

Agrarian tourism as a factor in the socio-economic development of rural areas

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Abstract. The entrepreneurial nature of tourism has a positive impact on the development of rural areas through creation of tourism infrastructure and diversification of related and supporting industries. The article presents the results of an online survey of the population of the Krasnodar Territory. The study confirms the hypothesis that the development of agrarian tourism in the Krasnodar Territory is a strategic vector that reduces the percentage of migration of the rural population, has a stimulating effect on rural infrastructure, and it also contributes to creation of added value, the use of innovations, diversification of tourism products, it acts as a kind of guarantor of the fact that the maximum profit will remain in the local economy, which, in turn, will have a beneficial effect on the socio-economic development of rural areas. The development of agricultural tourism will contribute to the revival of folk crafts, culture and identity, the preservation, effective use and development of the potential of the countryside, the solution of socio-economic problems, overcoming the economic, social and spiritual crisis of rural municipalities. Integration of agriculture and tourism will positively affect the competitiveness of rural areas, the well-being of rural residents and the strengthening of the country's agriculture as a whole.

1. Introduction

The entrepreneurial nature of tourism has a positive impact on the development of rural areas through creation of tourism infrastructure and diversification of related and supporting industries. The concept of sustainable development among the priority ecologically sustainable types of nature management includes rural tourism, which is developing quite dynamically and which has a high development potential in Russia.

Development of rural tourism is determined by the need to ensure economic growth and diversification, and therefore it is important that the potential contribution of tourism to the economic growth of rural areas is not weakened by the excessive specificity of the principles of sustainable tourism [1].

All types of tourism aimed at exploring various aspects of rural life, including traditions, ethnic culture and local color features that bring social and economic benefits to the local population and facilitate the influx of tourists, are equated with rural tourism.



The concept of rural tourism is by no means clearly defined and is subject to a number of interpretations.

The term “rural tourism” was adopted by the European Community (EU) to refer to all tourism activities in rural areas.

Fleischer and Pisam associate rural tourism with “countryside vacation”, where a tourist spends most of their vacation engaging in recreational activities in the countryside on a farm, ranch, country house, or in surrounding areas [2].

The OECD defines the countryside as follows: “At the local level, a population density of 150 people per square kilometer is the preferred criterion. At the regional level, geographical units are grouped according to the share of their rural population in the following three types: mainly rural (50%), significantly rural (15–50%) and mainly urbanized regions (15%)” [3].

Thus, rural tourism can be considered as one of the forms of tourism that demonstrates rural life, aimed at preserving the natural resource potential, ethnic and cultural-historical heritage, as well as their effective use within a certain territory, taking into account its specificity and characteristics. This is a multifaceted concept, which may include a wide range of activities, such as farming, ecotourism, ethnic tourism, sports and wellness tourism, and others [4].

To date, rural tourism includes the following types of tourism (figure 1).

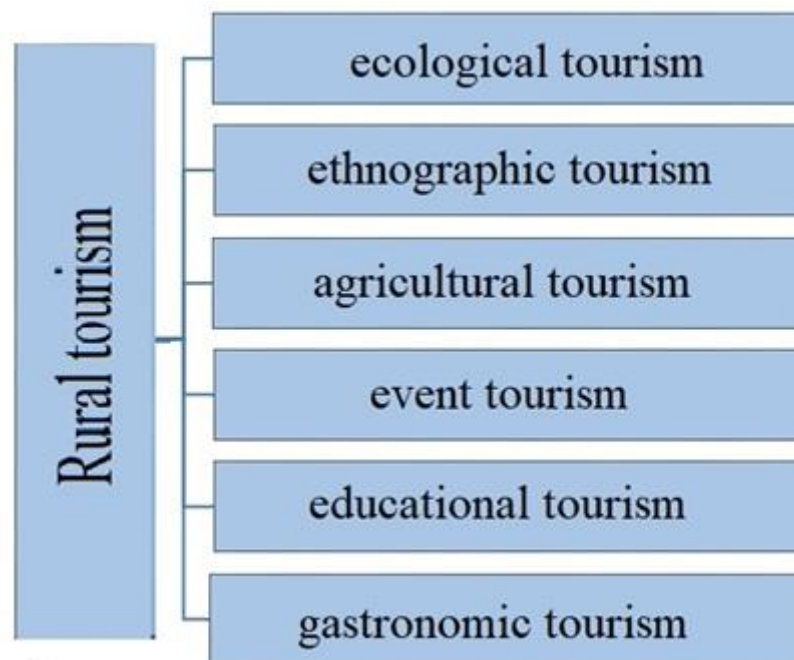


Figure 1. Classification of rural tourism.

One of the types of rural tourism is agrarian tourism, concentrated in rural areas and associated with agricultural production.

Agrarian tourism contributes to the formation of strategies for activation and diversification of rural territories, eliminates their depression, fulfilling the most important socio-economic function of the state in the context of the main tasks of Russian agricultural policy [5].

The main components of agricultural tourism are shown in figure 2.

