

**Marketing Minnesota's Fields and Forests:
Research on the Potential for Developing a Farm Stay Database and Joint
Marketing Program in Minnesota**



Community-University Partnership Supported by:

Wadena Agricultural Alternatives

Three Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Council
– Productive Conservation on Working Lands

University of Minnesota Extension

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs

Agritourism is growing in popularity throughout the United States, and this farm-stay study provides a starting point for the development of more agritourism opportunities in Minnesota. Farm-stay is an overnight, paid, guest accommodation situated on five or more acres of working lands. This report provides an initial understanding of the potential of farm-stay in Minnesota as a form of agritourism activity that might potentially boost rural economies. This study is a community-university supported initiative with major funding from the Productive Conservation on Working Lands (PCWL) program of Three Rivers Resource Conservation and Development, the University of Minnesota Extension, and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. Other project partners include the Center for Integrated Natural Resource Agricultural Management (CINRAM), and the Sustainable Farming Association of Central Minnesota.

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Introduction

Agriculture is the second largest industry in Minnesota. It generates \$55 billion in economic activities for the state and supports 367,000 jobs (MN Dept. of Agriculture, 2007). There are 79,300 farms in Minnesota occupying 27.4 million acres or 54% of Minnesota's total land area (MN Dept. of Agriculture, 2007). As the second largest industry in Minnesota, agriculture is extremely important to every Minnesotan, particularly those in rural areas. However, small family farmers are looking for ways to diversify their income and ensure profit long into the future. Agritourism has been suggested as one way to diversify their income. In general, agritourism is the practice of attracting tourists to an area used primarily for agricultural purposes (Blacka et. al., 2001).

Tourists' dollars are spent throughout the Minnesota economy on shopping (25%), recreation (25%), food (24%), lodging (19%) and transportation (11%) (Explore Minnesota Tourism, 2008). Minnesota hosts 41 million annual person-visits, and this tourism supports more than 240,000 Minnesota jobs and contributes 10.5 billion to the gross state product (Explore Minnesota Tourism, 2008). Tourism is distributed throughout Minnesota with the Twin Cities Metro area receiving almost half (45%) of tourists, and the rest relatively evenly distributed throughout the North Central/West (21%), Northeast (16%) and Southern (19%) districts (Explore Minnesota Tourism, 2008).

Considering the large impact that both agriculture and tourism have on the state of Minnesota, expanding agritourism opportunities may be an important boost to both economies. In 2008 the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), through its Community Assistance Program (CAP), with major funding from the Productive Conservation on Working Lands (PCWL) of the Three Rivers RC&D, supported a research project to explore agritourism opportunities in Minnesota, particularly the concept of creating a network of "farm stays" to be cooperatively marketed. The project included three key phases:

1. complete a through exploration of farm stays currently operating in Minnesota and create a database,
2. create a questionnaire and survey currently operating farm stays and interested farms or accommodation facilities that may meet the profile of a farm stay,
3. complete site visits and phone interviews to develop case studies of currently operating farm stays.

Methods

Database

An exhaustive search of farm stays in Minnesota was completed and a database was created. First, a list of websites related to accommodations or agriculture were compiled (Appendix A). Those websites that contained individual listings of family owned tourist facilities or agriculture businesses were included. Secondly, an email describing the project was sent to all individuals that listed an email address with their contact information. The email was tailored to the specific website where the information was found (Appendix B).

Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was developed based on previous farm stay research and the goals of the Minnesota Farm stay research project (Appendix C). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher, with assistance from project investigators and collaborators. Questionnaire sections included property, farm stay relationship, accommodations and demographics.

The survey was a census of all respondents to the database inquiry email. The farm stay questionnaire was distributed using Zoomerang, an online survey website. The survey period was from October 27, 2008 through November 13, 2008. An email was sent to the database list on October 27, 2008 and a reminder email was sent on November 10, 2008.

Throughout the survey period, a total of 33 people were contacted and 17 surveys were completed for a response rate of 51.5% (Table 1). A total of 3 surveys were unusable, and thus, 14 questionnaires were used for analysis. While the response rate is relatively high, the number of total responses is less than twenty so the data is not large enough to draw statistical evidence from and the information should be used with caution. Nevertheless, the information is a good first start in better understanding farm stays in Minnesota.

Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned and checked in Microsoft Excel 2003. Descriptive analysis provided means and frequencies to describe the sample and provide information on variables of interest.

Table 1. Response rate to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008

	n	%
Initial Sample	33	
Respondents	17	51.5
Total Unusable/Undeliverable	3	9.1

Case Studies

Based on preliminary assessment, four facilities were chosen for case studies to showcase already existing successful farm stays, or facilities with exceptional potential for future farm stay development. Two of the four facilities were contacted via a 30-minute phone interview. In addition, Kent Scheer of Agricultural Alternatives in Wadena, Minnesota completed three site visits.

Results

Database

Based on the research conducted, a total of 30 farm stays were identified (Appendix D). A further 14 sites were identified that have accommodations, some farm activities, and are interested in developing a farm stay. Eleven websites were identified as reference material for farm stays.

Questionnaire

Demographics

More than two thirds (71.4%) of respondents were female and reported an average age of 57.8 years (Table 2). All of respondents were white (100%) and of non-Hispanic or non-Latino background (100%). Respondent residences are distributed throughout Minnesota, with one respondent from Northern Iowa (Figure 1).

Table 1. Demographics of Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Female	10	71.4
Male	4	28.6
Total	14	100.0
Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	14	100.0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0.0
Total	14	100.0
Race		
White	14	100.0
American Indian/Alaskan	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Asian	0	0.0
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Black/African American	0	0.0
Total	14	100.0
Age		
18-30	0	0.0
31-40	1	7.1
41-50	3	21.4
51-60	3	21.4
61-70	6	42.9
71 or older	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

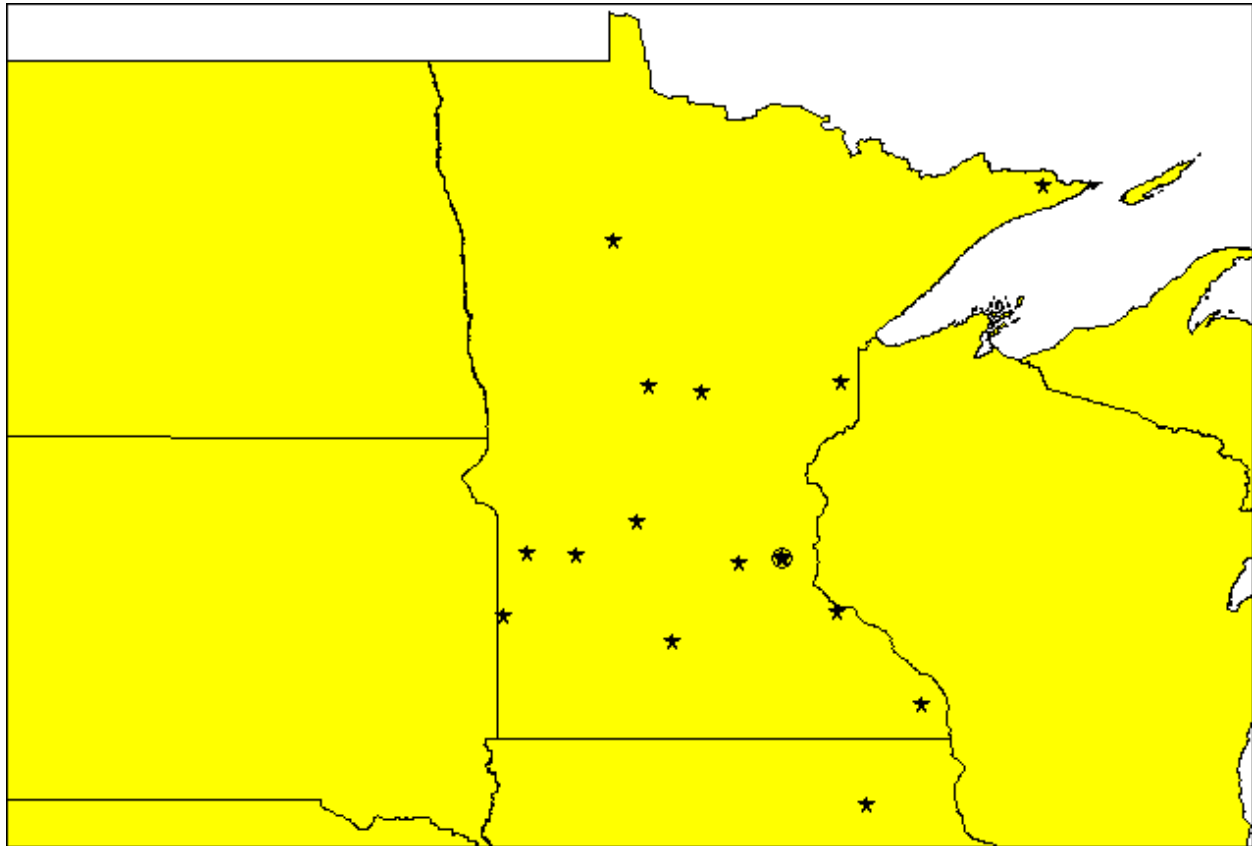


Figure 1. Regional map of respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=14).

