

Agritourism Intensive 2015-2016 – Shasta County

Offered by UC Cooperative Extension and the UC Small Farm Program in partnership with Shasta Co. Dept. of Agriculture, Redding Convention & Visitors Bureau, Growing Local Shasta, and other local partners

Course Syllabus

Course Overview

This course will introduce the student to the range of opportunities for diversifying a working farm or ranch by providing enjoyment and education to visitors for profit. Local experts will guide participants as they assess their own farms or ranches for agritourism potential and start creating business, risk management and marketing plans for their own agritourism operations. Local experienced agritourism operators will share their own experiences and will be part of a supportive network of advisors as class participants plan and start new enterprises.

Students will participate in individual exercises and will share their work during class discussions, and will have homework assignments to complete between the class sessions. The homework will include completing several assessment worksheets in cooperation with family or business partners, as well as writing first drafts of parts of their own business plans. Class instructors will provide each participant with individual feedback on all assignments turned in. No educational credit will be given for this course.

The participants will be encouraged to (but not required to) participate in group online discussions about the classes, readings and individual planning work.

- Dates:** Wednesdays, January 6, February 10, and March 16, 2016
Times: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. each session (lunches included)
Location: The McConnell Foundation Lema Ranch, 800 Shasta View Drive, Redding, CA 96003
Cost: \$50 for 3-session course for first person from a family or business, then \$25 for additional family or business participants.
Information: Penny Leff, UC ANR Small Farm Program, paleff@ucdavis.edu, 530-752-7779

Course Agenda

Session 1: Introduction to agritourism possibilities – Wednesday, Jan 6, 2016

- 8:30-9:00 **Registration/Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00-9:15 **Overview of the workshop series, introductions**
- 9:15-9:30 **Welcome/Why agritourism? – Shasta County Supervisor Pam Giacomini**
- 9:30-10:30 **Successes in agritourism – Experienced operators tell their stories, discuss costs & benefits and start-up challenges, followed by Q&A**
Bill Burrows, Burrows Ranch Hunting Club, Anne Bianchi, Bianchi Orchards
- 10:30 - 10:45 **Break**
- 10:45 -11:45 **Assessing your farm or ranch and community for agritourism potential**
Overview of individual farm/ranch assessment process – Penny Leff
Hand out assessment worksheets
Discussion about community & market assessment, potential partners & target audience identification
- 11:45-12:00 **Individual or small group exercise – start on assessment worksheet or list of questions**

12:00 – 12:30 **Lunch**

12:30 -3:30 **Field trip** to Hawes Farms including discussion of being in the hospitality business - meeting visitors' needs and expectations, setting up for guests, & creating a positive visitor experience, *Guest speakers: Bob and Mary Nash, Nash Ranch*

3:30 – 4:00 **Discuss homework, complete class evaluation**

Homework – due at beginning of next class:

- ❖ reading in text and supplemental reading
- ❖ Complete assessment worksheets of participant's own farm or ranch for agritourism potential, involving family members and partners in the process.
- ❖ Begin evaluation of the potential for several current or possible agritourism activities on participant's farm or ranch, including who would be partners/collaborators.

Session 2: Business planning, permits & partners – Wednesday, February 10, 2016

8:30-9:00 **Sign in/Continental Breakfast**

9:00-9:10 **Welcome /Overview of the day**

9:10-9:30 **Small Group exercise** – share assessment of farm or ranch for agritourism potential and analysis of possible agritourism enterprises

9:30 – 10:15 **Introduction to business planning** – *Nancy Swift, Jefferson Economic Development Institute*
Overview of planning process reasons, steps & resources
Discussion of mission statement, business concept, goals, objectives

10:15 – 10:30 **Individual Exercise** – start work on writing business concept

10:30 - 10:45 **Break**

10:45 – 11:30 **Budgeting & cash flow** – *Nancy Swift, Jefferson Economic Development Institute*
Discussion of cash flow, budgeting, “one-page financial plan”
Presentation of budgeting or cash flow projection exercise

11:30-12:00 **Individual Exercise** - Start Individual budgeting or cash flow projection exercise

12:00 – 12:30 **Lunch**

12:30 -1:30 **Navigating the permitting and regulatory process**
Richard Simon, Director, Shasta Co. Dept. of Resource Management
Fern Hastings, Shasta Co. Dept. of Environmental Health

1:30 – 2:00 **Small group discussions to share preliminary ideas or talk with experts**
Share initial thoughts about directions for exploration?

2:00 - 2:15 **Break**

2:15 – 2:45 **Emergency planning for agritourism operations** – *Penny Leff, using presentation based on work by Julie Fox, Ohio State University Extension*

2:45 – 3:30 **Introduction to the tourism community, Q&A**
Visit Redding representative talking about current visitors, current tourism activity & how farmers/ranchers might connect with visitors and current promotional and/or community activities.

3:30 – 3:45 **Full Group discussion** – *share visions – what do you want your agritourism operation to look like in 5 years?*

3:45 – 4:00 **Homework discussion, preview of next session, workshop evaluation**

Homework – due at beginning of next class:

- ❖ Complete first draft of “one page business plan”: mission statement, business concept, goals and objectives.
- ❖ Complete budgeting or cash flow projection exercise
- ❖ Consult with insurance agent, county planning department, and/or experienced agritourism operator

Lesson 3 – budgeting and marketing strategy – Wednesday, March 16, 2016

8:30-9:00 **Sign in/Continental Breakfast**

9:00-9:10 **Welcome /Overview of the day**

9:10-9:30 **Group discussion** - share and discuss homework assignments

9:30-10:30 **Legal liability and risk management strategies**

Introduction to risk management strategies and landowner liability issues,
Penny Leff, UC Small Farm Program
Insurance options for agritourism, *Kari Haley, Haley Insurance Marketing, Inc.*

10:30 -10:45 **Hand out Checklists** *for assessing risk management on your farm or ranch*
– *show Safe Agritourism website*

10:45 – 11:00 **Break**

11:00 -12:00 **Effective websites and social media for agritourism**
Kallie Markle, Visit Redding

12:00 – 12:30 **Lunch**

12:30 – 1:00 **Creating a marketing strategy**
Speaker TBD

1:00 – 1:15 **Individual exercise:** *draft outline of a marketing strategy*

1:15 – 1:35 **Small Group Exercise:** *Share individual marketing strategy drafts in small groups*

1:35 – 1:45 **Report back to full group on interesting/innovative marketing strategies**

1:45 -2:00 **Individual exercise:** *Complete 6 month action plan*

2:00 – 2:15 **Break**

2:15 – 3:00 **Marketing the community: agritourism associations and other collaborations** - working together for mutual success – *Debbie Johnson, Shasta Cascade Viticulture Association, Johanna Trenerry, Happy Valley Farm Trail*

3:00 – 3:30 **Full group discussion** – Each individual shares plans, challenges and progress so far

3:30 – 3:45 **Wrap-up and class evaluation**



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture