

**SCOPE OF AGRI-TOURISM IN UTTARAKHAND: INPUTS FOR THE FUTURISTIC  
POLICY ROAD MAP**

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**ABSTRACT**

Agritourism, the term itself signifies the combination of the words 'Agriculture' and 'Tourism'. Agritourism includes various activities aimed at providing tourists with a rural experience while contributing positively towards the existing agricultural practices. Some of these activities include staying on farms, agricultural tours, farmers' markets, food festivals, and workshops. Being home to magnificent Himalayan ranges, ancient agricultural traditions, and a variety of flora and fauna, Uttarakhand has immense potential for agritourism. This article discusses the prospects of agritourism in Uttarakhand as an effective means of increasing the income levels of farmers, creating jobs, and minimizing migration from hilly regions. Using examples from Maharashtra and Uttarakhand, the study explores the socio-economic advantages of agritourism, determinants of farmer participation, and critical challenges involved in the promotion of agritourism.

**Keywords:** Agritourism, Uttarakhand, Rural Development, Outmigration, Employment Generation, Farmer Income, Hill States

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Activities associated with agri-tourism vary widely, ranging from farm-stays to agricultural tours to farmers markets and food festivals to educational workshops. Using the unique natural and cultural characteristics of the hill areas, agri-tourism is capable of not only attracting tourists but providing employment opportunities to locals as well as changing the fortunes of farmers. Outmigration, decrease in employment opportunities, and decrease in farmer income have become very serious problems for the rural populations, particularly those in the hill areas. Reconnecting visitors with the origins of their food and creating awareness about the history of agriculture of a particular area is the basic theme behind agri-tourism.

This form of tourism enables people to explore the rural settings far away from the hustle and bustle of urban life and participate in activities related to agriculture. Agritourism gives the participants of all age groups the opportunity to get closer to nature, know about sustainable agriculture, and practically understand the process of agriculture. A few of the activities included in agri-tourism to enable people to experience the rural setting include picking produce from farms, milking cows, harvesting crops, and taking practical classes on cheese making, wine making, and bee keeping. Due to the combination of agriculture, education and entertainment, agritourism can be seen as an interactive medium through which people can connect with the rural environment, learn about different farming techniques and get involved with agriculture-related ventures. Agritourism is capable of creating job opportunities for locals besides providing additional income apart from the regular farm income along with contributing to the economy of the area through tourism. Additionally, agritourism can also help in preserving the culture and traditions of the region due to the practice of farming which can be unique to that area.

**1.1 Agriculture in Uttarakhand**

About 60% of the country's population is dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The agriculture sector contributes about 22% in the GDP of the country. Agriculture and the allied sectors

such as animal husbandry, fisheries, and horticulture play an important role due to the agrarian pattern of the state's economy. It accounts for 90% of the primary sector of the state's economy and directly and indirectly supports a large number of the state's population.

The agriculture practices are challenging in the state as the agricultural holdings in most of the state are small and scattered. 70% of the rural population is dependent on the horticulture, milk production, herbal plant production, fish production, animal husbandry, organic farming, aromatic plants, honey rearing, vegetable production and small scale industries related to them, for their livelihood. Based on the agriculture census of the year 2015-16, there are total 881305 holdings in the state under different categories. According to the year 2020-21, 30% of the total sown area is under wheat production, due to which it is the main crop of the state. 26 percent is under paddy, 8% is under Manduwa, 9% under sugarcane, 5% under Sanwa, 6% under pulses, 2% under oilseeds, 2% under maize, 2% under barley, 5% under fruits and vegetables, 3% under fodder and 2% under other crops.

Horticulture is practised by over 4.50 lakh farmers, 88% of them are small and medium-sized farmers. More than 30% of the GSDP of the agriculture sector is contributed by the horticultural industry. Uttarakhand is blessed with rich agricultural land and a climate conducive to diverse farming practices. From terrace farming and organic agriculture to cash crops, horticulture, livestock farming, sericulture and beekeeping, Uttarakhand's agricultural practices showcase resilience and adaptability of its farming communities.

### **1.2 Tourism in Uttarakhand**

Tourism is an important factor and considered as a powerful medium in the economic development and employment generation in the country, especially in the remote areas of the country. The share of tourism in the country's GDP is about 6% and 50 million people of the country are directly or indirectly engaged in tourism sector employment. Uttarakhand was awarded the Best Tourism Destination Award and the first prize for all-round development of tourism by the Union Ministry of Tourism.

