

Chapter I:

Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism Introduction

Chapter I. Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism Introduction

NRCS Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism Website

This website provides information about alternative enterprises and agritourism, including related directories, web sites and publications.

Available at:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS/altenterprise

Alternative Enterprises: For Higher Profits and Healthier Land

NRCS Brochure

Available online at:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS/altenterprise/infosheets.html

Copies available by calling, Call 1-888-LANDCARE

Alternative Enterprise and Agritourism—For Higher Profits, Healthier Land

NRCS Information Sheet—This four-page information sheet shows resources and a list of many alternative agriculture and agritourism opportunities.

Available online at:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS

Copies may be ordered by calling 1-888-LANDCARE.

Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism: Farming for Profit and Sustainability Resource Manual

This is a 3,000-page resource manual that contains about 100-pages of resource experts, 40 pages of web sites and lists of publications, articles, publications, books, research reports, and guides to assist in the development of agritourism and alternative enterprises businesses. This resource manual is designed for community leaders such as Federal or county employee or other staff who promote these activities and well as individual farmers and ranchers.

Available on the RESSD web site:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS/altenterprise

Agritourism and Alternative Enterprises: Farming for Profit and Sustainability Resource Manual Table of Contents and Abstracts

This publication is the “Table of Contents and Abstracts” of the above resource manual. This 250-page resource contains the name and a short statement of all the articles, books, publications, research reports, websites and guides that are identified in the above “Resource Manual.”

Available online at:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS/altenterprise

or in printed form by contacting

James Maetzold

Ph: (202) 720-2307

Email jim.maetzold@usda.gov

Income Opportunities for Your Farm: Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism Resources—CD ROM

This CD is available to all individuals from landowners to agritourism and alternative enterprise leaders. It contains the information on the RESSD website plus other funding resource information. In brief, the CD contains: major web site links, the above resource manual, NRCS brochure, NRCS Information Sheets, Funding Sources, People Resource Directory, and “Taking the First Step: Farm and Ranch Alternative Enterprise and Agritourism Resource Evaluation Guide.”

Available from James Maetzold

Ph: (202) 720-2307

Email jim.maetzold@usda.gov

Agritourism, Alternative Enterprises, Conservation, Sustainability and Partnerships For Farms, Ranches and Rural Communities

USDA, NRCS

This a paper that addresses alternative enterprises and agritourism definitions, natural resource sustainability, agritourism sustainability and partnerships.

Available in the resource manual or contact

Maetzold at 202-720-0132.

Choosing Your Enterprises: A Checklist

Reprinted in Ag Opportunities Newsletter (vol. 6 no. 3; May-June 1996) with permission from “Sell What You Sow” by Eric Gibson

Available online at: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/mac/agopp/arc/agopp007.txt> along with other newsletter information.

Ph: (573) 882-1905 or 1-800- 433-3704

Tips for Staying on Track and Getting Started

NRCS

A 10 steps to follow when considering an alternative enterprise or agritourism.

Available in resource manual or contact

Jim Maetzold

202-720-2307

email: jim.maetzold@usda.gov

Resource Conservation and Development: Partnerships Serving America's Communities.

This is a Federal government program that helps people in rural areas plan and carry out activities that increase conservation of natural, support economic development, and enhance the environment and standard of living in local communities. There are 370 councils active in the U.S.

More information available www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/RCCD/homepag3.htm

Small Farm Today: The Original How-to Magazine of Alternative and Traditional Crops, Livestock, and Direct Marketing

This magazine, published bi-monthly, is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of small farming, rural living, sustainability, community, and agripreneurship. At the end of

each magazine, resources are identified, there is a classified section, and an advertisements and a breeders directory.

Available online at: <http://www.smallfarmtoday.com>

3903 W Ridge Trail Rd

Clark MO 65243-9525

Ph: 1-800-633-2535 or (573) 687-3525

Email: smallfarm@socket.net

AgVentures

AgVentures magazine publishes articles on livestock, crops, aquaculture, niche markets, wildlife, herbs and other topics. The articles are based on actual alternative enterprise and agritourism success stories. At the end of each magazine, resources are identified, there is a classified section, and an advertisements and a breeders directory.

Website: <http://www.agventures.com>

Ph: 1-888-474-6397.

Growing for Market: news and ideas for market gardeners.

Monthly publication about horticulture and crops production and marketing.

For more information call

800-307-8949

Making Your Small Farm Profitable

By Ron Macher,

Storey Books (November 1999)

ISBN: 1580171613;

This book discusses the development of new crops and markets, maximizing net profit per acre, and enterprise planning and management. It also provides a guide to equipment costs, operation costs, etc.

Available from the publisher as well as from other common booksellers

Web Site: www.smallfarmtoday.com

Ph: 573-687-3525

You Can Farm: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Start and Succeed in a Farming Enterprise

by Joel Salatin

Polyface Inc (June 1998)

ISBN: 0963810928

Joel Salatin uses his experiences on his own farm to provide information to anyone who is beginning a farming enterprise.

Available form the publisher as well as from other common booksellers.

Ph: 540-885-3590

www.polyface.com

MetroFarm: The Guide to Growing for Big Profits on a Small Parcel of Land

By Michael Olson

This book has information on understanding agriculture and agribusiness, developing a metro-farm, and selling your product. For more information go to:

<http://www.metrofarm.com/index.asp?cat=40092>

Cost: \$29.95 (plus shipping and handling)

Order from:

AgVentures

11950 W. Highland Ave.

Blackwell, OK 74631-6511

Truck Patch: A Farmer's Odyssey

Ward Sinclair

It is a beautiful compilation of the author's words and conveys his spirit and love of farming. Available for \$14.95 from

The American Botanist,

PO Box 532

Chillicothe, IL 61523

Small Farm Resource Guide

USDA, CSREES, Small Farm Program

The Small Farm Resource Guide provides a listing of small farm organizations, institutions, and others that may not necessarily have small farm expertise, but do have information relevant to small farm enterprises.

Available at www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm or call 202-401-4385 for a free copy.

Small Farm Digest

USDA, CSREES, Small Farm Program

This publication has articles on USDA activities, small farm success stories, small farm studies and a calendar of events.

Available online at: <http://www.reeusda.gov/agsys/smallfarm/sfd>.

Available free of charge by calling, (202) 401-6544.

Directory of Land-Grant Universities

This website hosts all state partners of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Services. It includes an online list of professional workers in agriculture.

Available at: www.reeusda.gov/statepartners/usa/htm.

Travel Industry Association of America (TIA)

TIA's mission is to represent the whole of the U. S. travel and tourism industry to promote and facilitate increased travel to, and within, the United States. This web site contains a contact point for all state and many local governments that are involved in tourism, including rural tourism.

Available at: www.tia.org/Press/sto_directory.asp

Alternative Agriculture and Agritourism Enterprises (Links)

The following websites contain considerable information and links to various documents prepared by personnel from land grant universities, federal agencies, and private foundations. The documents each have information needed to help you make an informed decision about alternative agriculture and agritourism enterprises.

The Landowners Survival Guide: Resources for Agricultural Landowners in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

A 60-page publication of resources on economic viability, alternative production systems, natural resource conservation and farm stewardship.

Available from:

www.futureharvestcasa.org

Future Harvest-CASA

106 Market Court, Stevensville, MD 21666

Ph: 410-604-2681.

For Additional Information

The following Web sites provide basic information and the opportunity to link to additional resource material.

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)

www.attra.ncat.edu

1-800-346-9140

Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University

www.cals.cornell.edu/dept/ruralsoc/fap

607-255-9832

Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture

www.kerrcenter.com

Michigan State University Travel, Tourism and Recreation Center

www.tourism.msu.edu

517-731-0272

Minnesota Tourism Center

www.tourism.umn.edu

Missouri Alternatives Center

www.agebb.missouri.edu/mac

573-884-4339

National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils

www.rcdnet.org

National Endowment for the Arts

www.arts.endow.gov

National Association of State Development Agencies

www.nasda.com

NAFDMA-North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association

www.nafdma.com

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Rural Heritage

<http://www.ruralheritage.org>

202-588-6204

NRCS Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism

www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS/altenterprise/index.html

202-720-0132

Rural Information Center (RIC)

www.nal.usda.gov/ric

1-800-633-7701

Small Farms Center, University of California, Davis

www.sfc.ucdavis.edu

530-752-7774

Sustainable Agriculture, Research and Education (SARE)

www.sare.org

202-720-5203

Texas A&M Recreation Park and Tourism Sciences

<http://naturetourism.tamu.edu>

979-845-0871

Tilling the Soil of Opportunity: NxLevel

Guide for Agricultural Entrepreneurs

www.nebraskaedge.unl.edu

800-328-2851

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

www.usda.gov

www.ams.usda.gov

www.csrees.usda.gov

www.nrcs.usda.gov

www.sare.org

USDA Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC)

www.nal.usda.gov/afsic

301-504-6422 or 301-504-5724

USDA Rural Development

www.rurdev.usda.gov

USDA Small Farms

www.usda.gov/oce/smallfarm/sfhome.htm

U.S. Small Business Administration

www.sbaonline.sba.gov

[www.your state extension and/or department of tourism](#)



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

AE-1

Alternative Enterprises – For Higher Profits, Healthier Land

What Are Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism?

Alternative enterprises and agritourism allow farmers and ranchers to earn higher profits by replacing or supplementing traditional farm operations with innovative, sustainable on-farm or on-ranch ventures.

Alternative enterprises and agritourism can take many forms. They can:

- produce food and fiber or have little to do with agriculture,
- produce new or unique crops or livestock or add value to traditional agricultural products,
- rely on traditional farm practices or use alternative methods, such as organic systems,
- be labor- and resource- intensive or require few inputs,
- operate either seasonally or year-round,
- produce fun, recreation, and education- or nature-based agritourism.

But they all have a common theme: farmers and ranchers rely on the natural resources on their land – the soil, water, air, plants, wildlife, and scenery – to keep their family on the farm and the farm in their family. They also require sound land care. Since the land's resources generate income, conserving those resources makes good business sense.

Which Alternative Enterprise Might Be Right for Me?

A lot goes into determining what type of enterprise is most appropriate for you. But first you must assess the natural resources on your farm or ranch, as well as your personal and financial resources. Here are a few questions you should consider:

Land Use: How much land do you own or have access to and how is it being used? Farms with wooded areas may be well suited for mushroom production or hunting. Operations with open areas may make good sites for public events. Fallow

cornfields may be rented out for goose hunting. Pasturelands could be used to graze alternative livestock, such as goats, poultry, or bison.

Land Features: What does your land look like? Does it have scenic views? Rolling hills? Interesting geologic features, like caves or glacial features? Land that is unique or visually appealing may provide income opportunities from activities like hiking, horseback riding, nature tours, or hayrides. Land with water features could be used for fishing, duck hunting, canoeing, and other water sports.