Property

The size of respondents' property varied substantially. While the average size was 153.9 acres, the greatest percentage of respondents (42.9%) indicated property of less than 50 acres (Figure 2). More than half (57.1%) of respondents indicated that the primary function of their property is a Bed & Breakfast. Respondents also indicated that the primary function of their property is a farm/ranch (35.7%) or a hobby farm/ranch (7.1%) (Figure 3).

Qualitative analysis of responses to attractions of respondents' property reveals that a wide variety of cultural, historical, and environmental activities are available to tourists (Appendix E). Respondents most frequently noted hiking, canoeing and forest/prairie land as attractions of their property. Farms and sustainable agriculture were also frequently mentioned.

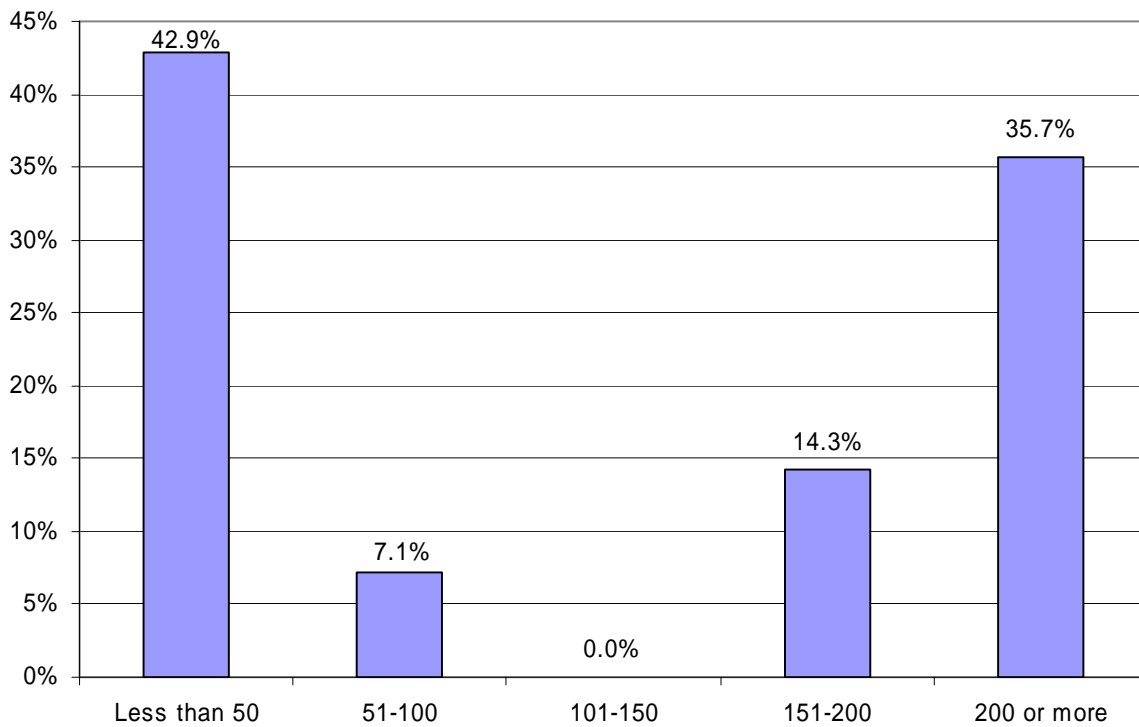


Figure 2. Size in acres of property of respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=14).

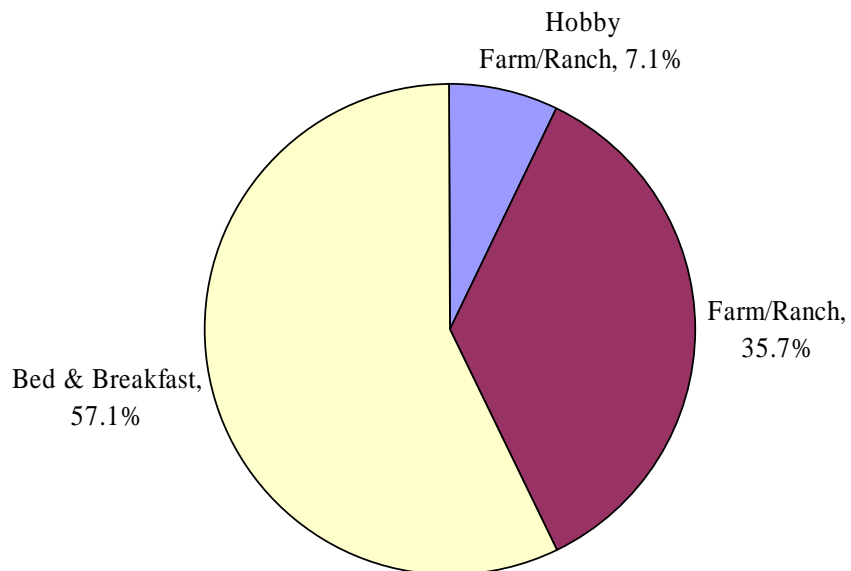


Figure 3. Description of primary function of property by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=14).

Farm Stay Relationship

Nearly two thirds (38.5%) of respondents indicated an interest in developing a farm stay (23.1%) or maybe developing a farm stay (15.4%) (Figure 4). Another one sixth (15.4%) of respondents indicated that they are already conducting a farm stay. Almost one quarter (23.1%) indicated that they are not interested in developing a farm stay at this time.

The majority (69.2%) of respondents indicated that they are interested in participating in a cooperative effort with other farm stays to jointly market their facilities (Figure 5). One quarter (23.1%) of respondents were not interested and another one tenth (8.3%) were not sure.

Qualitative analysis of responses to respondents definition of a farm stay reveal that overnight accommodations on a farm where guests can observe farm activity or participate in farm chores is central to the idea of a farm stay (Appendix E). About half of respondents specified an opportunity to observe farm activities while the other half specified interaction with farm chores. About one third specified an overnight stay. Food is also an important aspect of a farm stay as hearty breakfasts and family style meals were mentioned.

Respondents listed numerous challenges for developing or operating a farm stay (Appendix E). Qualitative analysis of their responses suggests that marketing and licensure are the two greatest challenges in developing or operating a farm stay. Other common themes were bringing people into their home and a lack of time.

Respondents also listed numerous rewards for developing or operating a farm stay (Appendix E). Qualitative analysis of their responses suggests that meeting new people and sharing their knowledge of farms as the greatest rewards. Respondents were particularly interested in educating guests about the importance of small family farmers on local communities and rural American values. The opportunity to gain a supplementary income was only mentioned once.

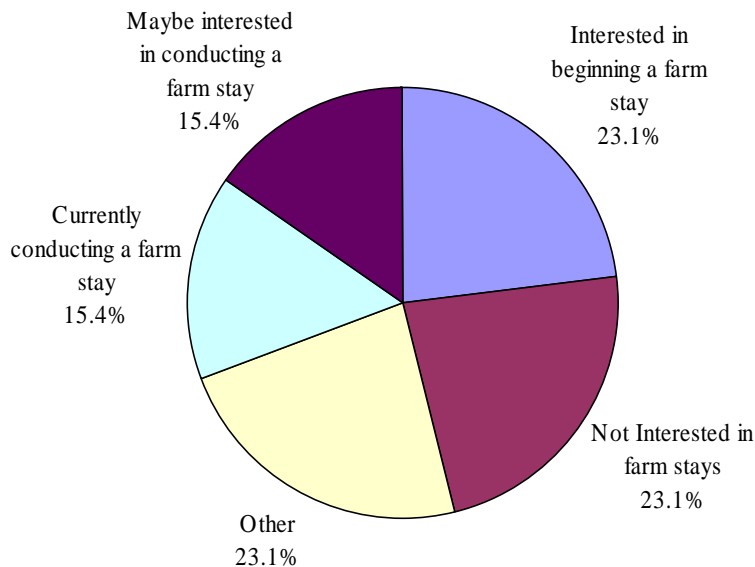


Figure 4. Interest in conducting a farm stay by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=13).