Uttarakhand, also known as 'Devbhoomi' or 'Land of the Gods', has a great significance of religious tourism in the state economy. The state is located in the foothills of the Himalayan mountain range, of which 86% is covered in mountains, which makes this state a perfect location for adventure tourism. Uttarakhand attracts a wide range of domestic and international tourists for its breathtaking landscapes, including the majestic Himalayan mountain range, lush valleys, serene lakes, and gushing rivers, providing opportunities for trekking, mountaineering and nature walks.

The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, along with various government and private initiatives, plays a crucial role in promoting tourism in the state, developing infrastructure, ensuring safety, and preserving the natural and cultural heritage. The range of attractions that Uttarakhand tourism presents goes on attracting people who seek spiritual comfort, excitement, and the link between nature and culture.

### **1.3 Agritourism in Uttarakhand**

Many people, particularly those who live in Uttarakhand's hilly regions, engage in agriculture, which is the state's economic backbone. Agriculture in Uttarakhand is the main occupation of many local villagers, given the geographical conditions of the place. Agritourism in Uttarakhand offers a gateway to the abundance of nature and the vibrant rural life in the lap of the Himalayas, with its picturesque landscapes, abundant biodiversity, and rich agricultural heritage.

The R.O.S.E (Rural Opportunity for Social Elevation) in the hills of Kumaon, situated in Bageshwar district, is working with an agri-tourism model where the tourists can avail homestays in the wheat fields and enjoy the scenic mountain views and indulge in the daily works with the farmers like harvesting of crops, cooking traditional dishes, teaching English, and many other activities. The Silent Valley, in Bhimtal offers agri-tourism by offering different activities to the tourists in the district, such as involvement in mulching, harvesting competitions, tree climbing, honeybee keeping, cow milking and other activities.

Various agritourism destinations like Aaloo Khet in Dhanaulti, Angora Farms in Gwaldam Chamoli, Chaubatia Gardens in Ranikhet, Macchi Tal in Gwaldam, and Ram Tal Horticulture Garden in Chakrata provide free entry to the tourists, and an opportunity to come and experience and gain knowledge about the agriculture and its practices. Green People, an NGO, initiated 'High Altitude

High-End Agro Tourism' in different villages of Tehri, Rudraprayag, and Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand, aiming to make Uttarakhand a leader in Farm Tourism.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study evaluates the effect of agritourism on the creation of jobs and the income of farmers in hilly areas. The factors influencing farmers' participation in agritourism and the advantages it provides to farmers are also covered in the study. The specific objectives are:

- (a) To analyze the contribution of agritourism in enhancing the farmer's income and livelihoods.
- (b) Assessment of the key factors that influence the farmer's participation in agritourism initiatives.
- (c) To assess the challenges associated with developing and promoting agritourism.
- (d) To identify institutional and policy measures necessary to support the growth and sustainability of agritourism in hill states.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

It is an exploratory research, in which the analysis of agritourism is done through various case studies conducted in India. The case studies selected for the study are from Maharashtra, the pioneer state of agritourism in India, from the North-East region, and a questionnaire was formed to understand the condition and factors that could lead to the growth of agritourism in Uttarakhand.

The study is conducted to analyze the contribution of agritourism in enhancing the farmer's income and livelihoods, to assess the key factors that influence the farmer's participation in agritourism initiatives, to identify socio-economic benefits of agritourism the people get in terms of employment generation, to assess the challenges associated with developing and promoting agritourism, and to acknowledge what institutional and policy measures are necessary to support the growth and sustainability of agritourism in hill states.

The limitation of the present study is the use of secondary data instead of primary data, and the sample collected for Uttarakhand was based on telephonic interview rather than an on-field survey. Due to time and financial constraints, a primary survey could not be conducted.

## **4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Shah et al. (2020) analyzed agritourism as a strategic tool for boosting the agrarian economy as well as reversing outmigration and farm abandonment in the Indian Western Himalayas. Tourism has been considered as a way to diversify and increase revenue from farms. Economic motives are considered to be important drivers of agritourism development, enhancing income from existing farm resources, diversifying farm revenue streams, expanding marketing and farm brand awareness, and adjusting seasonal fluctuations in farm revenue. Uttarakhand's farming communities face difficulties as a result of the state's uneven development, which has led to rural emigration and farm abandonment.

