

# Miami County Farm Tour Participant Agreement



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Director

The Miami County Farm Tour is organized by the Miami County Economic Development's staff and volunteers who serve on the Farm Tour Executive Committee. The Marais des Cygnes Extension District is a planning partner. In the past, a corporate sponsor has been secured.

Starting in 2021, the definition of a "farm tour" is being broadened. There will still be a focus on farms opening to the public on Mother's Day weekend, Saturday, May 8, and Sunday, May 9, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. However, the overall emphasis will be expanded to include options for virtual educational opportunities and individual tours offered at times other than the designated tour weekend.

## **Year-long Elements of the Program:**

- At least six Miami County farms must be interested in the program for it to be undertaken.
- New locations will be visited before being accepted into the program.
- Safety concerns will be a consideration for selection.
- Tour stop participants serve as ambassadors of goodwill for the county and its rural culture.
- Participants will be evaluated by an Executive Committee including at least three existing participants.
- Tour stops must provide their own signage.
- Participants will comply with all applicable regulations including zoning, product liability and sales tax collection. Inclusion on the tour in no way implies or conveys agricultural tax status.
- All media contacts or interviews regarding the program must be cleared in advance by the Miami County Director of Economic Development.
- No outside vendors or entertainment shall be allowed at a tour site unless the site's zoning status currently allows those activities. If you intend to sell items at your location, they must be produced by your operation unless your zoning status allows those expanded activities.
- An online map will be created with information on each participant. This information will include contact information and a general description.
  - Miami County Economic Development staff will support participants with their efforts to populate the multimedia educational elements into the online map.
- An online calendar will be created to feature events planned by each participating site. Events should focus on activities directly related to promotion of that site. Listings must be limited to involving no more than 10 days each month.
  - Miami County Economic Development staff will assist each participant in creating their sub-calendar.

## **Designated Tour Weekend Elements of the Program:**

- Locations must be open and staffed for visitors during the designated tour weekend. Exemptions will be offered based on local health orders. Notice should be provided immediately to the Miami County Director of Economic Development if an exemption is needed.
- A limited number of tour signs may be made available for use.

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- Locations must participate in a registration process for visitors and contribute a gift certificate valued at least \$50 for products or services from their location as a door prize.
- The week prior to tour weekend, a representative of each site must participate in a meeting which will include a briefing about each of the participating stops. A post-tour meeting will take place following the tour weekend to gather lessons learned and input from participants.

### **Participant Minimum Standards:**

- Participants must focus on educating visitors about an agricultural product directly related to the location. Products may be plant or animal based but must originate on site. Locations with similar products are not outright excluded, but it is the goal to have a balance of farming types.
- Each January, participants must complete an application for review by the Executive Committee. If a farm ceases operation, notice must be provided to Miami County for the information to be updated. If a farm sells, the new owner must reapply to become a part of the program.
- A clearly marked off-street parking area must be designated for guests. While the parking area may not be compliant with ADA Federal standards, it is suggested that a few parking slots near the entrance be marked and set aside for disabled visitors.
- Each site must submit documentation verifying that they have \$1 million in liability insurance.
- Tour stops must be willing to provide general sales and visitation information to Miami County Economic Development. This information will allow the department to estimate the program's overall tourism impact on the county. Forms will be provided twice a year.
- Sites must be willing to promote one another and any designated sponsors.

***Miami County may revoke authorization to participate in the program for any location that fails to meet these minimum standards.***

### **Miami County will provide:**

- Standards for the program utilizing guidance provided by the Executive Committee.
- Marketing assistance with both media outlets and creation of a promotional handout.
- Copies of the promotional handout by March 1.
- A save-the-date email to former attendees.
- Postcards to previous attendees.
- Develop a Google map that would contain information about each site, a link to the website, videos and photos, and potentially a link to where people could schedule or request tours of a site using something like <https://www.signupgenius.com/>
- Assist with an online calendar that would link to sub-calendars managed by each site. It would allow for combined promotion of events throughout the year.
- Assist sites with developing video clips or Facebook live sessions to provide their educational content.
- Support efforts to create scavenger hunts and similar types of activities to promote engagement.
- A website promoting the event with an online map of the tour stops.

### **Marais des Cygnes Extension District will provide:**

- Staff support with planning and implementing each stop's educational component. This includes troubleshooting possible delivery challenges, identifying necessary materials and technology resources.
- Assistance distributing promotional materials through their contact lists, Facebook pages and nearby extension agents.