Background

Farm tourism has found its niche as a growth industry in many parts of the world. Such growth requires the coordination of institutions and organizations that can coordinate strategic planning, promotion, and information management for farm tourism to thrive.

Tourism development today has taken a major leap forward by incorporating agricultural, environmental, and economic activities into its programs that encourage active involvement and participation of people and their communities. Specifically, these are the agritourism, sometimes referred to as farm tourism, and ecotourism endeavors of organizations or individuals who adopt technologies generated and developed out of agriculture, socio-economic researches, and conservation practices on the environment as profitable activities for local and international tourists, including its aesthetic valuation.

Being a young industry, farm tourism in the Philippines is still growing and developing. While there is a dearth of information related to farm tourism practices, there is literature that shows the management practices in farm tourism sites. This new economic development strategy of farm tourism helps farmers uplift their living and working conditions to generate income and enhance farm profitability (Schilling B. J., 2006). Moreover, it is rapidly being embraced as a strategy to conserve the family farm, and to teach the public about authentic farming life.

Objectives

The exposure workshop aims to enhance the knowledge, skills, practices, and attitude of the participants on inclusive and sustainable agricultural and rural development focused on the farm tourism.

Specifically, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Describe farm tourism trends and practices in Southeast Asia;
2. Distill common issues and concerns, challenges, and opportunities in the implementation of farm tourism programs;
3. List and discuss the minimum standard requirements and guidelines for the operation and maintenance of farm tourism sites; and
4. Develop a farm tourism program or agenda as may be relevant to their respective contexts (for enterprise venture, research, teaching, extension, or policy).
Workshop Sessions

The exposure workshop will have the following sessions:
A. Preliminary Activities
B. Country Paper Presentations
C. Farm Tourism
   1. Global Trends in Farm Tourism
   2. Development of a Farm Tourism Enterprise (case presentation)
      a. Support to farm tourism
      b. Public and private partnership initiatives
      c. Tools and techniques in the promotion and marketing of a farm tourism enterprise
      d. Standard requirements and rules for the operation and maintenance of farm tourism sites
      e. Guides for a better farm tourism practice
      f. Rules on the operation and maintenance of farm tourism sites
D. Field Learning Site Visits
E. Developing a Farm Tourism Program

Intended Participants

The exposure workshop is open to the following:
1. Practitioners – investors and entrepreneurs who are directly engaged in the farm tourism industry in the region
2. Regulators – officials and staff of government agencies both from the agriculture and tourism sectors as well as other interested local government agencies
3. Interest groups – non-government organizations, people’s organizations, and development organizations that are implementing programs and interventions in the agriculture and tourism sectors
4. Academe – state colleges and universities along with private academic institutions who are actively engaged in farm tourism activities and development projects

Approaches and Methods

The exposure workshop will adopt a combination of various approaches to maximize and facilitate the learning of the participants, as follows:
1. Sharing of experiences facilitated by country reporting;
2. Participatory lecture-discussion/PowerPoint presentations;
3. Workshops/small group planning exercises;
4. Plenary sessions; and,
5. Field learning visits/exercises.

Sixty percent (60%) of the workshop duration will be allocated to presentation, discussion, and workshop, while the remaining 40 percent will be allocated for field learning exercises/experiences.

Workshop Outputs

Participants are expected to have the following outputs:
1. Journal of new knowledge and insights from presentations, discussions, and field observations; and
2. Proposed farm tourism program.

Meanwhile, SEARCA will produce briefs and notes for sharing on best practices, industry needs, and policy recommendations to be harvested from the workshop report.

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