Babu (2021) examined how agro-based tourism changes the agricultural sector and strengthens farmers by providing a source of additional income. The Palshi Agritourism Centre in Maharashtra and the interventions of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Administration were used as case studies. The Agriculture Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC, Pune) is the main organisation in the Pune District that supports promoting this activity for achieving income, employment, and economic stability in rural areas. The ATDC initiative engages farmers from adjacent villages in its implementation, who share in the revenue earned, which amounts to roughly Rs. 65 lakhs per year.

Bose (2021) stated that the overall development of rural areas requires the involvement of the non-agrarian sector. The unique climatic, cultural and historical features in India creates the ideal conditions for the development of agro-tourism. Development of agritourism has numerous advantages; due to its affordability, agritourism serves as a low-cost entry point for travel and tourism. The employment alternatives for farmers, especially farm family members and youth, have risen significantly, and the farmers' extra income sources serve as a buffer against fluctuations in income.

Bagi and Reeder (2012) identified the factors affecting U.S. farmers' participation in agritourism. Several factors connected to the traits of the farm, the farm operator, and the region in which the farm is located have a substantial impact on the farmers' engagement. Farm operator characteristics of age, education, access to the internet, use of farm management advice, and the farm's organization as a partnership or corporation had positive and significant effects. The lack of education,

a common characteristic of low-income farmers, points to difficulties for such farmers in establishing agritourism and staying in business.

Bhatt and Kameshwari (2022) highlighted that hilly regions having adversities for agriculture can evolve into areas of socio-economic adaptations and could create income through the amalgamation of agriculture and tourism. Since agritourism in Uttarakhand is still in its infancy, the tourism agency lacks a dedicated organisation to identify and register all such centres. Integrating agritourism into the integrated farming model can be useful and should be used as a farm diversification strategy.

Chadda and Bhakare (2005) witnessed that the impact factor of agritourism has been phenomenal as per capita income has seen a rise. Many farmers have taken training in agritourism entrepreneurial aspects, and their feedback has revealed that there has been a minimum 33% income rise to basic agriculture income, as a two-acre farm yields Rs. 3,00,000 to Rs. 3,50,000 per annum. Supplementing agriculture with agritourism activities leaves an additional margin of Rs. 1,00,000 to Rs. 1,50,000 generating direct employment for 4 people, and indirect employment for approximately 10 individuals.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 5.1 Socio-Economic Benefits of Agritourism in Terms of Employment Generation

Agritourism has the capacity to create a win-win situation for both the farmers as well as the tourists. The farmers benefit by deriving additional source of income and tourist hunger for natural environment is satiated. It leads to employment generation through allied activities like Emu, organic and dairy farming. Gender bias is reduced as both male and female get equal opportunities to earn. Frequency of income generation increases from once a year to once a week. It is a strong supplementary source of income for farmers, employment generation, and rural development. Agritourism brings numerous socio-economic benefits, including economic growth, job creation, rural development, agricultural heritage preservation, education, cultural exchange, and environmental conservation. Agritourism has a big economic impact on the local and regional economy. Through a variety of channels, including farm tours, farm stays, on-site sales of farm goods, agricultural festivals, and leisure activities, it makes money. Tour guides, event coordinators, hospitality staff, and maintenance people are frequently needed to handle the operations of agritourism activities. New jobs are created as a result of the expansion of agritourism, both on farms and in allied fields like the food service industry.

*Table 7: Uttarakhand Tourism Infrastructure and Arrivals (FY 2022–23)*

Infrastructure / Arrivals Indicator	Count / Figure
<b>Tourist Places</b>	327
<b>Tourist Rest Houses</b>	180
<b>Night Shelters (RaenBasera)</b>	33
<b>Beds in Tourist Rest Houses</b>	6,244
<b>Beds in Night Shelters</b>	1,590
<b>Hotels / Lodges / Home Stays</b>	8,225
<b>Dharamshalas</b>	873
<b>Chardham + Hemkund Sahib Tourists (Total)</b>	<b>200.18 lakh</b>
– Indian Tourists	200.03 lakh
– Foreign Tourists	0.15 lakh
<b>National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries (Total)</b>	<b>4,55,577</b>
– Indian Tourists	4,38,693
– Foreign Tourists	16,884

*Source: Uttarakhand at a Glance, 2022, DES, Dehradun*

## 5.2 Contribution of Agritourism in Enhancing Farmer Income and Livelihoods

### Case Study 1: Baramati Agri and Rural Tourism Center, Maharashtra

Maharashtra is the pioneer state to develop and promote agritourism in the country. Baramati Agritourism Centre was incorporated in 2003 and owns the pilot agritourism project of 28 acres in Baramati, 70 km from Pune city. The main activities include operating its agritourism center, encouraging more farmers to take up agritourism, and conducting training and research programs.

