Mason and Smith Valleys

Agricultural Tourism Assessment Findings

Prepared for
Western Nevada College

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Photo credit: Debbie Arrighi
Study Objectives

An assessment of agricultural tourism opportunities in the Mason and Smith Valleys.

- Market assessment for the Valleys
- Profile of visitors to Northern Nevada
- Agritourism market trends
- Comparable events and facilities
- Opportunities and constraints
- Development strategy
Agritourism involves any agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch.

- Outdoor recreation (fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, horseback riding)
- Educational experiences (tours, cooking classes, wine tasting, on-farm museums)
- Entertainment (harvest festivals, barn dances, hay rides/corn mazes, farm animals)
- Hospitality services (overnight farm or ranch stays, farm meals)
- On-farm direct sales (“pick-your-own” operations, roadside stands, farmer’s markets)
Market

POPULATION 2010
- 50,000 and over
- 25,000 - 50,000
- 10,000 - 25,000
- under 10,000

Mason/Smith Valleys

POPULATION ESTIMATES
- 50 mi - 212,920
- 100 mi - 987,069
- 150 mi - 5,712,779
- 200 mi - 14,234,132

Source: Dean Runyan Associates; Census 2010 ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) Population.
Current Visitors to Western Nevada

Day Trip 13%
Overnight Trip 87%

Included Weekend Stay 66%
Weekdays Only 34%

Note: Weekend stay included a Friday and/or a Saturday night in Nevada.
Source: Dean Runyan Associates
Agritourism Trends: Farm Size

Size of Farms in U.S. with Agritourism and Recreation Income

- Small Family Farms (less than $250,000): 80%
- Large Family Farms ($250,000-$499,999): 6%
- Very Large Family Farms ($500,000 or more): 5%
- Nonfamily Farms: 9%

Source: Dean Runyan Associates, 2007 Census of Agriculture, USDA
Agritourism Trends: Recreation

Participation in Recreation Activities
Visiting Farms, Ranches, and Other Agricultural Settings

- Rural scenery: 76%
- Petting farm animals: 67%
- Learning where our food comes from: 49%
- Watching/participating in farm activities: 43%
- Purchasing agricultural products at the farm: 31%
- Hay rides or corn mazes: 24%
- Horseback rides: 15%
- Milking a cow: 10%

Source: USDA, National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, 2000; Dean Runyan Associates
Agritourism Trends: Farm to Table
Agritourism Trends: California

(B) Primary activity (number of operations)

- Events (8)
- Corn maze/pumpkin patch (9)
- Tour (17)
- Farm stay (14)
- Agricultural retail (131)
- All activities (282)
- No primary activity (56)
- Nature (15)
- U-pick (31)
- Nonagricultural retail (1)

Agritourism Trends: California

Agritourism Trends: Nevada

Participation in Recreation Activities Related to Agritourism
Humboldt and Toiyabe National Forests

- View/photo scenery: 64% (Toiyabe), 68% (Humboldt)
- Picnicking: 55% (Toiyabe), 59% (Humboldt)
- Visit historic sites: 49% (Toiyabe), 50% (Humboldt)
- View/photo trees wildflowers: 48% (Toiyabe), 48% (Humboldt)
- View/photo birds: 28% (Toiyabe), 28% (Humboldt)
- Visit farm or agriculture setting: 24% (Toiyabe), 25% (Humboldt)
- Horseback riding: 10% (Toiyabe), 12% (Humboldt)

Source: USDA National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, 2006;
Dean Runyan Associates
Opportunities

• Established event
• Setting and scenic rural roads
• Existing tourism services infrastructure
• Additional visitor activities
• Community service organizations
• Market trends
• Community interest, SCI workshops
• Regional support
Constraints

- Tourism organization
- Primary attractor
- Crop diversification
- Existing agritourism
- Regulations and insurance requirements
Leading Challenges to Agritourism in CA

Study Recommendations

A. Product Development

• Build on Taste of the Valley

• Identify additional event(s)

• Maintain agritourism focus

• Link with cultural/heritage tourism

• Assist interested farmland operations

• Consider a scenic road Farm Trails program
Study Recommendations (cont.)

B. Marketing

• Community organization

• Northern Nevada agritourism alliance

• Regional cooperative marketing

• Individual internet marketing

• Visit other agritourism operations

• Stay focused
Corley Ranch
Gardnerville, NV

Lazy P Corn Maze – Winnemucca, NV

Renner Farm
Smith Valley, NV

Fallon, NV

Tractors & Truffles
Ferrari Corn Maze
Reno, NV

Lavender Ridge – Reno, NV

Eldorado Great Italian Festival – Reno, NV
Bridgeport, CA

Spanish Springs, NV

Andelin Family Farm

Pomegranate Arts & Crafts Festival
Logandale, NV