Land Location: How close are your neighbors? How close is your marketplace? Being located too close to people may limit some enterprises, like hunting. But access to nearby markets may be required for other ventures, like pick-your-own enterprises.

Soil Type: What are the characteristics of your soil, and what is it best suited for? Soil capability should factor into your decision.

Farmstead Features: Are there historic buildings or other historic features on your property that might serve as tourist attractions? Is your farmhouse well suited for a bed and breakfast? Are there buildings that could be modified for use as conference or banquet facilities?

Climate: What is the average temperature, rainfall, or snowfall in your area? Will you need to irrigate?

Wildlife: Is there abundant wildlife on your property that could support recreation like hunting, fishing, and bird watching?

Financial Resources: Do you have access to loans or other sources of capital? Some alternative enterprises have high start-up costs, while others require little up-front investment.

Other Resources: What are *your* talents, skills, and interests? Are you, or are others in your family, good

at particular crafts such as woodworking, quilting, or knitting that you could teach or demonstrate? Do you enjoy working and talking with people?

Are there others – family members, neighbors, community groups – you can team up with on an alternative enterprise?

How much labor can you provide or do you have access to?

What Else Do I Need To Know?

Business Planning

Any new venture requires a well-developed business plan.

You'll need to do the following:

- assess your resources,
- research market and business conditions,
- identify your customers and competitors,
- set your business development and financial goals,
- research and comply with any rules and regulations (discussed below),
- arrange financing,
- develop a marketing plan, and
- implement your business plan.

Rules and Regulations

Alternative enterprises often pose new legal challenges that traditional farming operations don't face. You'll need to research whether your potential enterprise will require any of the following:

- special permits, including zoning, building, vendor, environmental, and other permits;
- compliance with health and environmental regulations, fish and game rules, building codes, tax remittance on sales, and other local, state, and Federal regulations;
- legal agreements to use other private or public property;
- liability or other insurance.

Where To Get Help

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program and its Sustainable Agriculture Network have developed and compiled information on planning, developing, and marketing different types of alternative enterprises. SARE also offers grants for research and education on alternative production and marketing systems. See <http://www.sare.org> on the web or call the SARE program at (202) 720-5203.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can help you conduct a natural resources assessment. To locate the NRCS office nearest you, look in your phone book under "U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service."

For a national listing of alternative enterprises and agritourism liaisons, see <http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/RESS/econ/ressd.htm>.

Resource Conservation and Development Councils, coordinated by NRCS, can also help you get started on alternative enterprises. To locate the RC&D Council that serves your area, contact your nearest NRCS office or see <http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/RCCD/rc&dstate.html> on the web.

Cooperative Extension

Your local Cooperative Extension Service can help you locate resources and expertise on alternative enterprises and business development. To find the Cooperative Extension office nearest you, look in your phone book under "County Government, Cooperative Extension."

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)

ATTRA offers extensive information on initiating and maintaining successful alternative enterprises and provides links to other organizations that can help you. See <http://www.attra.org> on the web, or call (800) 346-9140. ATTRA also provides useful information on marketing and evaluating alternative agricultural enterprises. ATTRA is sponsored by USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

Farming Alternatives Program (FAP), Cornell University

FAP has produced a step-by-step workbook, *Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises*, to help you plan and evaluate a new enterprise. It can be ordered by calling FAP at (607) 255-9832. Also see <http://www.cals.cornell.edu/dept/ruralsoc/fap/fap.html> on the web.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

The SBA provides information on planning, financing, and marketing your new business, including a small business "start up kit." SBA may also be able to help you develop a business plan and with other aspects of launching an alternative business. To locate

the SBA office nearest you, look in your phone book, under "U.S. Government, Small Business Administration," see <http://www.sba.gov> on the web, or call 1-800-UASKSBA.

Other Resources

For information on the local and state business climate, contact your local Chamber of Commerce. For information on starting and marketing your own tourist or recreation enterprise, contact your state department of tourism or your county or city convention and visitors bureau. Trade associations for specific businesses, such as the National Aquaculture Association, North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association, the American Pastured Poultry Producers Association, the American Bed and Breakfast Association, and many others, may be able to give you additional guidance.

Examples of Alternative Enterprises

FEE-BASED OUTDOOR RECREATION

Recreation derived from the natural resources on farms and ranches can provide new income opportunities for landowners. However, these types of enterprises require careful resources management to stay viable. The following are some of the activities that can be offered to the public for a fee:

Access to water bodies, natural areas, scenic sites, etc.
Archery
Bird watching or nature photography
Fishing or hunting
Ice-skating and sledding
Outdoor games (laser tag, paint ball, golf)
Swimming, inner tubing, canoeing
Rock climbing/rappelling
Scenic trails (for horseback riding, cross country skiing, hiking, or snowshoeing)
Picnicking and camping

EQUIPMENT RENTAL

If you are offering for-fee recreational services or are located in areas where outdoor recreation is popular – near trout streams, hiking trails, state and national parks, etc. – you may wish to consider offering rental of the following types of equipment:

Binoculars, sighting scopes, tripods
Boats, canoes, kayaks, inner tubes
Camping, fishing, or hunting equipment
Snowshoes, toboggans, cross country skis

ALTERNATIVE CROPS and VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Growing high-value, non-traditional crops, raising specialty livestock, or providing farm-related services can provide farmers and ranchers with supplemental income. The following list includes just a few of the items or services farmers and ranchers can grow or develop on their land to generate income:

Alternative livestock products

Goats (meat, milk, cheese, soap)
Llamas and alpacas (wool or breeding stock)
Free-range livestock
Pastured poultry and livestock
Rabbit
Bison, elk, and deer
Aquaculture (fish, clams, shrimp)
Bait (minnows, worm farming)
Canned, dried, smoked, or other preserved goods
Craft sales (dried flowers, wreaths, furniture)
Firewood
Flowers or herbs
Fruit or nut orchards
Christmas trees
Guide service for hunting, fishing, or pack trips
Horse boarding
Mushrooms (shiitake and others)
Nursery products (shrubs, annuals, nursery stock, etc.)
Organic produce
Straw (pine straw and others)

ALTERNATIVE MARKETING

There are a number of innovative ways to market crops that you already grow or those that you wish to grow. These marketing techniques can increase your share of farm and ranch sales.

Pick/cut-your-own (fruits, vegetables, flowers, Christmas trees)
Rent-a-tree, berry bush, garden, or flowerbed
Community-supported agriculture
Direct marketing
 Internet sales to distant buyers
 Farmers' markets
 Roadside sales
Direct selling to schools and restaurants

PUBLIC EVENTS and PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

Farms and ranches can make ideal settings for local fairs and festivals and other community events. You can offer your farm or ranch as the event site for a fee and offer goods for sale during the event for extra profit. You can also offer programs that help people reconnect with the land. The following are

types of events or participant experiences that urban dwellers and others may wish to participate in:

Bonfires
Clam bakes
Corn or tall grass maze
Dances
Farm school for children and adults
Festivals and fairs
 Anniversary festivals
 Blossom or harvest festivals
 Cultural or ethnic festivals
 Music festivals
 Heritage festivals
Food gathering (fruit, nut, mushroom, flower picking)
Rock or gem gathering
Garden plot rentals
Guided nature walks
Haying or other harvest experiences
Hay/sleigh/tractor rides
Historic interpretation or reenactments
Outdoor plays and concerts
Pumpkin carving
Petting zoo
Rodeos, roundups, horse shows
Syrup making
Tours of wildlife and fish habitat conservation projects

HOSPITALITY SERVICES

Because of the serenity they can provide, farms and ranches are increasingly being sought out for lodging and other hospitality services. Here are a few of the services that some farms and ranches are providing:

Bed and breakfast
Cabin rentals
Child care
Catering for events held on your farm or ranch
Meeting and conference facilities for business and pleasure
 Country weddings
 Company retreats
 Family reunions
 Church picnics
Farm/ranch vacations (cattle roundups, chuck wagon meals, cattle drives)
Pet boarding/training
Youth camps

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The farmstead is increasingly becoming a desirable location for demonstration or instruction of crafts and traditional rural activities. The following are some of the skills that imaginative farmers are sharing with the public:

Cattle roping, branding
Cooking, canning, wine making, syrup making, smoking fish and meats
Cow/goat milking
Crafts (woodworking, rug hooking, quilting, knitting, wool spinning, weaving, soap making, flower arranging)
Flour milling
Gardening
Grain threshing
Lumberjack skills
Organic food production
Plant identification
Sheep herding (sheep dog demos)

TOURISM

Tourism generates income not just from entrance fees but also from food, crafts, and other souvenirs offered for sale. The following list includes different farming and ranching operations the public may wish to tour. To attract more tourists, farmers and ranchers may want to join with other producers and innkeepers in their communities to offer tours of multiple operations (a fish farm, a flower farm, a llama operation, a ranch, etc.) and other rural attractions for a package price.

Bird/wildlife preserves
Cider mills
Farm/ranch buildings
Fish farms
Flower and herb farms
Specialty livestock operations (angora goats, llamas, dairy)
Food processing facilities
Historic sites or buildings
Hydroponics operations
Maple syrup production facilities
Orchards
Saw mills
Traditional farms and ranches
Wineries

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Agritourism Alternative Enterprises, Conservation, Sustainability and Partnerships
For Farms, Ranches and Rural Communities 1/

By

James A. Maetzold

National Agritourism, Recreation and Alternative Enterprise Leader, NRCS

Introduction: This paper discusses—Why Agritourism? What is Agritourism? What are the Agritourism, Recreation and Alternative Enterprise Opportunities? What is Sustainable Natural Resource and Agritourism? and What are the Agritourism and Conservation Partnership Possibilities for Sustainability?

Why agritourism and recreation on farms, ranches, and in rural communities?

Agritourism has the potential as a vehicle for preserving and sustaining family farms, ranches, rural communities, and conserving the natural resources. Agritourism enterprises and activities can provide additional income to farmers, ranchers, and the rural community. (Mahoney) It can provide the additional supplemental revenue that can make a difference between a profit and a loss for agricultural producers, agri-businesses and the rural community. It is a way to “add value” to crops and livestock currently grown on the farm or ranch. It also has the potential for building current relationships and expanding future relationships between agriculture and tourism supporting industries.