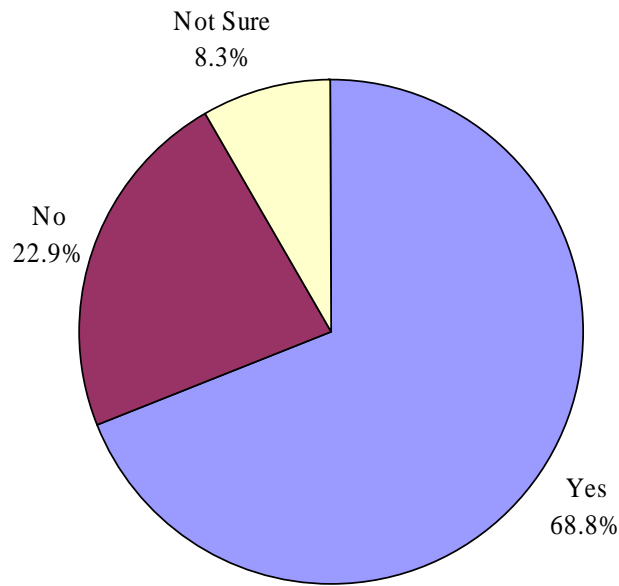


Figure 5. Interest in participating in a cooperative effort to joint market farm stays by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=12).

Accommodations

One third (33.3%) of respondents indicated that accommodations at their facility are located in their own home (Table 3). About one fourth (23.8%) of respondents indicated that accommodations at their facility are located in a building separate from their home. A converted, existing building is used by one fifth (19.0%) of respondents and a specially built, dedicated guest structure is used by one sixth (14.3%) of respondents for accommodations. A small percentage (9.5%) indicated that they have camping at their facility. Accommodation capacity is generally small but varies substantially from site to site. Respondents most commonly (33.3%) indicated their capacity to be between 3-4 or 9-10 guests (Figure 6). Respondents less frequently (16.7%) reported capacities of 1-2 or greater than 10 guests. Qualitative analysis reveals that most guest rooms include a private bath and half also include a fireplace (Appendix E). Most facilities highlight breakfast or some other type of food during the stay as an important amenity.

Table 3. Facility structure of accommodations by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008.

	Frequency	Percent
In your home	7	33.3%
Separate from your home	5	23.8%
A converted, existing building	4	19.0%
A specially built, dedicated guest structure	3	14.3%
Camping	2	9.5%

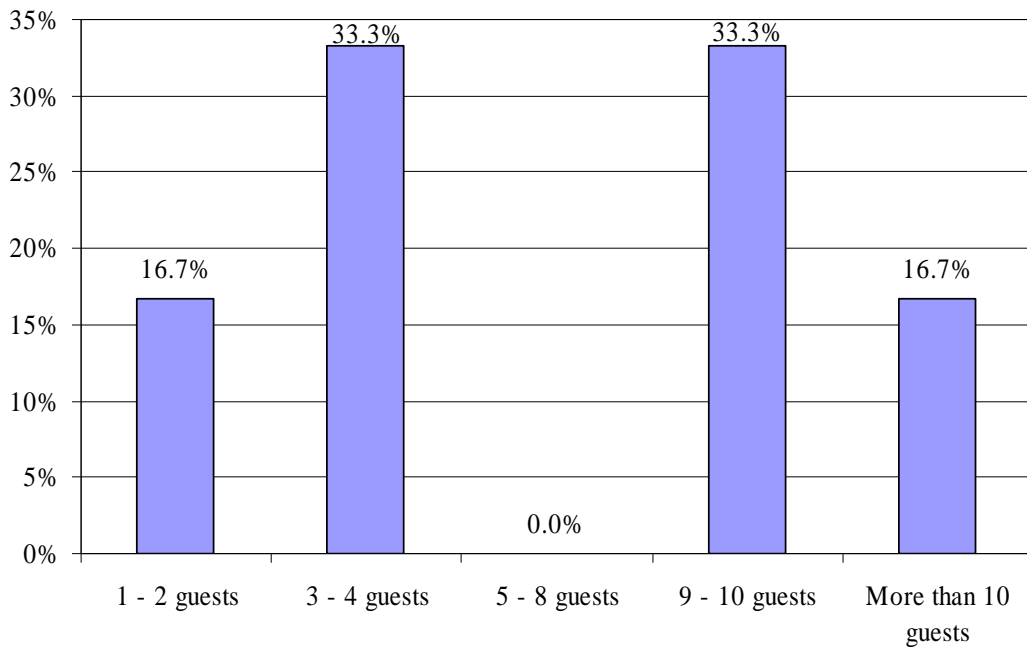


Figure 6. Facility capacity of respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=12).

Respondents most frequently charge a “mid-range” price for a one night stay at their facility with one third (35.7%) of respondents charging between \$51-100 and one third (35.7%) charging between \$101-150 for a one night stay (Figure 7). “Low-end” facilities priced from \$0-50 are offered by 14.3% of respondents. “High-end” facilities priced from \$151-200 and \$200 or more are offered by 7.1% of respondents, respectively. Half (50%) of respondents reported an occupancy rate of 0-25% (Figure 8). One quarter (25%) reported an occupancy rate of 26-50% and one quarter (25%) reported an occupancy rate of 51-75%. Increasing price of accommodations and increasing occupancy rate were highly correlated (.72). More than half (58.3%) of respondents indicated that their occupancy rate meets their goals (Figure 9). One third (33.3%) of respondents indicated that their occupancy rate is below their goals. Less than one tenth (8.3%) noted that they do not have an occupancy goal.

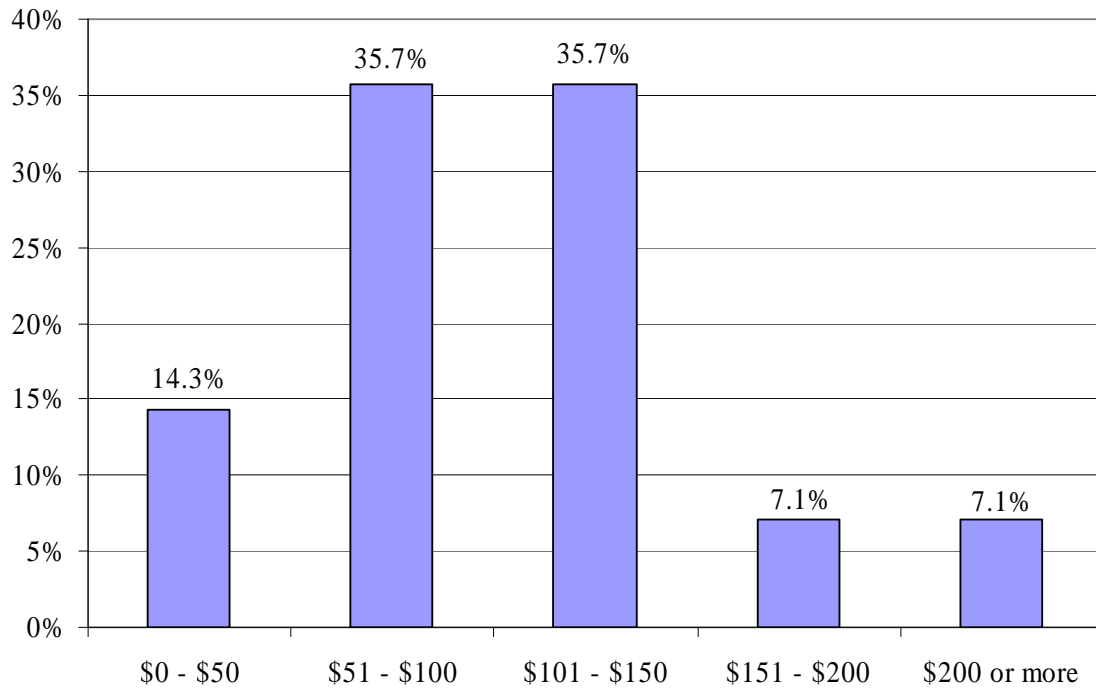


Figure 7. Accommodation fee for one night stay by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=14).

