourism contributes towards development of the agricultural sector by exposing the visitors towards diversified agricultural activities like how crop cultivation takes place, experience ploughing the land, milking the cow, poultry, fishery, beekeeping, organic farming, floriculture, terrace gardening, hydroponics, etc. even some tourists get motivated to take up entrepreneurial ventures in

agriculture and by providing employment opportunities and income to the farmers and tour operators, and an opportunity to rest, relax, enjoy and learn about agriculture for the visitors. There are 23 and 37 agritourism destinations are prevailing in Karnataka and Punjab respectively. Agricultural areas in India have many tourist attractions with varied agro-climatic conditions which can form the basis for tourist attraction. The paper suggested that the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tourism and Agricultural Universities should give orientation towards agritourism by providing some innovative ideas and by training the farmers in their areas. Reviewing literature on agritourism in Punjab and Karnataka indicated that, agritourism as an economic development instrument has great potential to contribute towards improving the farmers' income.

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