Many of the natural resource conservation programs enhance the natural resources and rural landscapes that are cherished by rural, suburban, and urban tourists. Agritourism provides many rural, urban and suburban tourists with the opportunities for enjoyment and direct contact with agriculture and the natural resources. Getting back to the agricultural heritage roots and nature-based recreation experiences is a major tourist trend today. (Rach, and American Recreation Coalition)

Integrating tourism into current agricultural food and fiber product operations is a way for a farm or ranch to “grow” and supplement its income as well as increasing the recreation diversity for the public. Agritourism can “jump start” tourism development with relatively little initial investment at the farm, ranch or community level. It is a people to people business. It can begin by just changing the method of production, marketing or making another use of natural resources other than just production agriculture. Agritourism is a unique enterprise that generally requires a small amount of money, but is normally labor intensive. To build an agritourism enterprise, is a process of investing a small amount—build and learn, invest a small amount—build and learn, invest....etc. (Cool) Agritourism can also be developed to attract tourists during off-peak farm

1/ This paper builds on a report prepared by Edward M. Mahoney, Daniel M. Spotts, and John V. Edwards titled “Developing Agriculture and Natural Resource Products

Tourism by Sustaining and Enhancing Partnerships,” Unpublished report prepared for Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA, 1999.

and ranch work periods such as blossom time, maple syrup processing, and summer/autumn festivals or during peak periods such as fruit and vegetable U-pick enterprises and harvest festivals.

What is agritourism or alternative enterprise? This word has several meanings as it includes tourism, agriculture, people, products, and conservation. It is also called “alternative enterprise” and “enterprise diversification.” Agritourism is defined by some as any business or activity that invites visitors to come on to a farm, ranch or into a rural community to enjoy agriculture and the natural resources. (Kuhlen, et al) It is generally an additional or “alternative enterprise” that has been added to the farm or ranch. It can also be a value-added alternative enterprise that increases the value of the current food and fiber crops or non-traditional agriculture production or marketing. For a community, it is a new tourism or recreation activity that is designed to attract tourists. It is any activity that is beyond the traditional food and fiber production or marketing agree-business system of the area but it is agriculturally, natural resource or cultural/heritage based. This is also called “rural economic development.”

In agritourism and alternative enterprises, farmers, ranchers and the rural community utilize the same natural resources--soil, water, animals, plants and air and people—that are used to produce food and fiber, but use them for agritourism, different products or different marketing methods.

What is Tourism? It is defined by the commercial tourism industry as any recreation that occurs when a person travels more than 100 miles from home to participate in a recreation activity. (TIA) Thus, tourism is outdoor or indoor recreation, pleasure travel involving the direct purchase of farm products, farm stays, crafts, tours, festivals, indoor/outdoor learning, scenery, walking/hiking, skiing or other nature-based outdoor or natural resource based recreation experiences. If it is not a 100-mile trek, it is not tourism.

This causes a serious problem for agritourism when it comes to evaluating agritourism business alternatives. Agritourism cannot be limited to the 100 miles criteria for rural America tourism because the majority of all agricultural, nature-based, or natural resource-based recreation tourism and income is derived from the local county residents. Research findings estimate that about 75-80 percent of the income is from local residents for the basic on farm, ranch or local community tourism or value-added activity. For the rural community and especially the Natural Resources Conservation Service, agritourism means any agricultural or natural resource/cultural/heritage-based-income-producing recreation or value-added enterprise or community activity regardless of the distance traveled by the tourist.

What are the different recreation or value-added alternative enterprises?
Alternative enterprise activities are either natural resource consumptive or non-

consumptive. In most cases, agritourism recreation or value-added enterprises are non-consumptive or renewable such as fruit trees bearing fruit every year, birds returning every year, and the scenery changing with the season. Also, agricultural food and fiber crops being planted in soil, using conservation planning and practices, that sustain the soil which is nourished by annual rainfall.

Figure 1 shows 14 different categories of agritourism alternative enterprises that can occur on the farm, ranch, or in the local community. These are: farm markets and specialty products; product processing; fairs, festivals and special events; horses and other farm animals; unique dining experiences; wildlife and fish; adventure; floriculture; education; heritage/culture/ethnic; arts and crafts; farm/ranch stays; tours and touring; and pick/cut/gather/grow your own. (Mahoney)

Table 1 contains over 150 agritourism and value-added alternative income producing recreation enterprise activities for the farm, ranch or rural community. (A number of these enterprises can be found in Chapter Nine "Enterprise Diversification" of the NRCS National Range and Pasture Handbook.) Each of these enterprises provides the opportunity to develop a number of spin-off recreation enterprises that tie into the tourism-related business enterprises. Many tourism and recreation activities/attractions on a farm, ranch or in a rural community can be linked to other "value added" enterprises such as direct marketing, roadside stands, U-pick, selling of ice cream/cheeses, decorated food baskets, crafts, farm dining, fresh and processed meats/vegetables/jams/jellies, syrup, wines, at farmers' markets, roadside stands or on the farm. This tourist traffic also translates into other tourism businesses such as shops, hotels, motels, restaurants, gas stations, repair shops and other services in the community.

Agritourism and Natural Resource Sustainability—Sustaining the natural resources through conservation is a major consideration during the development and operation of tourism and alternative enterprises as it is with traditional food and fiber production. For many of the alternative enterprises, the organic production, processing and distribution of food and fiber are a primary consideration. It makes good sense and it is USDA's policy. USDA Secretary's Memorandum 9500-6, "Sustainable Development" (September 13, 1996) commits USDA to work "...toward the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of diverse food, fiber, agriculture, forest, and range systems." It calls for USDA to balance goals of improved production and profitability with the need for stewardship of the natural resource base and ecological systems and the need for vitality of rural communities.

Natural resources and cultural landscapes will continue to be dominant tourist attractions in most rural areas as tourists continue to pursue their interest in nature-based recreation and agritourism. It is important to conserve, protect, and enhance these natural resources that tourists enjoy. Long-term rural agritourism sustainability depends upon maintaining the quality of the nature-based environment that includes a sustainable and productive agriculture. The following are features of (1) natural resource sustainability and (2) agritourism sustainability.

1. Natural Resource Sustainability--Sustainability is defined by the United Nations as... "The use and management of the natural resources (soil, water, animals, plant and air) in a way that it does not limit the options of future generations." The major elements of natural resource sustainability are productivity, stability/resilience, maintenance of resource asset, and equitability as shown in Figure 2.

1. **Productivity**—For consumptive type recreation enterprises such as recreation wildlife hunting and fishing, or crop and animal production for farmer's market, the natural resources' maintain the ability to restore themselves after use. This includes the ability to replenish the wildlife, restore the soil, and ensure that water quality is not impaired and that the rural scenic beauty of the rural landscape is maintained. The same holds true for the non-consumptive enterprises such as campgrounds, horseback riding, on farm or ranch stays. These are a few examples of sustainability. This means the resource is used within the resource capacity while maintaining capacity to perform other needed ecological functions as well as the agritourism functions.
2. **Stability/resilience**—The natural resources' use is within the resources' ability to remain stable in productivity and/or where the resources are depleted that can be built up. Consideration and allowance are made for multiple roles of the land and water resources.
3. **Maintenance of resource asset**—Substitution of non-polluting measures for polluting measures wherever possible (e.g. non chemical weed or pest management for chemical-dependent practices.) Non-renewable resources are used efficiently and substitutes that are renewable are found whenever possible. Water and energy are used rationally and economically. Preservation of biological diversity or enhancement of diversity in ecosystems that are in fragile condition or is not a fully developed ecosystem.
4. **Equitability**—The use and management of the resources today should be such that future options are not limited.

A strong sustainable feature of agritourism enterprises is the non-consumptive aspect of most enterprises or the enterprises' use of renewable resources. These features are discussed below under the opportunity for partnerships between natural resources organizations and agritourism.

The NRCS National Planning and Procedures Handbook provides the foundation for the conservation of soil, water, animals, plants and air natural resources for sustained use. These planning practices and conservation systems sustain the natural resource base when properly applied. This handbook is available in every NRCS district office.

Agritourism Sustainability—It consists of six essential elements—authenticity, fun, values, relationships, learning, and involvement as shown in Figure 3.

1. **Authenticity**—Tourists seek authenticity in their experiences on the farm, ranch, or in the rural community. Today’s tourists are well informed, highly educated, professional, and know what they want and why they want it. They also have a sufficient amount of income to buy what they want and are willing to pay the cost to “experience” that diversity.
2. **Fun**—A tourist’s definition of fun really depends on the age group. It is also influenced by what people “perceive” what the fun “experience” is to be. The customer expectation is the key. You need to know your customer.
3. **Values**—Tourists come seeking values, which are inherent in the authenticity and fun. They also come with their values about heritage, roots, ethnicity, environment, agriculture, etc. The media and other social influences have shaped many of the values. It is important to articulate and communicate the values of farmers, ranchers, and the rural community to correct any misunderstandings.
4. **Relationships**—Tourists want to leave with a sense of belonging or becoming a part of the experience themselves. They want to take a piece of the experience with them be it a craft, food, or knowledge, even a personal relationship with the people and the land or nature.
5. **Learning**—Tourists need to be informed and kept interested in the recreation activity. This is the part of sustainable tourism at which one teaches how conservation, agriculture and the environment work together to produce food, fiber, and recreation. This is also very dependent upon the age or age groups/customers that are participating. One needs to capture the learning techniques or styles familiar to the customer. This needs to be combined with entertainment or fun that includes farm/ranch buildings, families, heritage, rural culture and lifestyles.
6. **Involvement**—Tourists today have been involved through school, sports, television, and numerous local community programs. The sustainable recreation enterprise must consider the up and coming tourists’ generations need for “adventure” and “experience” type activities. These people want to be involved rather than just viewing or driving by. These customers are the baby boomers of the 50’s and 60’s that want an “experience” rather than just being served.

Why build Agritourism, Non-Agricultural Recreation Industry Tourism and Conservation Partnerships? Natural resources are used by agritourism, non-agricultural recreation industry and production agriculture. How these natural resources (soil, water, animal, plants and air) are used depends upon their attributes such soil fertility, climate, terrain etc. The natural resource attributes for food and fiber production are soil fertility; rainfall, climate and water, which may be different from those, needed or used by agritourism and non-agricultural recreation enterprises. However, some of the natural resource attributes are used for both agricultural production and agritourism or other alternative enterprises such as U-pick, fee fishing and hunting, food processing, and numerous other food, fiber, and forest value added tourist products. The recreation-based

natural resource attributes unique to agritourism enterprises include: rural landscapes, scenery, nature quiet time, bird watching, rock climbing, horseback riding, hiking, or water-based activity to name a few. For other enterprises, all the attributes of the natural resources are used such as for farm or ranch stays, farm/ranch working experiences, and community blossom or harvest festivals. Many of these same natural resource attributes are also important to non-agricultural recreation industry enterprises. For example, non-agricultural recreation enterprises depend on special attributes such as ski slopes, waterfronts, nature-based retreats and remote convention centers. Thus, all agritourism, and non-agricultural enterprises are tied to the natural resources. To insure economic sustainability of the enterprises, there is a joint interest in environmentally sustaining the natural resources. This is accomplished through conservation partnerships.