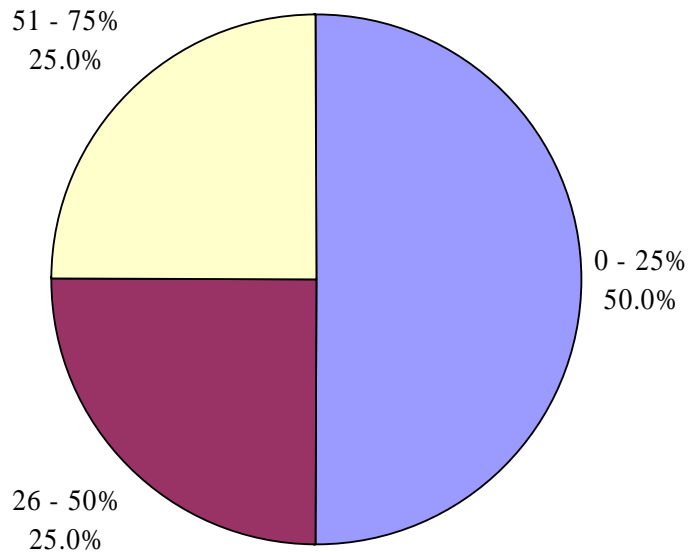


Figure 8. Accommodations occupancy rate by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=8).

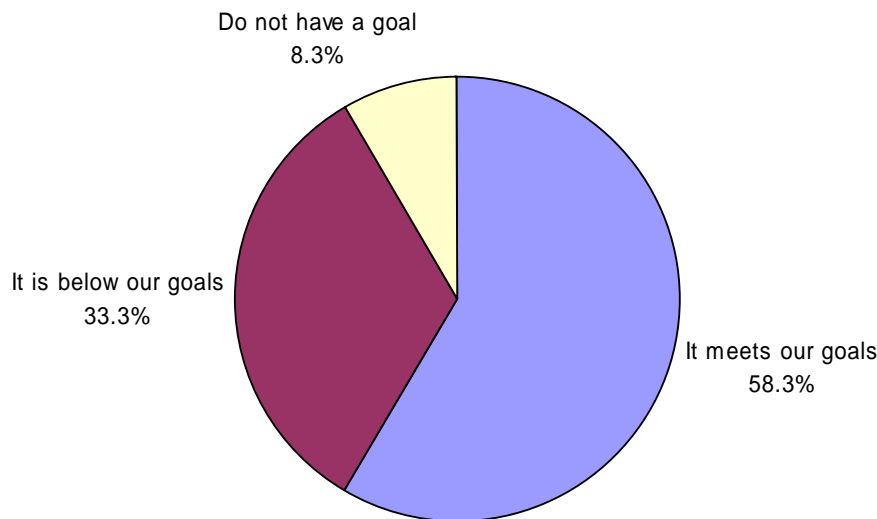


Figure 9. Accommodations occupancy rate in relation to respondent goal by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=12).

Respondents are evenly split regarding the work load of a tourist facility. About one third (36.4%) indicated that the impact of accommodations on their family work load is comfortable (Figure 10). About one third (36.4%) indicated they are stretched, but manage accommodations on their own. Finally, about one third (27.3%) hire out workers for or because of the accommodations offered.

Qualitative analysis of respondents marketing practices reveal that marketing is primary directed towards tourists living 100-300 miles from the destination, particularly in the Twin Cities Metro area (Appendix E). Respondents market to a variety of clientele with interests in green travel, local foods, nature activities and farm experiences, among others. Some respondents noted that they do not market to specific groups. More than half (53.8%) of respondents indicated that they do not offer any type of package or discount for their facility (Figure 11). About one third (30.8%) do provide a package or discount and about one sixth (15.4%) offers a package or a discount depending on special circumstances.

Regarding revenue from accommodations, respondents were fairly polarized. More than half (58.3%) of respondents indicate that 0-25% of their annual revenue comes from accommodations (Figure 12). On the other hand, one third (33.3%) indicated that 76-100% of their income comes from accommodations and about one tenth (8.3%) indicated that 51-75% of their income comes from accommodations.

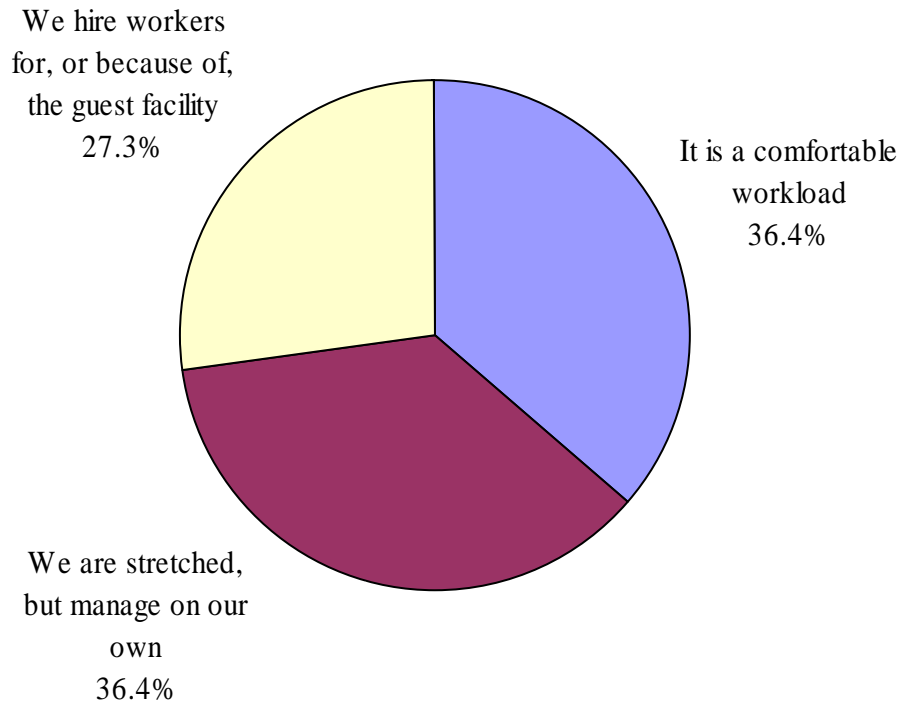


Figure 10. Impact of accommodations on family workforce by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=11).

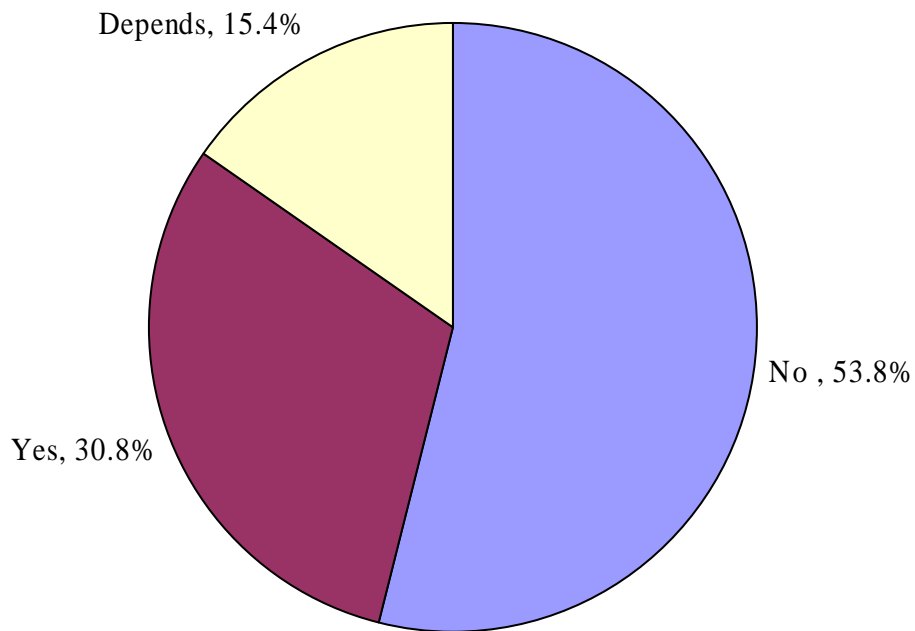


Figure 11. Discount offered to guests by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=13).

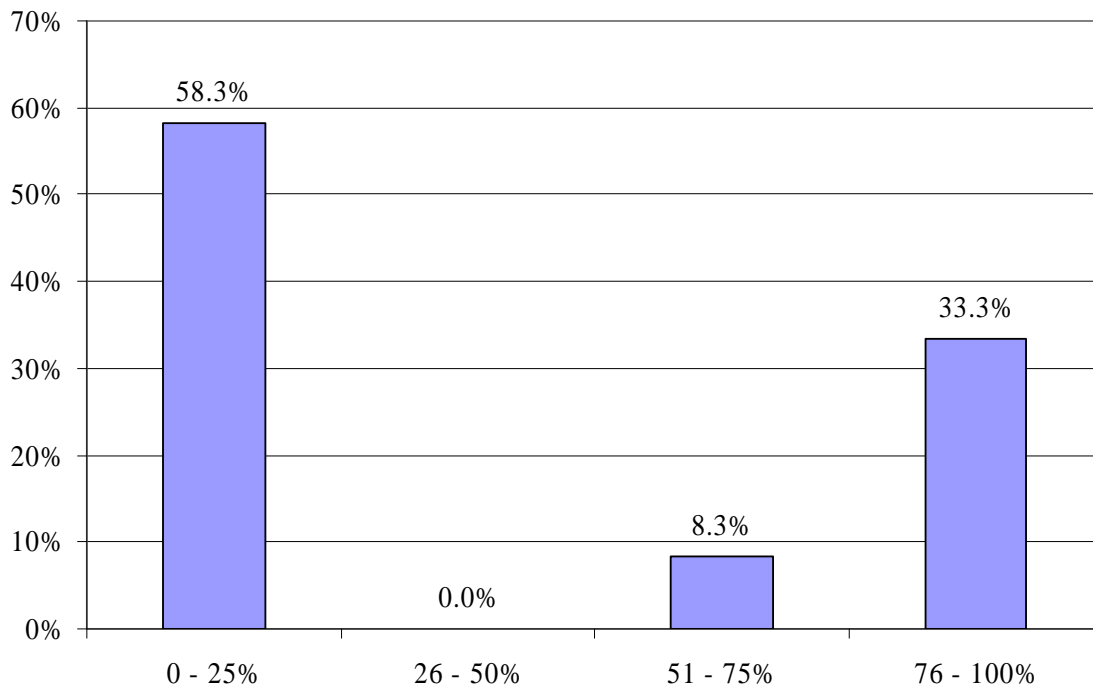


Figure 12. Percentage of annual revenue that comes from accommodations by respondents to an email survey among Minnesota farm stay database participants, 2008 (n=12).

Case Studies

Qualitative analysis of the two interviews completed by the author and the three site visits completed by Kent Scheer reveals several themes related to farm stays. Currently operating farms have a strong focus on education related to organic farming, general farm operations and traditional rural life. Farm stay accommodations are generally simple, located in the farm stay family's home, or in an old farm building that has been remodeled to provide accommodations. Farm stay operators are interested in connecting with other farm stays for educational and marketing purposes through a website, newsletter and/or brochures.

Discussion

Agritourism is growing in popularity throughout the United States and the 2008 farm stay research project provides a starting point for the development of more agritourism opportunities in Minnesota, particularly in the area of farm stays.

An exhaustive search of currently operating farm stays in Minnesota reveals that there are relatively few operating farm stays in Minnesota. This may indicate a lack of interest among farmers; however, it seems more likely that few people have learned about this opportunity. To further develop farm stays in the future, research on farmer interest will be beneficial. Educational materials distributed to small farmers will also highlight the potential for farm stays as a means of diversifying their income, meeting new people, and sharing their traditional rural life. Research will also help define consumer interest in farm stays. While past research is limited, McIntosh & Bonnemann (2006) found that visitors to WWOOF farms were attracted to the rural nature of the experience, opportunity to learn about organics, personal meaningfulness of the experience, and the element of sincerity of the experience. Research such as this, related to farm stays, will help to form a basis for target marketing.

Current farm stays can benefit from increased targeted marketing. In both the survey and case studies, farm stay operators noted that they do not market to a specific audience or do not market in general. Furthermore, half of respondents have an occupancy rate of less than 25% and one third indicate their occupancy rate is below their goal, indicating that improved marketing may help them increase their occupancy rates so that they better meet their goals. Further research regarding accommodation price and occupancy rate is warranted. Higher accommodation prices are highly correlated with occupancy rate indicating that guests may prefer a more luxurious farm stay experience rather than a rustic, albeit more realistic, experience.

In addition, many respondents indicated marketing as one of the biggest challenges in operating a farm stay. This research supports a joint marketing program, such as a website (developed by Agricultural Alternatives) listing Minnesota farm stays as a way to increase knowledge of and patronage of farm stays. Since many farm stays do not offer any sort of discount, one suggestion may be to offer discounts if patrons learn of the facility through the farm stay website.

A clearly defined farm stay definition will help farmers interested in beginning a farm stay, as well as possible tourists, better understand the type of accommodation experience provided. A clearly defined farm stay definition has yet to be uncovered. The current working definition used in this research is:

“A working farm, market garden, forest, or orchard of at least five acres which provides overnight accommodations for paying guests, but receives at least 25% of its gross income from the sale of agricultural, horticultural, or forestry products” (Kent Scheer).

This definition may need to be adjusted over time but serves as a good starting place for farmers interested in beginning a farm stay and for tourists interested in visiting a farm stay. A definition,

such as this one, should be included in the farm stay website. It may also be helpful to hold a workshop, or create a blog if meeting in person is not possible, of farm stay website members to work together to develop an agreed upon definition. Finally, while it may not be relevant for the definition, considering a large proportion of respondents included food in their definition of a farm stay, it may be appropriate to include food in a deeper description of farm stays or when marketing.

Education is a major component of a farm stay. Many respondents indicated that educating guests about organic farming, general farm practices and rural life were important to them. In fact, the social benefits of a farm stay may be a more important and greater benefit than any economic benefit derived from farm stays. Farm stays that were interviewed also suggested creating a farm stay network so that farmers can learn from each other. Including educational information related to accommodations, marketing, licensure and other relevant information would greatly enhance the farm stay website. In the future, a handbook for developing farm stays may be developed. This handbook will certainly aid farmers in entering the business. Current handbooks for developing a Bed & Breakfast in Minnesota and for developing Agritourism in Virginia have already been created (Appendix D). Using these guidebooks as references may help in developing a Minnesota farm stay handbook.

While education is a major component of a farm stay and interaction with farm activities is often mentioned as an important aspect of the experience, it will be important for farmers to understand the liability risks associated with guests assisting in farm chores. Collecting eggs or weeding a garden may have few risks but feeding animals or operating machinery will entail significantly greater risk. Farm stay operators must be aware of the risk they are taking on and properly insure themselves against liability.

While surveys and case studies provide the ability to better understand market potential, due to the limited number of respondents in this study the research should be used with caution. It cannot be considered statistically accurate, but still provides an opportunity to understand trends. Future research capturing a larger sample is advised. Regarding case studies, Valerie Shannon of Money Creek Buffalo Ranch and Mary Doerr of Dancing Winds Farmstay Retreat are strongly recommended for future interviews.

References

Blacka, Aaron; Pierre Couture, Charles Coale, John Dooley, Andy Hankins, Ann Lastovica, Brian Mihalik, Charlotte Reed, Muzzo Uysal (2001). *Agri-Tourism*. Retrieve from <http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/agritour/310-003/310-003.html#L2> on 12/09, 2008. Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Explore Minnesota Tourism (2008). *Tourism & the Economy*.

McIntosh, Alison J. and Susanne m. Bonnemann (2006). *Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF): The Alternative Farm Stay Experience?* *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 14(1): 82-99.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture (2007). *Minnesota Agriculture: The Foundation of Minnesota's Economy*.