**Table 1: Baramati Agri and Rural Tourism Center – Farm Profile**

Parameter	Details
Name of Farm	Baramati Agri and Rural Tourism Development Center
Location	Baramati, Maharashtra (70 km from Pune)
Year of Commencement	2003
Ownership	Private
Area	28 acres
Visitors/Year	3,000
Number of Employees	6
Activities Offered	Bullock cart ride, farm operations, livestock experience, honeybee keeping, fishing, modern agricultural practices, rural market visit, food processing units
Accommodation	Dormitories and Cottages
Charge per Customer (incl. food)	Rs. 2,000
Annual Returns (2021-22)	Rs. 53,57,000

*Source: Agriculture Report by ATDC*

The center offers activities such as bullock cart rides, farm operations, livestock experience, honeybee keeping, fishing in farm pond, modern agricultural practices visit, rural market visit and food processing units. It accommodates visitors in dormitories and cottages at Rs. 2,000 per customer including food and stay. The net income from the center was calculated at Rs. 53,57,000 for the operational year. The net income of Rs. 53,57,000 shows that breakeven can be achieved within 1.5 years to compensate for fixed costs.

**Table 2: Cost Incurred for Agritourism – Baramati Center**

Fixed Cost Item	Cost (Rs.)	Variable Cost Item (240 days)	Cost (Rs.)
Cottage (10 Nos. @ Rs. 4,15,000 each)	41,50,000	Staff (6 Nos. @ Rs. 400/day)	5,76,000
Dormitory (2 Nos. @ Rs. 3,00,000 each)	6,00,000	Repair & Maintenance (Rs. 700/day)	1,68,000
Dining Room	3,80,000	Others (food, customer services)	7,15,000
Farm Pond	1,00,000		
Cattle Shed	1,50,000		
Rural Games Unit	80,000		
Farm Machinery	8,00,000		
<b>Total Fixed Cost</b>	<b>62,60,000</b>	<b>Total Variable Cost</b>	<b>14,59,000</b>

*Note: Land cost not included. Source: Agriculture Report by ATDC*

**Table 3: Returns from Agritourism – Baramati Center (240 Seasonal Days)**

Accommodation Type	Calculation and Revenue
<b>Dormitories (2 Nos.)</b>	Rs. 550/head/day x 8 persons = Rs. 4,400 + Rs. 800 accommodation = Rs. 5,200 x 2 dorms = Rs. 10,400/day x 240 days = Rs. 24,96,000
<b>Cottages (10 Nos.)</b>	Rs. 550/head/day x 4 persons = Rs. 2,200 + Rs. 800 accommodation = Rs. 3,000 x 6 cottages = Rs. 18,000/day x 240 days = Rs. 43,20,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>Rs. 68,16,000</b>
<b>Less: Variable Expenses</b>	Rs. 14,59,000
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>Rs. 53,57,000 (Breakeven achieved within ~1.5 years)</b>

*Source: Agriculture Report by ATDC*

According to the ATDC Survey Report, the number of tourists visiting ATDC centers was around 0.4 million in 2014 and reached around 0.7 million in 2016. The increase in the number of tourists consequently led to the generation of around 35 million rupees through ATDC. The Agritourism Development Corporation provides farmers with agritourism training programmes with the technical and professional skills required to build farm-centric tourist operations.

**Table 4: ATDC Centers – Tourist Arrivals and Income Generated (2014–2017)**

Year	Tourists Visited (Millions)	Cumulative Income (Million Rs.)
<b>2014</b>	0.40	–
<b>2015</b>	0.53	–
<b>2016</b>	0.70	–
<b>2014–2017 (Total)</b>	–	<b>35.76</b>

*Source: ATDC Survey Report, 2017*

### **Case Study 2: YATRA – Farm Tourism Venture, Assam**

The whole approach is based on creating organic model farmers, model villages and introducing farm tourism in those farms and farmers. Ten farm tourism spots have been developed under the initiative and is supporting about 125 farmers involved with the initiative. Ten youths are directly employed and many other youth are involved indirectly with the project.