A growing number of tourism and recreation businesses are recognizing the importance and potential profit associated with ecologically and culturally sensitive development and management. These businesses understand that tourism growth will increasingly depend on the public perception that the natural resources are being sustained and social impacts of tourism development have been minimized. The public's interest in environmental sustainability opens the door for conservationists to demonstrate the benefits of cooperative stewardship of natural and cultural resources as essential elements of responsible tourism development and use.

Conservation agencies and organizations provide the foundation for establishing these partnerships that cooperatively promote the conservation of the natural resources. These partnerships insure people can enjoy the tourism and recreation qualities of the conserved natural resources in a sustainable manner for the future. Agritourism can be the catalyst for forming these partnerships with tourism and hospitality businesses, rural community and conservation stakeholders. It is the common bond or link, which is shown by the shaded area across the top row of circles in Figure 4.

Farmers and ranchers have a long and successful cooperative track record with government conservation agencies, conservation/environmental organizations, and sport interests to conserve land, water and wildlife resources. A fully integrated partnership of agritourism, non-agricultural recreation, natural resource conservation organizations, and the rural community can also repeat this track record. Figure 4 shows how each of these industry areas work independently but also have a common area of interest, building on the common base of the natural resources (See the interlocking circles in the center of the page). Working together in this common area on natural resource stewardship makes sense because all the areas directly depend on the wise use of the Nation's natural resources and all four groups need strong partnerships to attract new members to sustain tourism and the natural resources.

Each tourism sector in Figure 4 has something to gain from and contribute to sustainable tourism and conservation partnerships. Agritourism has the potential to economically preserve family farms, and ranches. It also contributes by showing the many tourists that have limited direct contact with agriculture to understand what it does to conserve the natural resources. This can modify what tourists believe or perceive about agriculture and

its impact on the natural resources environment. This can differ radically from what they hear from mass media or some special interest groups. Agritourism offers the opportunity to educate business owners and tourists about the benefits of resource conservation.

Rural community's link to conservation (Figure 4) shows that it is important for communities to be concerned with conservation partnerships that sustain the natural resources. Rural tourism can also benefit from the preservation of farms' natural resource based industries, and rural landscapes that are fundamental to attracting a growing number of suburban and urban tourists. A growing number of tourism and recreational businesses are recognizing the importance and potential profit associated with ecologically and culturally sensitive development and management.

The non-agricultural recreation industry circle of Figure 4 plays an important role in community development and partnerships, as it becomes a major employer and important source of income in many rural areas. New recreation-based enterprises can partner with existing or expanding agricultural and natural resource businesses to contribute to overall economic diversification, growth and stability in rural areas. Permanent residents can benefit from tourist facilities and revenues that support local infrastructure, amenities, and the preservation of natural and cultural resources.

Agritourism attractions and experiences can also benefit rural communities and tourism businesses by increasing tourist's length of stay and local spending. Communities, agritourism and non-agricultural recreation industry partnerships supplement and/or complement each other's activities through harvest or blossom festivals, heritage, cultural, ethnic and other attractions. A common conservation ethic bond can foster other partnerships that promote the conservation friendly tourism/recreation enterprises for all the farms and ranches in the community. This results in stronger rural communities as shown in the box at the bottom of Figure 4. These conservation/tourism business partnerships will be extended to areas or groups in the community such as cultural, heritage and other resources to achieve overall sustainability for rural community.

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**TABLE 1: Alternative and Agritourism Enterprises or Activities for the Farm,
Ranch and Rural Community**

FOR-FEE RECREATION ACTIVITIES

- Archery
- Bird and/or wildlife watching
- Bicycle racing/rentals
- Tricycle racing or maze for kids
- Camping
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Corn or tall grass maze
- Cross-country skiing
- Firearm shooting-range or skeet
- Fishing
- Grass sledding
- Golfing
- Go Carts
- Hand gliding
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, including guaranteed shooting of pen-raised small/large game on shooting preserves
- Ice skating
- Laser tagging
- Mountain biking
- Mushroom/wild berry/plant/flower/rock/gem gathering
- Nature photography
- Off-road/all terrain vehicle riding or driving
- Paint balling
- Picnicking
- River/pond or lake tubing
- Rock climbing/rappelling
- Scenic trails (horse, motor, off-road vehicles, walking)
- Snowmobiling
- Snowshoeing
- Swimming
- Tobogganing/sledding
- Turkey shoots
- Walking/jogging/use of exercise trail

FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE

- Assisted living accommodations
- Business meetings
- Business picnics and reunions
- Church groups
- Club meetings
- Country weddings
- Family reunions
- Heritage enactment
- Historic train rides

TABLE 1: Alternative and Agritourism Enterprises or Activities for the Farm, Ranch and Rural Community (continued).

- Interpretive programs
- Playground
- Retreats
- Trails—foot, horse, vehicle, off road
- Youth camps

PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES

- Animal birthing
- Barn raising
- Dancing--ethnic
- Farm/ranch vacations—branding, roundups, chuck wagons, haying, farming, cattle, drives
- Farm school for kids
- Garden plot rentals
- Grow your own fruit/vegetables/flowers/crops/Christmas trees/fish
- Herbal medicine making
- Make your own old-time toys, clothes, Christmas decorations, and/or food dishes
- Make your own bread
- Mushroom log seeding
- Pick/harvest/cut your own fruit/vegetables/flowers/crops/Christmas trees/fish/firewood
- Pond construction
- Quilt making
- Rent-a-tree, bush, garden, flowerbed, crop
- River fording
- Rug making
- Wild West trail rides with bandits and Indians
- Wildlife and fish habitat development—bats, birds, fish, snakes, insects, same game
- Trail rides including overnight

TOURS OF . . .

- Aquaculture operations
- Bird sanctuary
- Conservation activities
- Croplands
- Culture
- Cider mills
- Ethic
- Forest sites
- Farm/ranch buildings
- Food processing plants
- Historic sites
- Hydroponics operations
- Maple syrup production facilities
- Orchards
- Saw mills
- Scenic attractions
- Wetlands and restoration
- Wildlife and fish habitat
- Wineries

TABLE 1: Alternative and Agritourism Enterprises or Activities for the Farm, Ranch and Rural Community (continued).

DEMONSTRATIONS OF . . .

- Bread making
- Cattle drives, roping, branding
- Cooking, canning, wine making, smoking fish and meats
- Flour milling at home
- Furniture making
- Lumberjack skills
- Dairy milking technologies
- Organic food production
- Planting, harvesting, milking technologies
- Quilt making
- Rug making
- Rural crafts (e.g., woodworking)
- Sheep herding
- Shrimp farming
- Soap making
- Sun drying food
- Sustainable food production
- Syrup making
- Threshing grain
- Weaving
- Wild native jams and jellies

EXHIBITS AND/OR LECTURES ON . . .

- Aquaculture
- Conservation technology
- Environmentally sensitive agriculture production technologies
- Forest
- Farm/ranch antiques
- Herbal medicine
- Historical crafts
- Irrigation, fertilizing, integrated pest management, soil conservation technologies
- Native plants
- Raising animals
- Rural crafts (e.g., quilting, doll making, fruit baskets, baskets, toys, etc.)
- Sustainable agriculture
- Wildlife management

SITES FOR FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

- Anniversary festival—you name the occasion
- Blossom festivals
- Cultural festivals
- Country/Bluegrass/Gospel music festivals
- Ethnic festivals
- Exhibitions of newborn farm animals
- Harvest festivals
- Historical events
- Historical re-enactment
- Rodeos

TABLE 1: Alternative and Agritourism Enterprises or Activities for the Farm, Ranch and Rural Community (continued).

- Rhubarb Festivals
- Strawberry Festivals
- Unique to area
- Other events

FARM/RANCH/COMMUNITY ENTERTAINMENT

- Bonfires
- Clam bakes
- Dancing
- Education
- Guided nature walks
- Hands on experiences—clays, face painting, wood making, plays
- Hay/sleigh/tractor rides
- Interactive games
- Live historic interpretation
- Mystery theater
- Participatory plays
- Playhouses
- Pumpkin carving
- Plays and concerts
- Socials for dining
- Story-telling

EQUIPMENT RENTAL

- Binoculars/sighting scopes/tripods
- Boats/canoes/kayaks/tubes
- Cross-country skis
- Camping equipment
- Fishing equipment
- Hunting/shooting equipment (e.g., dogs, blinds, and decoys)
- Laser tag equipment
- Mountain bikes
- Off road/all terrain vehicles
- Pack animals
- Paint ball equipment
- Snowmobiles
- Snowshoes
- Toboggans/sleds

LESSONS

- Archery
- Gardening
- Canning
- Cultural heritage
- Country cooking
- Cider/wine making
- Farm/ranch antiques
- Food processing, preserving, smoking, canning

TABLE 1: Alternative and Agritourism Enterprises or Activities for the Farm, Ranch and Rural Community (continued).

- Fishing
- Firearm shooting—range or skeet
- Game dressing
- Historic restoration
- Horseback riding
- Hunting
- Making old-time toys, clothes, Christmas decorations--Pumpkin carving
- Sausage making
- Whittling
- Woodworking
- Other arts and crafts

HOSPITALITY SERVICES

- Assisted living services
- Bed & Breakfasts
- Cabin rentals
- Catered functions, e.g., weddings, reunions
- Child cares
- Horse livery stables
- Interpretative centers
- Meeting/banquet facilities
- Pet hotels
- Pet day care
- Picnic/trail lunches
- Restaurants serving dishes made from products produced on the farm/ranch or the wild
- Storage units, boats, vehicles
- Wagon Trains

ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISES (Non traditional production or value added marketing.)

- Access to water bodies, natural areas, scenic sites, etc. for recreation, education, and/or research
- Angora goats
- Alpacas
- Bait shops
- Boarding, training, and care of horses and/or hunting dogs, cats, other pets
- Clam farming
- Canning
- Canning/smoking/packaging/storing of food, fish, game
- Cricket farming
- Dairy goats—milk, soap, meat
- Game dressing—ducks, geese, pheasants, etc
- Gift shops featuring arts and crafts made on the farm/ranch and/or in local area
- Grapes and by products—jellies, wreaths, wood, wine
- Ground cover production
- Guide service for hunting, fishing, pack trips, sightseeing, etc.
- Farmers' markets
- Hay sales
- Horseback riding liverys
- Jellies and jams from native wild berries
- Lavender—fresh, decorated, dried, crushed
- Nurseries—shrubs, annuals, nursery stock, etc
- Organic vegetables, poultry, livestock

TABLE 1: Alternative and Agritourism Enterprises or Activities for the Farm, Ranch and Rural Community (continued).