Appendix

Appendix A

Websites searched for farm stays

Name	Address
Community Supported Agriculture	http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/csa.html
Couch Surfing Project	http://www.couchsurfing.com/
Green Routes	http://www.greenroutes.org/
Land Stewardship Project	http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/
Minnesota Bed & Breakfast Association	http://www.minnesotabedandbreakfasts.org/
Minnesota Buffalo Association	http://mnbison.org/
Minnesota Grape Growers Association	http://mngrapes.org/?page_id=23
MN Grown Directory	http://www.mda.state.mn.us/food/minnesotagrown/directory.htm
The Hospitality Club	http://www.hospitalityclub.org/
World Nomads	http://www.worldnomads.com/

Appendix B

Sample email sent to individuals listed on targeted webpage sites

Greetings!

My name is Andrea Schuweiler and I am a graduate student at The University of Minnesota. I am working on a project with the U of M Tourism Center to identify Farm Stays in Minnesota. Farm Stays are simply tourism accommodations located on working farms. The goal of this project is to advance agritourism opportunities in Minnesota along with providing more opportunities for small and medium sized farmers to diversify their income. The outcome of the project will be a database similar to the Association of Bed & Breakfast website and a manual for small and medium sized farmers to develop a farm stay. I found your email on the Association of Bed & Breakfast website and am emailing you because many bed & breakfasts are located in rural areas on farms or other large tracts of land. If you are a Bed & Breakfast located on a farm, ranch, forestland, or even have a large garden I would like to talk to you about your agritourism opportunities and potentially include you in the future database. This project is not intended to compete with the Bed & Breakfast Association; rather we seek to provide another marketing opportunity. Please contact me via email schu1211@umn.edu or phone (612) 625-0298 if you are interested in the project. Please feel free to forward this email to interested parties. Thanks so much for your time!

Sincerely,
Andrea

Appendix C

Survey Instrument

Farm Stay Questionnaire

First, a few questions about your property . . .

1. How would you currently describe the primary function of your property?

- Farm/Ranch
- Hobby Farm/Ranch
- Winery
- Bed & Breakfast
- Other, please specify _____

2. What is the size, in acres, of your property? _____

3. Please describe the cultural, historical and environmental attractions that your property, or surrounding areas, provides for tourists.

And now, a few questions about your relationship to farm stays . . .

4. Please provide your definition of a “farm stay,” or what comes to mind when you hear the phrase “farm stay.”

5. How would you describe your interest in farm stays?

- Currently conducting a farm stay
- Interested in beginning a farm stay
- Not Interested in farm stays
- Other, please specify _____

6. What do you find to be the greatest challenge in developing or operating a farm stay?

7. What do you find to be the greatest reward of developing or operating a farm stay?

8. Are you interested in participating in a cooperative effort with other farm stays to jointly market your facilities?

Yes No Additional Comment: _____

Now, a few questions about your accommodations . . .

9. Please describe the facility structure of your accommodations (check all that apply).

- In your home
- Separate from your home
- A converted, existing building
- A specially built, dedicated, guest structure
- Camping
- Other, please specify _____

10. Please describe your guest accommodations, include # of rooms, bathrooms, amenities, meals, pet policy, etc...

11. Please describe the capacity of your facility.

- 1-2 guests 9-10 guests
- 3-4 guests More than 10 guests
- 5-6 guest Other, please specify _____
- 7-8 guests

12. Please describe your major clientele and/or target market. Please include the average distance guests travel to your facility.

13. Do you offer any price packages or discounts? If so, explain.

14. How much do you charge for a one night stay?

- \$0-\$50 \$151 - \$200
- \$51-\$100 \$200 or more
- \$101-\$150 Other, please specify _____

15. What percentage of your annual revenue comes from accommodations?

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%
- Other, please specify _____

16. What is your occupancy rate?

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%
- Other, please specify _____

17. How does your occupancy rate meet your occupancy goals?

- It meets our goals
- It is below our goals
- It is above our goals
- Other, please specify _____

18. What is the impact of your accommodations on your family workforce?

- It is a comfortable workload
- We are stretched, but manage on our own
- We hire workers for, or because of, the guest facility
- Other, please specify _____

19. Please use this space to add any additional comments you have.

And finally, a few questions about yourself . . .

20. What is your gender? Male Female

21. What year were you born? _____

22. What is your zipcode? _____

23. What is your ethnicity?

- Hispanic/Latino
- Not Hispanic/Not Latino

24. What is your race (check all that apply)?

- American Indian or Alaska native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other, please specify _____

Appendix D

Database Findings

Farm Stays Identified

Name	City	State	Website
Acorn Ridge Farm	Staples	MN	
August Earth	Hutchinson	MN	
Camphill Village Minnesota	Sauk Centre	MN	http://www.camphillvillage-minnesota.org/
Carmel Apple Orchard Inn	Staples	MN	
Dancing Winds Farmstay Retreat	Kenyon	MN	http://www.dancingwinds.com/about.html
Dream Acres	Wykoff	MN	
Earthen Path Organic Farm	Lake City	MN	
Earthrise Farm	Madison	MN	http://www.earthrisefarmfoundation.org/index.html
Four Columns Inn	Janesville	MN	http://www.fourcolumnsinn.net/
Gardens of Eagan	Farmington	MN	
Green Island Preserve and Retreat	Wadena	MN	
Hand N Home Farm	South Haven	MN	
Hawkeye Buffalo Ranch	Fredericksburg	IA	http://www.hawkeyebuffalo.com/
Hungry Point Inn	Welch	MN	http://www.hungrypointinn.com/
Kara Kahl Farm	Houston	MN	
Kitty Ridge	Winona	MN	http://www.farmwinona.org/
Money Creek Buffalo Ranch	Houston	MN	http://www.buffalotal.com/
Moonstone Farm	Montevideo	MN	http://www.prairiefare.com/moonstone/index.html
Natures Nest Bed & Breakfast	Montrose	MN	http://www.naturesnestfarm.com/index.htm
Northern Light Farm	Solway	MN	
Philadelphia Community Farm	Oseola	WI	http://philadelphiacommunityfarm.org/
Round Barn Farm B&B*B	Red Wing	MN	http://www.roundbarnfarm.com/
Springside Farm Stay			
Steven Pines Farm			
Sweet Retreat, A Bed & Breakfast Inn	Alexandria	MN	http://www.sweetretreatbandb.com/
The Women's Environmental Institute	North Branch	MN	http://www.w-e-i.org/
Triple L Farm Bed & Breakfast	Hendricks	MN	http://lllfarmbb.com/Home.html
White Earth Land Recovery Project Farm	Ponsford	MN	
Whiteley Creek Homestead	Brainerd	MN	http://www.whiteleycreek.com/
Country Gardens on Lake Mina	Alexandria	MN	

Other Farm Activities

Name	City	State	Website
Gale Wood Farms	Minnetrissa	MN	http://www.threeriversparkdistrict.org/parks/galewoods.cfm
Nitty Gritty Dirt Farm	Harris	MN	http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/csa.html#nitty
Poplar Creek Guesthouse Bed & Breakfast	Grand Marais	MN	
The Bohemian Bed & Breakfast	New Ulm	MN	
Round Barn Farm B&B*B	Red Wing	MN	
The William Sauntry Mansion	Stillwater	MN	
TC Davis Manor B&B	Farmington	MN	
Afton House Inn	Afton	MN	
Historic Dayton House	Worthington	MN	
Bird House Inn B & B	Excelsior	MN	
Home in the Pines Bed & Breakfast	Duquette	MN	
Spicer Castle Inn	Spicer	MN	http://www.spicercastle.com/
North Creek Community Farm	Prairie Farm	WI	http://www.northcreekcommunityfarm.com/
The Dwelling in the Woods	McGrath	MN	http://www.thedwellinginthewoods.org/index.html

Reference Websites

Name	Website
Rural Bounty	http://www.ruralbounty.com/
A Lancaster County, PA Farm Stay	http://www.afarmstay.com/
Leaping Lamb Farm Stay	http://www.leapinglambfarm.com/
Pennsylvania Farm Vacation Association Inc.	http://www.pafarmstay.com/
Italy Farm Stay	http://www.italyfarmstay.com/
Farm Stay and Ranching	http://www.infohub.com/travel_packages/farm_stay_ranching.html
Canter Berry Trails Apple Ranch	http://farmstay.us/
Montana Bunkhouses	http://www.montanaworkingranches.com/
Rustic Vacations	http://www.rusticvacations.com/
Tennessee Agritourism	http://tnvacation.com/agritourism/
Agri-Tourism - Virginia Cooperative Extension	http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/agritour/310-003/310-003.html

Appendix E

Open-Ended Responses to Questionnaire

Please describe the cultural, historical and environmental attractions that your property, or surrounding areas, provides for tourists.