YATRA is a package for tourists where they can have the experience of staying in an organic tea garden, manufacture hand-made green tea, pluck tea leaves, live in bamboo made huts, sail in bamboo boats, stay in the bamboo village, help farmers plough, make compost and vermicompost, and taste the ethnic food and culture of the north east. The venture has trained 5,600 farmers on low cost farming methods and 3,000 school children on farm entrepreneurship, generating an annual turnover of 1 crore.

**Table 5: YATRA Farm Tourism Venture – Profile**

Parameter	Details
<b>Agripreneur</b>	Samir Ranjan Bordoloi
<b>Location</b>	Assam, North-East India
<b>Farm Tourism Spots</b>	10 spots developed
<b>Farmers Supported</b>	125 farmers
<b>Direct Employment (Youth)</b>	10 youths directly employed
<b>Farmers Trained (Low-Cost Methods)</b>	5,600

<b>School Children Trained</b>	3,000 on farm entrepreneurship
<b>Annual Turnover</b>	Rs. 1 Crore
<b>Key Constraints</b>	Farmers fear income drop on organic conversion; lack of marketing skills and financial support; poor rural infrastructure

*Source: Case Study by Saravanan Raj and Jyoti Todd*

### **Case Study 3: Rose Home Stay, Sunargaon, Uttarakhand**

Rose Homestay in Sunargaon, Uttarakhand not only provides the village with a much needed additional source of income but provides visitors with the chance to interact with the community. The farmer, Jeevan Lal Verma, has been hosting agritourists in his Rose Homestay since 1988, and provides farm production such as organic food grain, cow milk, poultry products (eggs and chicken), goat milk and meat, and vegetables at good prices, resulting in an income increase of 50%.

The case study revealed that the hosting family benefited through lodging and boarding charges, while community needy families benefited through agritourists' kind support. Community service providers, shopkeepers, transporters, guides, musicians, folk cultural artists, and local kids were also benefited. Key challenges identified included land reduction due to stone mining, environmental degradation, air pollution, less greenery, and reduced natural beauty.

**Table 6: Rose Home Stay, Sunargaon – Farmer Profile and Survey Responses**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Name</b>	Jeevan Lal Verma
<b>Gender / Age</b>	Male, 56+
<b>Education</b>	10+2 with 2 years Industrial Training
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer
<b>Farm Activities</b>	Organic Farming, Dairy, Goat Farming, Poultry, Kitchen Gardening
<b>Hosting Agritourists Since</b>	1988 (Rose Home Stay, Sunargaon)
<b>Income Impact</b>	50% increase in income through supply of organic produce, dairy, poultry and vegetables to tourists
<b>Employment Generated</b>	Organic/dairy/goat/poultry farmers, tour guides, home stay hosts, transporters, shopkeepers, folk artists
<b>Key Challenges Reported</b>	Land loss due to stone mining, environmental degradation, lack of travel agent support and promotion
<b>Socio-Economic Assessment</b>	Very Significant

*Source: Telephonic interview conducted as part of this study*

### **5.3 Key Factors Influencing Farmer Participation in Agritourism**

From various literature, it was found that farmer's participation in agritourism is significantly affected by a number of variables related to characteristics of the farm, the farm operator, and the area in which the farm is located. These variables include the amount of land owned, the percent of land that is not suitable for crop production, the allowing of public access for recreational uses to some part of the farm, and whether the land is enrolled in a conservation program.

Farm operator characteristics of age, education, access to the internet, use of farm management advice, and the farm's organization as a partnership or corporation had positive and significant effects. Investment in agritourism operations is not significantly limited by a farmer's wealth. However, limited

education, a common characteristic of low-income farmers, points to difficulties for such farmers in establishing agritourism and staying in business (Bagi and Reeder, 2012).

Dinh (2022) quantified the impact of each element on a scale of strong to weak: support of local government policies; join farmer associations, unions, and extension clubs; take use of the benefits; diverse modes of production; internet access; education level; membership in tourism and travel associations; the distance between the farm and the nearest commercial hub; income; and the age of the head of the household.

## **6. CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING AGRITOURISM**

The following key challenges were identified for the promotion and development of agritourism:

**Regulatory and Permitting Issues:** Agritourism activities often require compliance with a range of regulations and permits, including zoning regulations, health and safety standards, and permits for hosting events or selling food products. Understanding such regulations can prove challenging, particularly where farmers have little knowledge about the regulation or the rules themselves are confusing and inconsistent.