- Pasture fed eggs of many different colors
- Pasture fed chickens
- Pasture fed turkeys
- Pasture fed beef
- Pasture fed hogs
- Pet stores selling animals raised on the farm/ranch
- Pine straw sales
- Rabbit
- Sesame production for oil or condiment
- Sod farming
- Straw sales
- Shrimp harvesting/farming
- Mushrooms—shiitake and others
- Taxidermist
- Tilapia fish farming
- Roadside markets selling products produced on the farm/ranch (e.g., fruits, vegetables, nuts, cider, Christmas Trees, greenhouse plants, firewood, dressed game)
- Vehicle spotting for hunters, anglers, canoeists, etc
- Worm farming—bait, pet food and human consumption

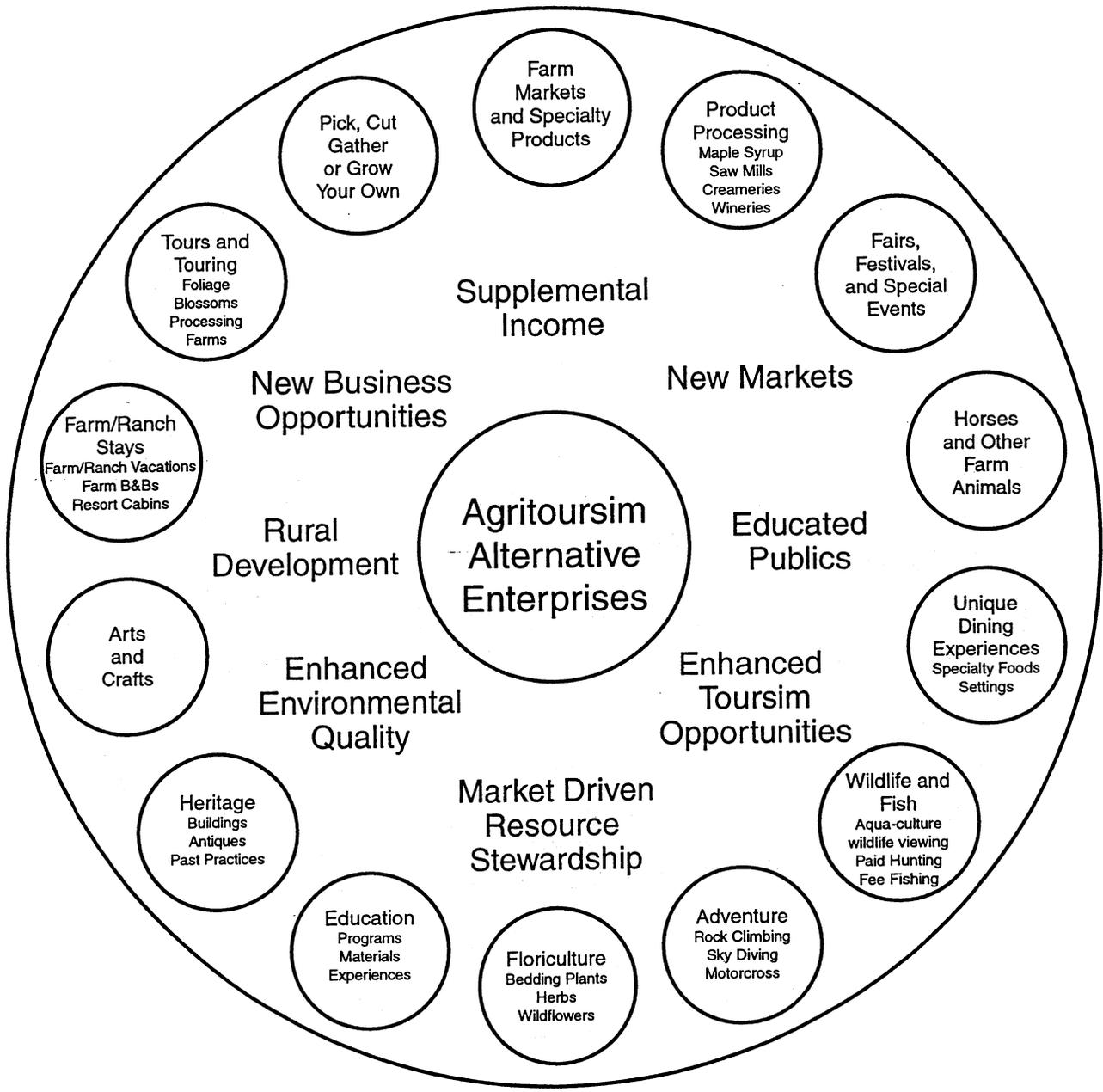


Figure 1 Agritourism Alternative Enterprises

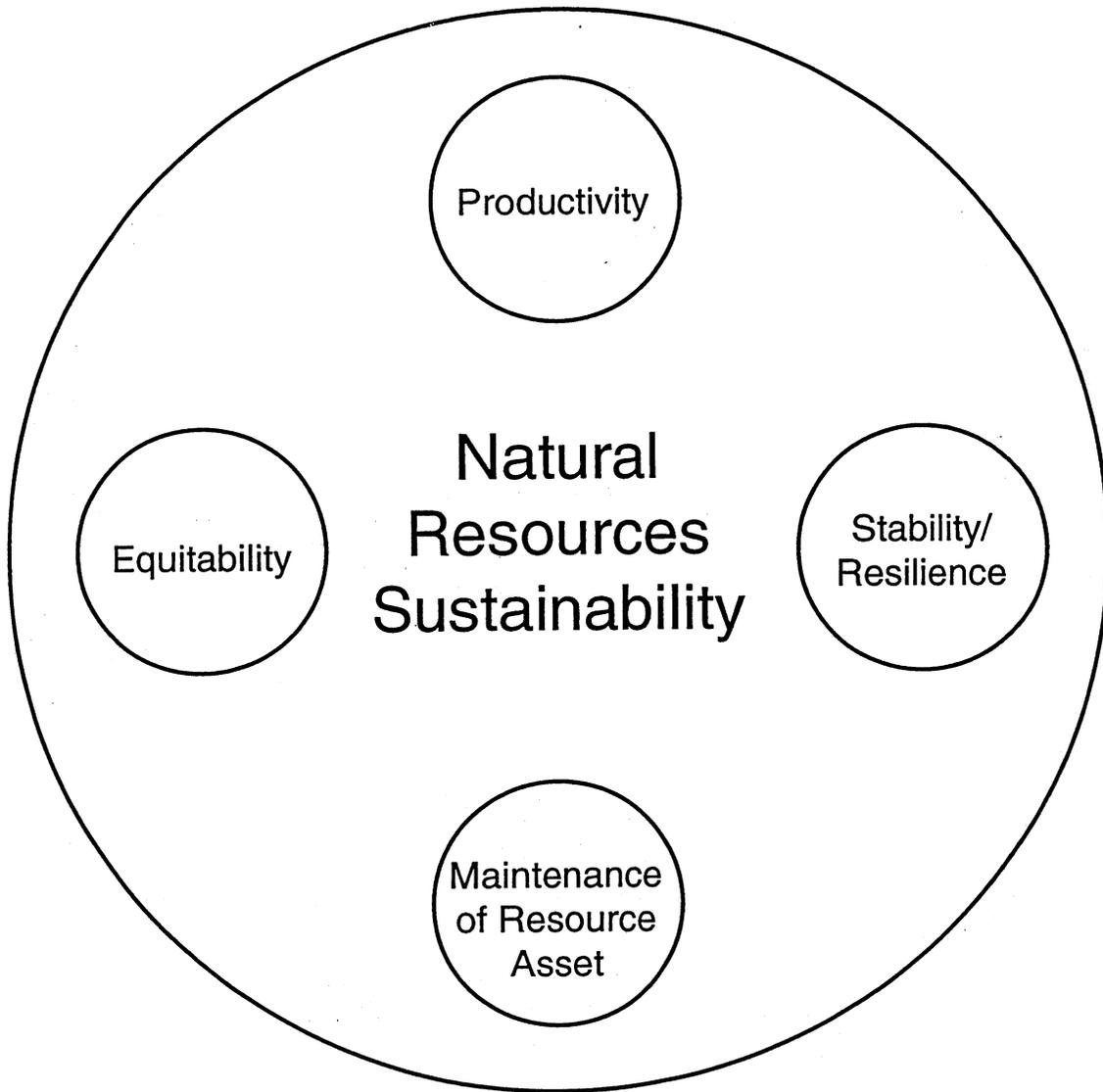


Figure 2: Natural Resources Sustainability

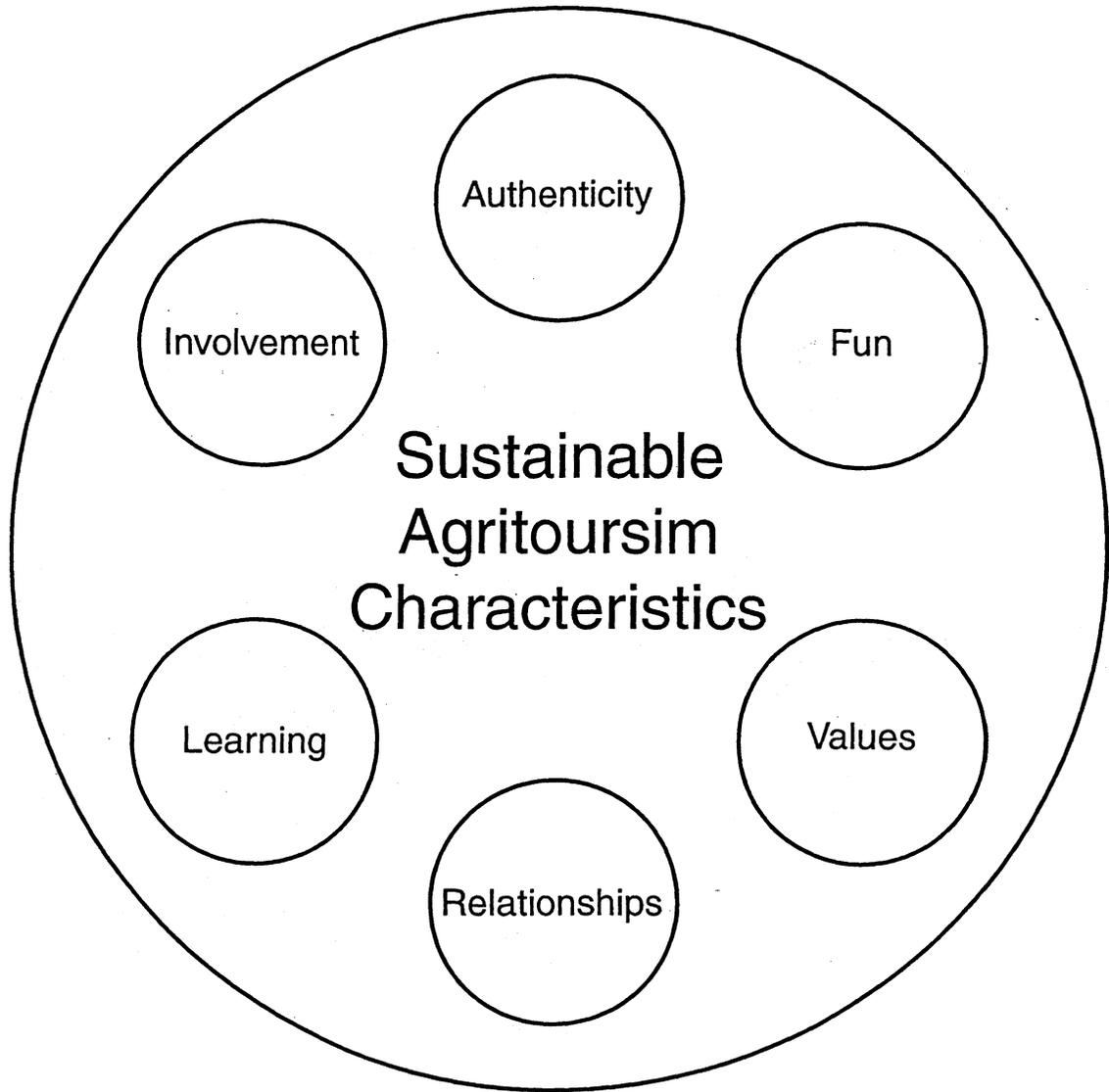


Figure 3: Characteristics of Sustainable Agritourism

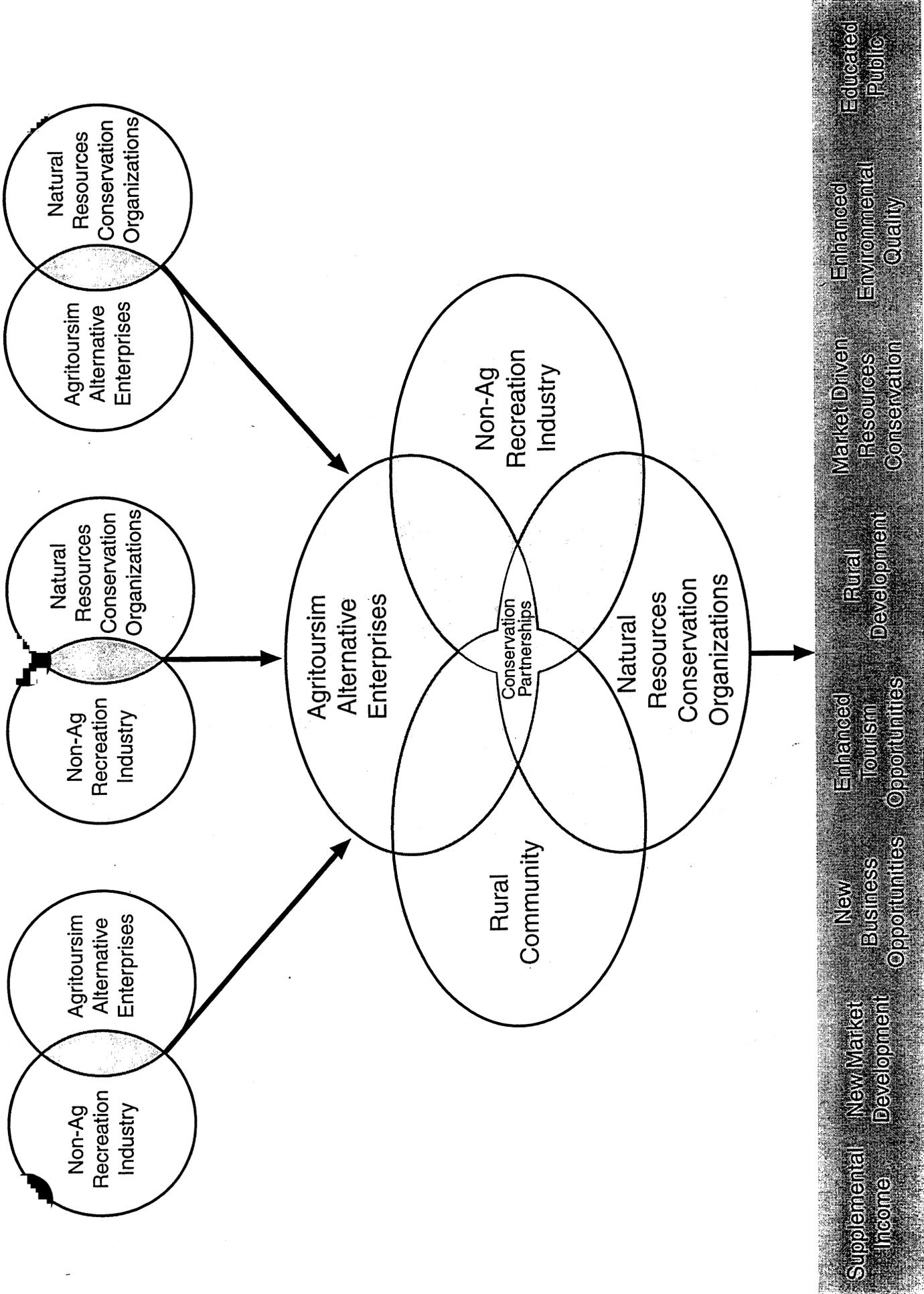


Figure 4: Mutual Conservation Interests Yield Partnerships and Rural Development

June 24, 1996

AG OPPORTUNITIES

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May-June 1996

Vol.6, No. 3

"Choosing Your Enterprises: A Checklist"

(Reprinted with permission from "Sell What You Sow" by Eric Gibson)

Personal and family considerations

- * Have you identified goals and objectives for your business and personal life?
- * Have you conducted a full inventory of your resources (human, physical and financial) which can contribute to accomplishing these goals and objectives?
- * Are you willing to make sacrifices required to make this enterprise profitable (time, changes in lifestyle, privacy)?
- * What do you wish your business to look like five years from now, and what are some intermediate steps or objectives required to get there?

Inventory resources

- * Physical resources: land, soils, climate, water, buildings, machinery and equipment;
- * Management and labor resources;
- * Local marketing options available;
- * Financial resources;
- * Miscellaneous: sources of information, suppliers, processors and distributors;
- * Time

Identify enterprises

- * Current and potential buyers, produce managers, books, magazines and publications, seed companies, chefs, etc.

Enterprise feasibility

- * Is this enterprise technically feasible for your location given the following factors: climate, soils, water, insects, diseases, growing season?

- * What are the building, machinery, equipment, management and labor requirements? If you don't have the necessary resources, what is the cost (in dollars and time) of acquiring them? Do you have the facilities to pack, package and ship the product?

Market factors

- * Have you clearly defined what your product/service is (features such as size, quality, varieties, etc. and benefits to buyer or user)?
- * Are there markets for the product, and if so, what is your target (niche) market(s)?
- * Market outlet alternatives;
- * Geographic location of market(s);
- * Demographic characteristics (age, income, etc.);
- * Behavioral characteristics (lifestyle, etc.);
- * How large is the existing market demand?
- * Number of potential buyers;
- * Annual per capita consumption;
- * Average purchase per buyer:
- * Can the market be created or expanded to absorb an increased supply of the commodity? Are advertising and promotion efforts worthwhile?
- * What are the favorable market windows for the product? (Compare historical prices against projected costs per unit);
- * Does the market demand specific grade/quality/size standards?
- * What is the cost of transportation to the targeted markets?
- * Are there any middlemen services involved (brokers, wholesale distributors, etc.)? If so, do they have any specific requirements (delivery, volume, etc.)?
- * How many competitors are located nearby? What do you have to offer to surpass your competitors?
- * What prices does the market offer and how steady are those prices? What is the highest price and the lowest price you are likely to receive and what conditions create these price situations?