- We are the heartland of rural American Farming in the So. Mn River Valley. Wildlife and fowl aplenty and in birding terms I think we offer a triangle point of migration. Wonderful opportunities of river life and history. Dakota Conflict center with BCH
- Driftless area of SE MN, NE Iowa, W. WI. Root River Valley, bicycle trails, hiking, canoeing, fishing, hunting, Mississippi River
- Buffalo. WE do tours, have a store. People can go out in our wagon and feed them. Many other touristy things in the area.
- Our area is popular for hunting and fishing. Back road hiking and biking. Hendricks celebrates Norway's Independence Day, July 4th, and harvest.
- Famous Damman Round Barn at the Round Barn Farm B&B&B. Walking and hiking paths up the bluff and around the meadow, the Mississippi River and historic Red Wing.
- Next to a wilderness area, scenic byway, historic canoe routes, forested with recent fires and natural disasters, pristine lakes,
- walking and hiking trails, weekly open farm days in season, canoe rental, scheduled public programs
- The home was built in 1895 as part of a farm. Today the building and surrounding structures house 18 guestrooms. The property is located on the southeast shore of Green Lake in Central Minnesota.
- We are on the Evergreen Memorial Drive, MN Hwy 23
- native prairie, sustainable agriculture, local foods, Lac qui Parle Mission, MN River experiences, birding
- We have a yurt for people to rent. A Year ago we moved an old 1917 school house onto the property. We give tours of the farm and what we do. We are open to interns, especially if they are college sponsored.
- We have a very comfortable quiet country 2 story horse barn that is our B&B. There is a panoramic view of our 600 tree apple orchard and the surrounding wetlands.
- Our farm has a range of ecosystems available for exploration. floating bog, tamarack bog, spruce and hardwood forest. We are close to Itasca and Lake Bemidji State Parks, and the tourist attractions of Bemidji.
- Our B&B setting builds upon Brainerd's heritage as a farming community centered around the railroad industry. Breakfast is served in an 1890 railroad passenger car preserved to its original state. My activity board features info. on canoeing, kayaking, fi

Please provide your definition of a “farm stay,” or what comes to mind when you hear the phrase “farm stay.”

- I immediately think of a working farm.
- Overnight stay with opportunity to interact with "farm life", i.e. help with chores, feed/see/touch animals, etc.
- Farm stays can be for one night or several. Participants can tag along and do whatever, be it chores or every day work.
- "Farm stay" means to me that people come and stay on the farm for several days to experience the culture of the people in the area as well as the surrounding environment.
- It's a confusing term. We are a bed and breakfast and that is a much more descriptive term. Does "farm stay" mean I have to clean out stalls?
- Farm animals and crops in the fields. Guests can visit the barn, family style meals.
- a cozy cabin, crowing roosters, a hearty breakfast of local food, and the opportunity to help with animal chores and in the garden.
- What comes to mind with the phrase "farm stay" is the Amish community that allows visitors to stay at select farms and witness or be a part of the farming activity for a period of time.
- Staying at an active farm with animals and crops and farm equipment
- Folks come here and pay us to stay in our guest cottage on our working farm, a perennial polyculture.
- Several ideas: Spending some time in our yurt (rent), using it for a group meeting or time of relaxation. Also taking time to be with us and participate in the activities of the farm, like volunteer work or having a place to write, paint, etc.
- Farm business is always going on with mowing the orchard, trimming trees and later harvesting and marketing the apples in the lower story of the barn.
- Primarily a leisure time for the guest, but with the expectation that the guest will want to visit with the animals and follow along or help with farm tasks. Modest levels of service join the family for meals and help a little in the kitchen.
- To me a farm stay is lodging that is located on acreage outside of town and has some sort of farming where crops are grown for animal or human consumption and/or animals are raised.

What do you find to be the greatest challenge in developing or operating a farm stay?

- Economics and marketing
- I have not done this. I would think the business angle, and also having strangers in you home.
- Not a particular challenge. We are set up for hunters.
- We have been doing Bed and Breakfast for 22 years and bunkhouse lodging for 14 years. To get started the biggest challenge was to become licensed by the State Department of Health and approved by State Fire Marshall.
- Again, what is a "farm stay"?
- Need to be licensed for health and sanitary. Inspected for quality to ensure the safety and comfort of guests.
- Advertising ~ the majority of properties would not be located in a tourism area. Without street exposure the cost of advertising may be prohibitive.
- Time it takes to orient newcomers
- Hoping the people who do come can also be independent since we are involved in our daily work if they do not wish to participate.
- Time. Neatness of our house.
- I grew up on a 160-acre farm 10 miles S.E. of Brainerd, so farming is part of who I am.

What do you find to be the greatest reward of developing or operating a farm stay?

- Maintaining awareness of farming and the importance rural America offers the country at large.
- Supplementary income. Meeting new people
- Establishing relationships.
- Meeting the people who come to stay, sharing what we have with them, watching their reactions, and learning from our guests.
- The educating of guests in regards to rural communities and the part they play in our economy.
- Networking and building support for our kind of agriculture
- Meeting new people and sharing our philosophy as well as hearing about the person who comes and what drew her/him.
- Chance to meet interesting and interested people. Spread the word about local/sustainable ag.
- The majority of our guests come from the Minneapolis/St.paul area. We can provide a serene setting that allows them open space to roam freely and learn ways to be self-sufficient. In their city setting, it may not be feasible to emulate exactly what we ar

Please describe your accommodations, include # of rooms, bathrooms, amenities, meals, pet policy, etc . . .

- 7 rooms, 7 baths breakfast, no pets inside. Families and groups welcome
- 1 bedroom - queen bed, private bathroom. No pets. meals optional
- We have a open pet policy.
- Presently we have 1 room in our house that is used as Bed and Breakfast. It has private bathroom with shower, Queen sized bed and hide-a-bed, TV with DVD, desk, AC. phone, full breakfast, WI FI available. 2 Bunkhouses, mixture of old and new, each seep 4
- 5 suites all with huge private baths with 2 person whirlpool tubs; all beds are queen or king sized with pillow mattresses, feather beds, down comforters and pillows and luxury linens. All suites have gas fireplaces. We are a luxury stay and serve huge br
- 3 rooms, all with private bath. Family style meals. No pets. Quiet on a lake and creek. Canoe, hike, ski, snowshoe on property.
- There are 18 guestrooms with private bathrooms. 12 guestrooms have double whirlpool tubs and showers, 6 guestrooms have antique claw foot tubs and showers. 10 guestrooms have fireplaces, microwaves, refrigerators and coffeemakers. Wireless internet is a
- We have 2 guest rooms with private bath within the room, and queen sized beds. One room has a steam shower and a private balcony. Both rooms on 2nd floor, no elevator
- One room guest cottage, continental breakfast, bathroom in big house, access to farm activities, pond, beach (canoeing), on-farm sales shop, some pets okay
- Our yurt is in the woods, 20feet wide, accommodating 3 people and more if sleeping bags would be used on the floor. We are in the process of getting a shower house. We now use the facilities in our home. We invite those who stay to join us in our meals
- We have 2 suites, each with their own bathrooms, fireplaces, shared deck overlooking the orchard and shared living room. We do not allow pets, sorry. We offer an evening snack always homemade and a menu breakfast with 5 entrees, including fresh fruit
- Private room w/ sofa bed. Shared bathroom. Pets okay but must be compatible w/ free range animals. Meals w/ family.
- We have 3 cabins and 2 inn rooms. All accommodations have private baths with a full breakfast served. Two cabins have fireplaces. We have a huge stone fireplace on our back porch. We have a no pet policy.

Please describe your major clientele and/or target market. Please include the average distance guests travel to your facility.

