

Fact Sheet

Customer Service for Agritourism Operations



PERMITTING AND COMPLIANCE

Ensure that your operation complies with all relevant regulations and obtains necessary permits. These could include:

- Signage & Handwashing
- Parking & Accessibility
- Safety & Employee Training

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USING TECHNOLOGY

Technology can replace your cash register, be mobile, and also be easily updated if you add additional products or experiences during your season.

- Some examples agritourism operations use include: Square, Clover, and Barn2Door
- A Point of Sale system can also be helpful to gather customer contact information for future communications



VISITOR EXPECTATIONS

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- Is your farm easy to find?
- Is the product or experience as promised in your marketing materials?
- Can customers identify who your employees are? Do you have a branded t-shirt, hat, etc...



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- Have you trained your staff to be friendly, welcoming and willing & able to answer questions?
- Train your employees on your product mix, product uses, experience options, and for typical scenarios which might occur during the season
- Employees who are trained are more likely to give a quality customer service experience



BUILDING CUSTOMER LOYALTY

A good experience on your farm builds customer loyalty.

- Do you have a return policy? You need a posted return policy which includes qualifications (what's included), valuation (an equal value replacement), and whether you accept returns and/or refunds
- Consider starting a customer loyalty program -- e.g. every purchase of \$50 gets you 10% off.

HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Have you empowered your employees to problem solve? Is there a clear chain of command and is that person someone who is regularly on-site?



Try to take care of difficult customers quickly, off to the side, and without losing your cool. Your customers will appreciate this and value your customer-focused approach.

We never want to budge on health and safety concerns -- if a customer's actions might put themselves (or others) at risk, for example, not sitting down on a hay ride, or visiting areas of the farm which are not safe, etc...

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ACCESSIBILITY

- Is your farm set up to welcome those of all abilities?
 - Do you have stone on your walkways, well-mowed walkways, places to sit down, etc...



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

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- Are your hours convenient?
- Do you have enough check-out lines?
- Is your farm clean?
- If you have a farm store or experiences inside a building -- is it well lit?



MARKETING/PROMOTION

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Develop a robust marketing strategy to attract visitors. Utilize online platforms, social media, and local partnerships to promote your agritourism offerings and create a strong online presence.

- Consider joining local directories and tourism listings to widen your reach



SAFETY

Good customer service also includes keeping your customers safe. One way to do that is to invite your local fire and/or police to visit your operation and offer feedback on what you can do create a safer environment. They can help you write up processes and/or procedures for your staff to follow, as well as signage recommendations to keep you legal. They may also be willing to train your employees on conflict resolution techniques.

Additional Resources:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension Agritourism Program Work Team:
<https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-cooperative-extension/work-teams/agritourism>
- Cornell Cooperative Extension Agritourism YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/@cceagritourism>

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