- * What is your expected sales volume? What is the minimum and maximum volume of product you believe you could sell in one year?

If your market research shows that supply already exceeds demand for the product/service being evaluated, or that the trend is one of declining consumption and/or prices, do not pursue the enterprise any further. If your market research is favorable, continue with the following considerations.

Financial considerations

- * Once you are in full production, what are the expected costs and returns (enterprise budgets)?
- * What will be the impact of varying yields/production levels on

profitability?

- * What are the costs of production given varying climatological and pest problems?
- * Are you able to acquire the necessary start-up capital to establish the enterprise? What about the annual operating funds necessary to continue the enterprise?
- * What is the impact of the new enterprise on the profitability of any existing enterprise?
- * Is the proposed enterprise complementary or supplementary to existing enterprises, or does it compete with them? If so, what is the impact on the profitability of the other enterprises?
- * How will the additional costs and returns of the new enterprise affect the cash flow of the business?
- * How will investment of additional resources and the diversion of existing resources from present uses affect the financial risk position of the farm?

Miscellaneous considerations

- * Are there any legal restrictions, regulations or liability factors associated with the new enterprise?
- * Does the enterprise require any special recordkeeping to provide information for both management decisions and/or government reports?
- * Does the enterprise require an abundant or continuous supply of special production inputs?
- * Will the proposed enterprise limit off-farm employment opportunities?

If you have satisfactorily answered all of the questions from this checklist, you probably have enough information to make a decision about the new venture. If you decide to go ahead with the enterprise, you should now develop an implementation plan, including a business development plan that specifies a timetable, production schedule, marketing plan, management structure and financial plan.

Tips for Staying on Track and Getting Started

(Recommended for a one to two-year period.)

1. *Assess your resources* –

- Make an in-depth assessment of the resources available to you and your family by using several of the workbooks and guides that are available.

2. *Get informed* –

- Attend seminars, workshops, trade shows, and schools.
- Purchase books, videos, newsletters, magazines, and other publications.
- Go to the library and do some research. Use the internet to get the most up to date information. If you don't have an internet connection at home, one should be available to you at the library.
- Look through the resources listed in the NRCS "Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism: Farming for Profit and Sustainability Resource Manual" available at your area Resource Conservation & Development Office and on the internet.

3. *Find out what other entrepreneurs are doing* –

- Talk to neighbors, friends, and strangers about their businesses.
- Visit businesses in your surrounding area and in neighboring counties and see what they are doing and how they are running their business.
- Visit farm stands, farmers' markets, and other business sales outlets.

4. *Consult potential customers* –

- Ask your relatives, friends, and neighbors about the product(s) you are thinking of providing through your new enterprise. Are they interested?
- Provide your potential customers with a sample of the product service you are planning to provide.
- Invite friends to your farm to participate in the activities you are planning to provide and ask them for a critique.

5. *Research the market for your products.*

- Determine what the consumers are buying.
- Determine what the consumers want and are willing to pay for.
- Are you going to sell direct to the consumer, wholesale, institutions, and on the internet.