- Traveling public at large looking for an experience not just an overnight stay.
- We really haven't done this (i.e. opened a farm stay business). We are on the Woofer website and that's how you got our name.
- It is up to the individual. No specific target market. Previous guests have traveled as much as 200-300 miles.
- The majority of clientele come from the Twin Cities area. The twin cities is about 180 miles from our farm. However, we have had many guests from almost every state and from a number of foreign countries.
- Twin cities, Rochester, Eau Clair and surrounding areas. We are a romantic getaway for couples. We also host weddings from June through September and have done 46 weddings since September, 2003.
- Mpls St. Paul area. 200 to 300 miles.
- Families with children, and folks interested in eating local food. Average distance 15 miles.
- Our target market is 30 to 65 years of age, typically celebrating a special event. The average travel distance is 100 miles.
- Twin Cities people on their way to Duluth, about 110 miles one way
- 130 miles. Folks who no longer have their own family farm to return to, birders, artists, green travelers
- This varies much. We have local people, but also guests from the metro area which is about 3 1/2 hours away.
- We provide wonderful private accommodations for the business class because of Wi-Fi etc. We have had guests from around the world and have had people from 20 different states. Businesses in the area use us for their best clients because of our hospitality
- No guests yet.
- The majority of our guests travel from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area which is 120 miles from Brainerd. Our B&B is located 3 mi. from downtown Brainerd.

Appendix F

Farm Stay Interview Summaries

Triple L Farm and Bed & Breakfast
Phone Interview with Joan Larson, Owner
10:00am, Monday, December 1, 2008

Triple L Farm and Bed & Breakfast is located in Southwest Minnesota in Hendericks. The home is an original farm house that has now been converted to a Bed & Breakfast, co-habituated by the owners of the farm. The property contains the farm house, large barn, 2 cottages and 283 acres of rented farm land. Thirty acres of the farm land is in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the remaining area is used for growing corn and soybeans.

Triple L provides a variety of accommodations. Four rooms are licensed for Bed & Breakfast style accommodations within the home; however, only one of the rooms is currently being used for that purpose. The room currently used for accommodations has a private entry, private bath, queen size bed and furnished breakfast. Triple L also has two relatively primitive bunkhouses. Each room sleeps 4, has a refrigerator, microwave, hot plate and access to an outhouse or a bathroom with shower in the home.

The primary target market for the Bed & Breakfast style accommodations are families, primarily from the Twin Cities. Triple L actively encourages children and does not charge additional for children. The bunkhouses typically attract hunters who find the CRP land to be good for hunting. Triple L also promotes hiking and biking around the farm land, yard games for entertainment, and swings and hammocks for relaxation. Many guests come to Triple L because they have never been to a farm before and are looking for a “back home” experience. Triple L is near Westbrook where guests can visit actual sod houses. Bunkhouse guests also look forward to the chance to use an outhouse and to experience an “upgraded Little House on the Prairie” experience.

Triple L has great potential as a marketing site for farm stays. Although there are not any direct opportunities to work on a farm, the site is located directly in the middle of farming country and guests can see farming going on all around them. Triple L also has a large garden that could be used to serve local foods or possibly solicit help from guests with.

Triple L’s busy season coincides with hunting season where they have about 50% occupancy. The rest of the year, their occupancy rate is around 10-20%. They are extremely interested in marketing their facility as a farm stay. Currently it is marketed through BedandBreakfast.com, Explore Minnesota, word of mouth and the internet.

Dwelling in the Woods
Phone Interview with Patricia Woods, Director
1:30pm, Friday, November 21, 2008

The primary purpose of Dwelling in the Woods is to provide an opportunity for retreat. Dwelling in the Woods is located in Northern Minnesota and is surrounded by forest. While much of the retreat atmosphere takes into account the natural surroundings, there is very little, if any, agriculture. The greatest potential would be the large garden that is kept in the summer, which services about 30% of guests' food. They also host several volunteer days throughout the summer when volunteers can help with environmental and facility maintenance. Dwelling in the Woods is most interested in continuing to maintain its retreat focus, but is interested in supporting surrounding farms in the area if a farm stay program is developed.

Dwelling in the Woods primarily markets through "Define the Divine" and other retreat websites. Explore Minnesota, Word of Mouth and newspaper articles are also important in their marketing. Their busy season is the fall and winter, with January being the busiest month. Their max capacity is 18 people and they have 8 hermitages (i.e. cabins). Guests at the facility are primarily middle-income, women, and Twin Cities residents. Dwelling in the Woods is a non-profit organization that relies on donations to keep the cost of the accommodations low.

Narrative Report on Three Farm Stay sites visited for interviews, conducted for the Marketing Minnesota's Fields and Forests Project. Submitted by Kent Scheer

The Dwelling in the Woods

The Dwelling is situated on 140 acres of managed forest land near McGrath Minnesota. The clientele served ranges from writers, to church groups, to yoga groups, to individuals. The facility has been in operation for 20 years. It's stated purpose is to provide a place for people to heal, and though it has a spiritual orientation it is completely non-denominational in nature. The daytime and meal seating capacity is 26 people with overnight accommodations for 18. Buildings are designed to house two with a few having a higher capacity. Each has a bathroom. General interior decor is described as simple. While the typical visitor attends either with an organized group or alone, The Dwelling is fully able to accommodate families with children, though this is only a minor fraction of its clientele. The average customer is a female between 40 and 60 years of age. A three day stay is normal with weekends being filled throughout the year, though vacancies are common during mid-week. Fall and winter are the busiest seasons. Amenities offered include massage, meditation, spiritual direction, a library, a walking labyrinth, forested hiking trails, and two mandatory quiet days. Staffing is three to four full time (chef, director, manager, maintenance) and several part-time. Also, an extensive volunteer labor pool is cultivated and necessary, with eight volunteer workdays scheduled annually. Their forest land is extensively managed including recreational trail maintenance, bud-capping, planting, logging and firewood harvest. This is a not-for-profit organization and the board of directors numbers 12 members from all over the state. As for providing referral to other retreat facilities, they have an occasional and informal relationship with a retreat in Little Falls, and "each visitor becomes an ambassador for the Dwelling".

Moonstone Farm

Moonstone Farm is not far from Montevideo, Minnesota. It is a family farm specializing in the production of organic beef. The owners also have a long-standing educational mission to facilitate awareness on organic and local foods issues for the region. Their farm offers internship opportunities to young people throughout the world through their connection with the WWOOF international organization.

The guesthouse is a small, separate building which was originally remodeled to house visiting friends and family. When it matured into a commercial rental the owners made a commitment to do this both right and legally. Therefore, it is licensed and subject to inspections at an annual cost of \$160. Their water is also annually tested.

Further, they have insurance coverage supplemental to their standard homeowner's policy.

Occupancy: last year every weekend from April through October was booked. This is without advertising, and merely by relying on referrals from friends and customers. In this way, they are found by the right kind of people and experience no problems or issues with their visitors.

Clientele: most come for the quiet, for rural beauty, and for "pastoralism". They may have writing or artwork to accomplish in a setting which facilitates focus. Some also have an early link with farming, having been raised on a farm. Finally, a few of the overnight guests are customers who come specifically to buy Moonstone beef.

Labor Base: the farm stay impact on family labor is appropriate. It requires about one hour of work following each stay, and this includes such things as doing laundry and cleaning the shower. It is wise to do this preparation immediately since one never knows when a call may come

requesting accommodations. This also presents the only slight obstacle related to the farm stay, which is that at the time arrivals are expected it is necessary for someone to be at or near the house.

Though Moonstone routinely has summer interns their quarters and their work are separate from the "Broodio" farm stay.

Helpful services: things which would be helpful to them would be a professional brochure of farm stays with good color photos of each; an e-newsletter for Minnesota farm stays; and a means of exchanging tips and experiences with each other.

Earthrise Farm

Earthrise Farm is a very diversified and alternative farm operation founded by two sisters on their old, home-place near Madison, Minnesota. It has been in operation for 13 years.

Facets of Earthrise include a CSA, organic eggs and fowl production, an internship program, a library, a space for meetings, an educational component and facility, and a retreat capability for limited overnight guests.

There is a strong spiritual orientation to this farm stay, though it is completely non-denominational and encouraging of all religious pursuits. The sisters have a personal specialization in teaching "the new cosmic story from western science", and they maintain a connection with their mother house on Mankato which also has sisters who are a great resource for gardening.

Helpful Services: they would encourage a new farm stay organization to take the role of cataloging the teaching skills of all its members so that those skills could be traded within the group. Also, to create and provide a list of others with relevant teaching skills.

As a side note; the three best known sustainable farm operations in this area provide a wonderful benefit to their interns by gathering them all together for regular events tailored to these youth. Therefore, the suggestion is that all internships within a farm stay organization should also be noted, so that this benefit might be extended.