**Facilities and Infrastructure:** The creation of agritourism businesses will often involve the creation of suitable facilities that can support tourists. Such facilities could include construction of centers for visitors, restrooms, parking areas, picnic sites, and recreation areas. Lack of finance and permits for the construction of facilities can affect the creation of agritourism business ventures.

**Marketing and Promotion:** Marketing and promotion are key elements in bringing people to the destination for agritourism. But some farmers might lack skills when it comes to promoting their services. Budget constraints, limited marketing know-how, and competing tourist attractions might prevent the farmer from reaching out to the target market and raising awareness of their agritourism services.

**Seasonal Activities and Sustainability:** Agritourism activities are typically conducted on a seasonal basis. The high season usually occurs at certain times of the year, which could pose challenges when sustaining an income stream throughout the year.

**Financial Feasibility:** The establishment and operation of an agritourism enterprise are likely to incur substantial monetary expenditure. Examples of these include investments in physical infrastructure, marketing activities, employee training, and insurance. Ensuring the generation of sufficient income to recover these costs and become profitable can be difficult, particularly for startups with fewer visitors than anticipated.

**Striking a Balance between Agriculture and Tourism:** In agritourism, there is likely to be some compromise between agriculture and tourism needs. Agricultural operators need to satisfy the competing requirements of their agricultural business and visitors, which may lead to certain issues. Increased visitor numbers can present problems for securing privacy on the farm, the protection of animal welfare, and agricultural sensitivities.

## **7. INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY MEASURES**

The following institutions and policies can help to facilitate the sustainable development of agritourism:

**Favorable Institutional Policy:** The government can establish policies and regulation which would acknowledge the agritourism sector and encourage its development. This will involve making policies that will create a favorable regulatory environment for agritourism. Also, the government will have to simplify the process of obtaining permits for agritourism.

**Incentives and Grants:** The government can offer incentives to investors in the agritourism sector. The government could provide grants and low-interest loans to assist the growth and development of the agritourism sector.

**Training and Education:** There are various institutions that can train agritourism providers. Such institutions include hotels and hospitality management schools that have courses in customer relations, marketing, hospitality management, and safety. Also, agricultural extension officers and training colleges could conduct training in sustainable agriculture techniques.

**Networking and Collaboration Platforms:** Networking will assist agritourism operators to share knowledge and experiences. Networking platforms will involve bringing together agritourism operators into an association and engaging in regular conferences, workshops, and seminars.

**Marketing and Tourism Promotion Assistance:** Government authorities as well as tourism boards can support the marketing and promotion of agritourism as tourism niche itself by undertaking various efforts. Some of these efforts include promoting agritourism offerings in tourism literature or websites, engaging with tourism agencies and travel agents in promoting agritourism offers and experiences, organizing fam tours for tour operators and agencies, etc.

**Infrastructure Provisioning:** Governments can play an active role in ensuring that necessary infrastructure is developed and made available to support agritourism in respective regions or communities. Road transport accessibility to agritourism locations can be improved; there can be better provision of electricity, water, Internet, among other facilities which tourists will require while visiting agritourism attractions.

**Quality Control and Certification:** Quality control and certification programs can also be established by governments to improve standards in agritourism industry. Standards relating to safety, hygiene, customer service, environmental sustainability, among others, can be formulated and certification/accreditation awarded accordingly.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

Agritourism is an important area within the agricultural sector which benefits not only the agricultural industry and the tourists but also rural communities. First, it gives tourists a new and different experience that is associated with getting back to nature and learning how sustainable agriculture works in practice. It is a welcome change from standard vacations because one can get out of town and explore another side of life.

Second, agritourism makes important contributions to local economies because by attracting more tourists, farmers and rural businessmen can earn money in a new way and become less dependent on regular farming. They have additional opportunities to boost their economies and help to sustain farmland and create new businesses such as farm to table eateries, farm accommodations, and other agritourist ventures.

Moreover, agritourism can contribute to increased environmental sustainability. Agritourism businesses adopt the practices of sustainable agriculture, organic farming methods, and conservation of the local environment. Tourists through the programs and experience get educated about the significance of environmental conservation and the role played by agriculture in sustainable development.

As a result of implementing agritourism in the region, the farmers of Uttarakhand are expected to be engaged in diversified economic activities leading to the increase of their income, which further contributes to boosting up the local economy. With proper planning and collaboration between various players, the practice of agritourism will continue to thrive.

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