6. *Network* –

- Join organizations or groups for people involved in enterprises similar to the one you are interested in.
- Join the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and/or other business and planning organizations or committees in your community.
- See if other local entrepreneurs would like to join you in your business venture or start their own agritourism or alternative enterprise.

7. *Get help –*

- Visit resource people in your county, region, or state. County agents, RC&D Coordinators, state extension staff, Department of Agriculture staff, State tourism directors and staff, small business development center staff, and other specialists should all be willing to answer questions and help you get started.

8. *Develop a business and marketing plan –*

- Various books, worksheets and programs are designed to help you develop a successful business and marketing plan are available through the internet
 - your local library
 - your local outreach program
 - your local college
 - Service Corp of Retired Executives
 - Small Business Development Centers
 - your local RC&D office

9. *Create a financial plan –*

- Decide how you will finance your business.
- Find out about financial assistance (grants and loans) available to you.

10. *Start small, learn from your experience, and expand the business*

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SMALL FARM TODAY

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Small Farm Today was founded for and is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of small farming, rural living, sustainability, community, and agrpreneurship

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In this issue of *SFT*:

Marketing

Thoughts on Marketing <i>by Kelly Klobner</i>	27
Marketing Strategies <i>from SARE</i>	35
Souland Farmers Market <i>by Esther Payne Davis</i>	39
U-Pick Marketing <i>by Kelly Klobner</i>	41
Farmer-Owned Cooperatives	43
Marketing Miniature Cattle <i>by Richard Gradwohl</i>	46

Draft Animals

Some Thoughts on Animal Power <i>by Nathan Booker</i>	53
Hitches for Draft Horses and Mules <i>by Melvyn Bradley</i>	54
Learning Resources for Draft Animals <i>by Robert L. Myers</i>	57

Other Stories

OUR PLACE: Dexter Cattle <i>by Dean Fleharty</i>	50
A Dream of Dates <i>by Sandy Thompson</i>	61
Spiritual Gardening in a Commercial World <i>by Sandy Thompson</i>	64
Prickly Pear—Desert Manna Part 2 <i>by Sheri Weinberger</i>	66
IN MY VIEW: Organic Standards Revisited <i>by Ronnie Cummins</i>	69

Departments

From The Ridge <i>by Ron Macher</i>	4
Letters	5
About Agriculture	10
Products for the Small Farm	15
Good Books	16
Ozark Odyssey <i>by William "Chilly" Childress</i>	18
Agriculture & the Economy <i>by Harold F. Breimyer</i>	19
Small Acreage Management <i>by Kelly Klobner</i>	21
NEW! Sustaining People Through Agriculture <i>by John Ikerd</i>	23
Seeds, Plants & Produce Directory	72
Breeders Directory	74
Trading Post	81
Index of Advertisers	87
Calendar	88

ON THE COVER: (Clockwise from top left)

- 1) A booth at a trade show can provide excellent marketing opportunities —page 27, photo by Paul Berg
- 2) Shepherd Bliss weaving boysenberry canes —page 64, photo by Sandy Thompson
- 3) A five-abreast draft horse team cultivating corn at Horse Progress Days—page 57, photo by Paul Berg

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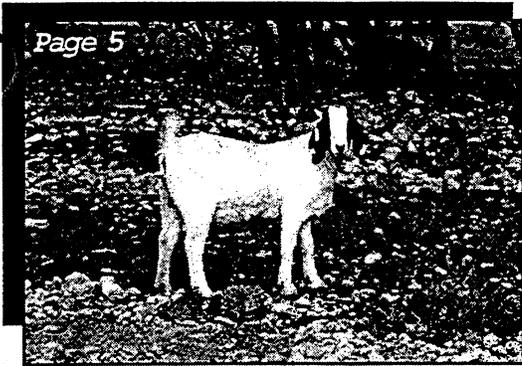
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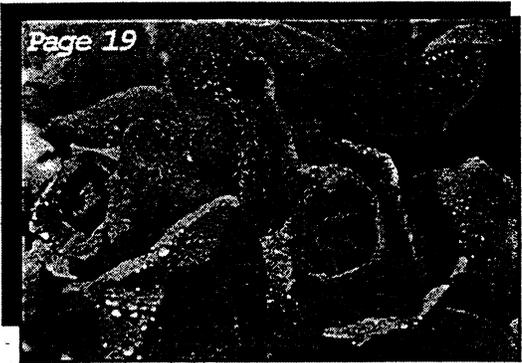
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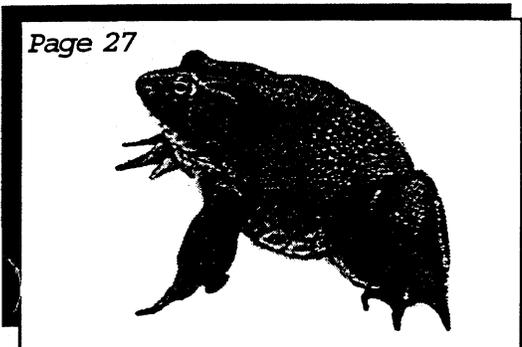
Goat Ranching



Cut Flowers



Raising Silkworms



Bullfrog Farming

Table of Contents

Today's Ideas on How to Profit from Your Land

LIVESTOCK

The Leaps And Bounds Of Goat Ranching. 5

MARKETING AVENUES

Pick-Your-Own Methods For Marketing A Pick-Your-Own Farm ... 10
 From Worms To Riches? 13

CROP

Cashing In On Specialty Cut Flowers *Growing specialty cut flowers is a blooming opportunity on small and large acreage* 19

NICHE

Silkworms For Sale! - *This California company produces materials for silkworm rearing and study* 24

AQUA-VENTURES

Frog Farming - *Raising captive-bred bullfrogs* 27

REFERENCE POINTS

The Farm Hand.....IFC
 Facts From The Field.....18
 Ask AgVentures.....23
 AgAwareness.....26
 National Breeder Directory.....31
 Back Issues.....32
 Classified Corral.....33
 Advertisers Index/Subscription Form.....34

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- Paddlefish
- Insects For Eating
- Paw Paws

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 Captive raised bullfrogs at Rana Ranch
 Commercial Bullfrogs, owned by
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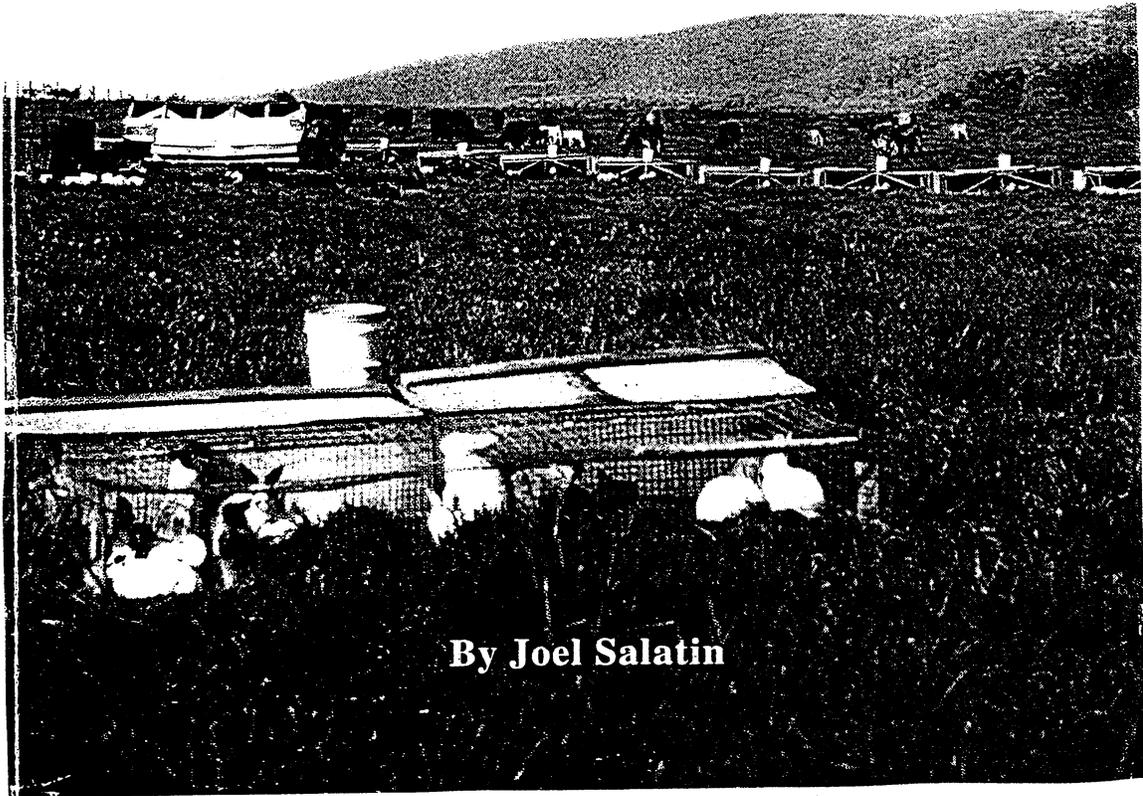
Foreword by Howard W. "Bud" Kerr, Jr.

Contents

Foreword	viii
Preface	xi
Acknowledgments	xiv
Getting Started	1
1. Deciding to Farm	3
What Is a Small Farm?	5
Becoming a Farmer	9
The Farming Life	11
Agripreneurship	13
2. Starting a Farm	17
Starting a Farm Plan	17
Evaluating Your Resources	19
Getting Help	40
II. Farming	41
3. Some Principles of Good Farming	43
4. A Living, Healthy Soil	51
The Physical Nature of Soil	52
Working the Soil	54
Our Living Soil	55
Soil and Plant Roots	58
Crop Rotation	60
Cover Crops and Green Manure	66
Nitrogen and Legumes	68
Feeding Livestock in Rotations	70
5. Weatherproofing Your Farm	75
The Effects of Climate	75
Water	76
Altering Your Farm Environment	80
Extending the Season	92
Caring for Livestock in Winter	94
III. Planning and Marketing	97
6. Your Goals and Farm Planning	99
Planning	100
Setting Goals	103
Developing Your Farm Plan	110
7. Marketing	115
Eight Steps to Identifying the Market	116
Niche Marketing	118
All About Niche Markets	121
Add-on Value	125
Twelve Ways to Sell Your Products	129
Pricing Your Product	142
Advertising	144
Your Farm as a Destination	147
8. Selecting Your Enterprise	151
Types of Enterprises	160
Enterprise Cost Analysis	168
Diversity	180
Sustainability	181
IV. Management	183
9. Machinery	185
Acquiring Machinery	186
Determining Equipment Size	198
Variables to Consider	199
Economics of Machinery	201
Buying Equipment	207
10. Farm Management	213
Recipe for Success	215
Knowledge Is Power	218
Making Choices	219
Management Tools	219
Managing Labor	223
Planning for Farm Efficiency	227
11. Where We Are Going	233
Land and Farms	233
Industrialization of Agriculture	235
Farms and People	237
Success on Sustainable Farms	237
My Vision	241
<i>Appendix A: Metric Conversions Chart</i>	243
<i>Appendix B: Resource Lists</i>	244
Books	244
Book Sources	253
Periodicals	254
Internet Sites	258
University Sources	260
Federal Agencies	261
Map Sources	262
Resource Lists	262
Seed and Plant Catalogs	263
Supplies	265
Associations and Organizations	267
<i>Index</i>	269

