OPPORTUNITIES

- Improved food processing
- Increase tourist arrivals
- Investment in rural cuisine
- Provide supplemental income
- New employment opportunities
- Conservation of the environment
- Appreciation of minority culture and local lifestyle
- Educational opportunities for locals and tourist alike
CHALLENGES

- Marketing
- Funding
- Product Development
- Training
- Collaboration / Partnerships
- Consistency of food supply
- Natural resources management
- Climate Change
REGIONAL COLLABORATION

- Policies to link agriculture, tourism and trade
- Proviso of Farm Stay list
- Sharing of certification / accreditation lists
- An Asia/ASEAN tour package “IKOT ASIA” “IKOT ASEAN”
- Farm Tourism Linkage Committee like the ones recently set up in the nine member Caribbean countries; bringing together public and private groups to know who is doing what, how they can learn from each other, how to access grants and foreign funding, etc.
NATIONAL COLLABORATION

- Tap Chefs as agents of change. To move away from the idea that tourists prefer to eat only familiar food from home. Chefs can make local cuisine as exciting and flavorful for tourists.

- Chefs are the engine that can pull the “agricultural train” from small farmers, organic farmers to small scale processor of sauces and ingredients. A single farmer cannot produce the quantities needed by even one hotel.

- There is a need to pull farm tourism owners to clusters on cooperatives.
INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

- Set up farm interpretative centers
  “Interpretation is an educational activity that aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects by firsthand experience and by illustrative media rather than simply communicate factual information (Tilden, 1977)”

- Digital solutions linking farmers and chefs at real time (like in Haiti) to know who is producing, what quantities and seasons by using their mobile apps.
  Use metaphysical approach in setting up the farm tourism site
Metaphysical analysis is using the six senses approach, an exercise that Hitesh Mehta (one of the 5 world’s ecotourism experts) does at all the sites he works on before he draws even a single line. It is a walkthrough to experience the land with their six senses. The sixth being the spiritual before drafting a site analysis and translating it into a plan. Mr. Mehta cautioned “Our common mistake is that we go to a site and immediately act as designers. We need to analyze first the things around us.”
FARM TOURISM IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT ECOLOGY.