YOU GAIN FARM

THE ENTREPRENEUR'S GUIDE
TO START AND SUCCEED
IN A FARMING ENTERPRISE



By Joel Salatin

Contents

Contents (continued)

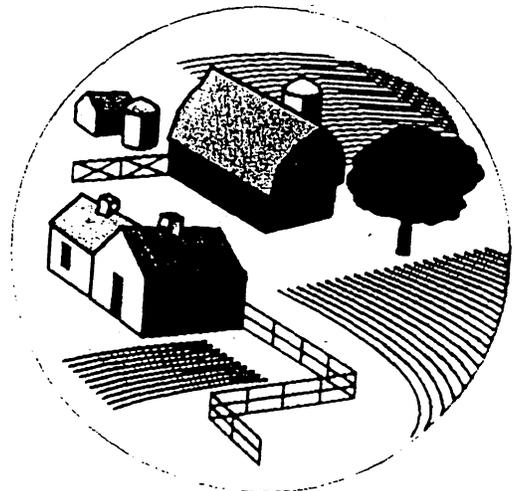
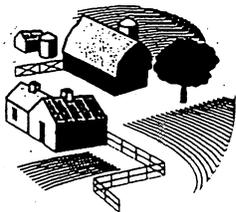
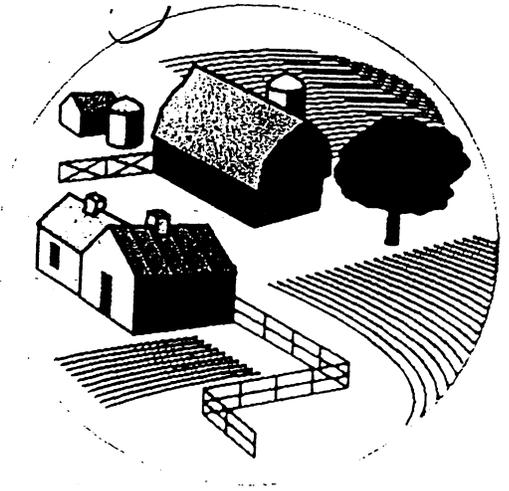
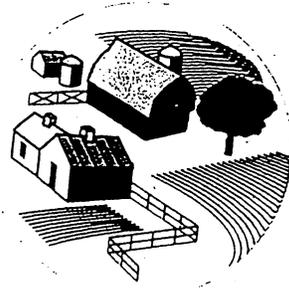
Foreword	viii
Introduction	x
Envisioning Your Future	
Developing a Vision	2
The Polyface Story	7
The Right Philosophy	23
Do It Now	43
Surveying Your Situation	49
Good Enough	59
For Beginning and Profiting ... Lessons from the Lemonade Stand	65
Examining Your Ideas	
Recipes for Failure	73
The Ten Worst Agricultural "Opportunities" ...	85
Best Centerpiece Agriculture Opportunities ...	99
The Ten Best Complementary Enterprises	123
Ten Commandments for Succeeding on the Farm	139
Embarking on Your Venture	
Acquiring Land	148
Where to Settle	154
Being Neighborly	160
What You Need	172
Multi-Purpose Everything	178
Where to Buy Things	185
Searching for Answers	196
Brainstorming	208
Self-Employment	217
Evolving Your Model	
Grass is the Center	233
Biodiversity	243
Water	254
Letting Animals Do the Work	265
Livestock Sanitation	281
Soil Fertility	289
Seasonality	305
Synergism, Stacking and Complementary Enterprises	314
Reducing Costs	324
Labor	346
Accounting	357
Filing System	366
Establishing Your Market	
Designer Agriculture	376
Developing Your Farm's Clientele	388
Communication	401
Pricing	413
Value Added	425
Summary	
In Summary	436
Appendices	
Appendix A - Newsletter	439
Appendix B - Resources	449
Index	454



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July 1998



Small Farm Resource Guide

SMALL FARM RESOURCE GUIDE

FIRST EDITION

By Denis Ebodaghe

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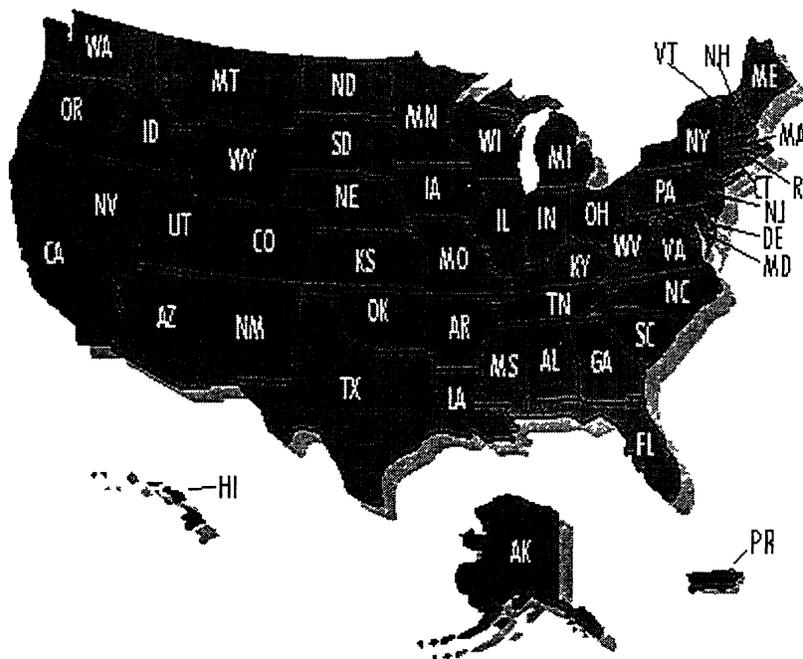
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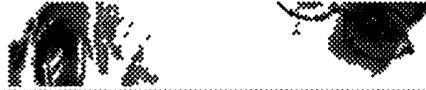


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HOME PAGE	MEMBERS & SUBSCRIBERS	INTERNATIONAL POW WOW	MARKETING PROGRAMS	SEEAMERICA.ORG	MEETINGS & EVENTS	S OF
ABOUT TIA	RESEARCH	PUBLICATIONS	TOURISM AWARENESS RESOURCES	PRESS & COMMUNICATIONS	NATIONAL COUNCILS	<

SeeAmerica Public Relations Directory



Welcome to the online version of the **SeeAmerica Public Relations Directory**, published by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA). This directory was published to assist media in the U.S. and around the world in obtaining the information they need to write travel articles about the USA.

Here you will find a list of all 56 U.S. state and territorial travel offices. You will also find the names of their primary media spokesperson, address, phone number, fax number, web site address and e-mail address. In addition, you will find a list of more than 300 of the leading convention and visitor bureaus in the U.S. along with their contact information.

With this list a journalist can contact the exact person who can assist them with research, press kits, slides, photos and press trips. This directory is designed to be a one-stop source for USA travel information.

This directory is just one of several new media services offered by TIA. In the Press Room Section of this website you can learn about another TIA service called [TravelNewsLink](#). With one e-mail to travelnewslink@tia.org, you will be connected to more than 1,000 USA travel industry public relations professionals in a matter of minutes. It is the ideal way to get the hard-to-find information you need - fast.

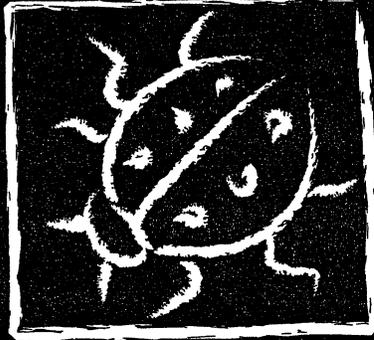
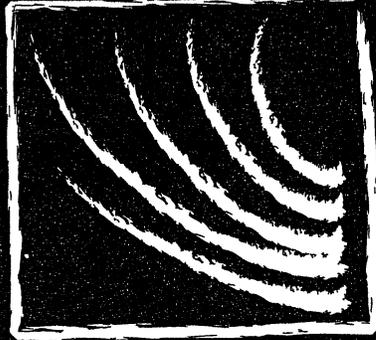
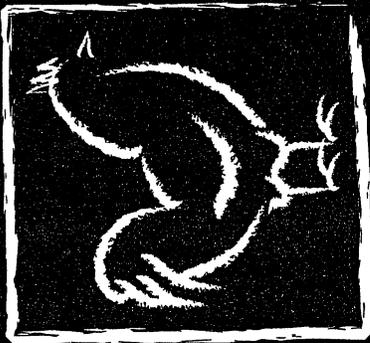
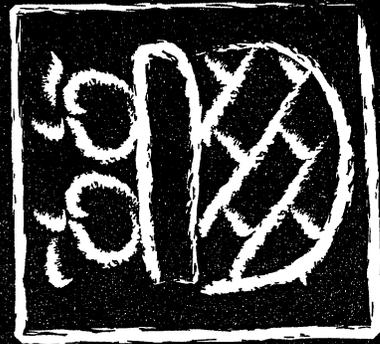
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Page

THE LANDOWNER'S SURVIVAL GUIDE:

RESOURCES FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDOWNERS
IN MARYLAND, VIRGINIA, AND WEST VIRGINIA



Future Harvest-A Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture

Compiled by Ruth Sullivan and Diana Friedman

June 2002

Who is Future Harvest-CASA? 5

Introduction 6

How to Use This Guide 8

SECTION I: ECONOMIC VIABILITY 9

Enterprise Evaluation and Business Planning 11

Natural Resource Income Opportunities 13

Direct Marketing 15

Value-Added Production and On-Farm Processing 17

SECTION II: ALTERNATIVE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS 21

Organic Production 23

Rotational Grazing of Beef and Dairy Cows 26

Alternative Poultry Production 28

Pastured Production of Other Livestock 30

SECTION III: NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION 33

Farmland Protection 35

Forest Stewardship and Conservation 38

Wetland Conservation and Restoration 40

Using Native Plants 42

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement 44

SECTION IV: FARM STEWARDSHIP 47

Soil Quality Management 49

Nutrient Management 51

Cover Cropping 54

Integrated Pest Management 56

Tell Us What You Think 59



II. Assessing Natural Resources for Alternative Enterprises