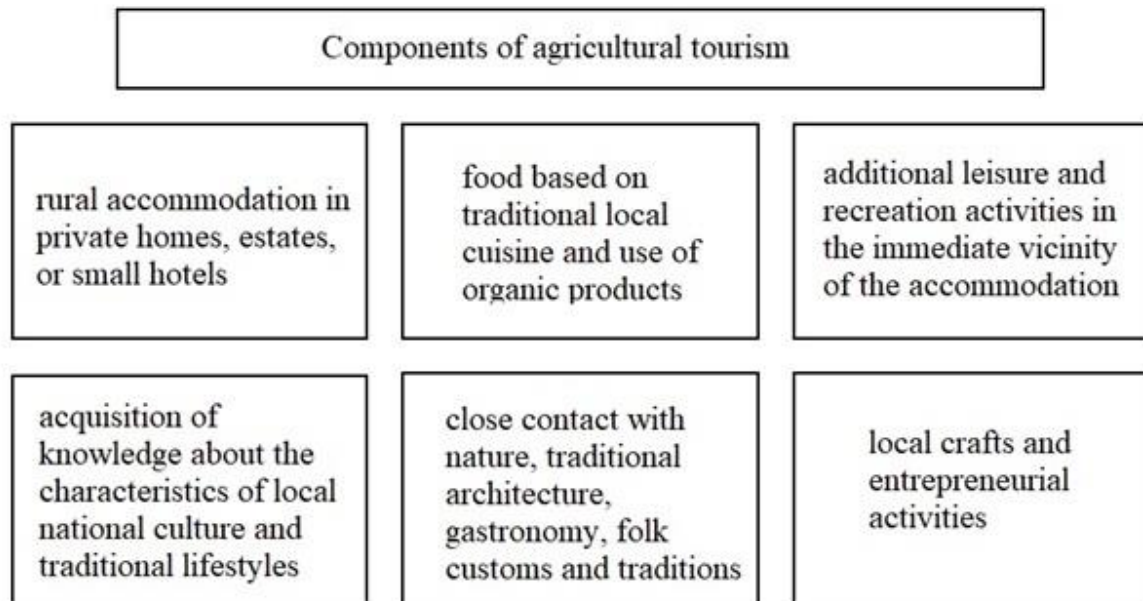


Figure 2. The main components of agricultural tourism.

Today in the Russian Federation there are about 4.500 rural tourist accommodation facilities, of which there are 3.500 rural guest houses and about 1.000 agritourism farms. The number of agritourism accommodation facilities makes up only 22% of the total rural tourism accommodation offer [6]. In this regard, a hypothesis appeared that the development of agrarian tourism will contribute to the promotion of the socio-economic development of rural areas.

2. Material and methods

The study was conducted by interviewing a random sample of respondents in order to inform residents of the Krasnodar Krai about the presence of agricultural tourism in the region.

The survey was carried out through a data collection based on an electronic questionnaire posted on the Internet, distributed on social networks.

The use of such research methods as: analysis, synthesis, monographic examination, empirical and factual information, provides a high degree of authenticity of the results, generalizations and recommendations.

3. Results and discussion

One of the most favorable regions of Russia for agricultural tourism is rightfully the Krasnodar Krai, on the territory of which there are more than 100 objects of agritourism which are operating successfully: ostrich farms, eco farms, apiaries, cheese dairies, ethnoparks and ethnocenters, as well as wine and tea tours, hunting, fishing, horse rides. Tourists participate in activities, lifestyles and traditions of the rural population, receiving individual experience of living in the countryside [7–8]. They usually rent rural housing, which they can combine with (rural) activities and attractions, preferably using local social, cultural and natural resources. All objects of agritourism are included in the interactive guide created by the Ministry of resorts of the region.

The ongoing regional project “School of Agritourism”, aimed at studying successful experience and analyzing cases in various areas of organization of agricultural tourism objects, should be noted. There is also an Agritourism Association in the region, tasks of which include compiling a register of enterprises in the field of agritourism, developing integrated tours, etc. Krasnodar Krai is a pilot region of Russia, which took part in the implementation of the project of the Federal Agency for Tourism

(Rostourism) “Gastronomic map of Russia” [9].

However, despite of the region’s large agritourism potential and various agritourism enterprises, the extreme unevenness of their distribution is worth noting.

In order to identify problems and prospects for the development of agricultural tourism in the Krasnodar Krai, an online survey was conducted, in which 105 people took part.

The survey was conducted from May 6 to May 10, 2020 through an online questionnaire.

To the open question “Do you know of such a type of tourism as agricultural?” 52.9% of respondents said that they heard about it; 28.04% are quite knowledgeable about agritourism; 18.6% are not aware of this type of tourism (figure 3).

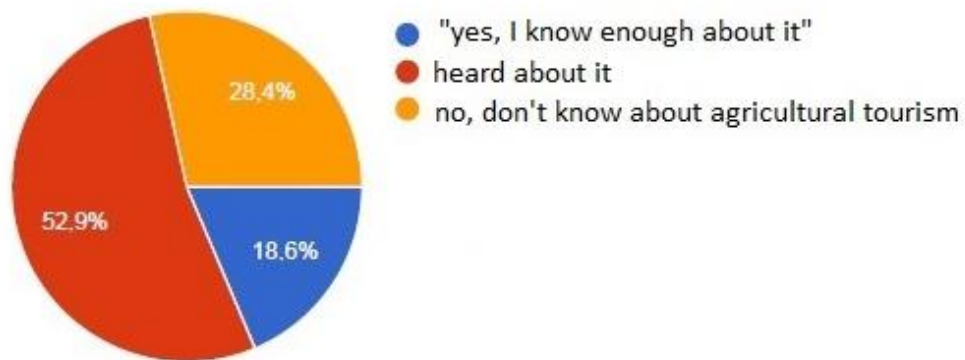


Figure 3. Answers to the question “Do you know of such a type of tourism as agricultural?”, %.

To the question: “Is the territory of the municipality in which you live attractive for the development of agricultural tourism?” 70.6% of respondents answered positively.

The answers to the following question are particularly interesting: “What factors favorably influence the development of agritourism in your municipality?” (figure 4).

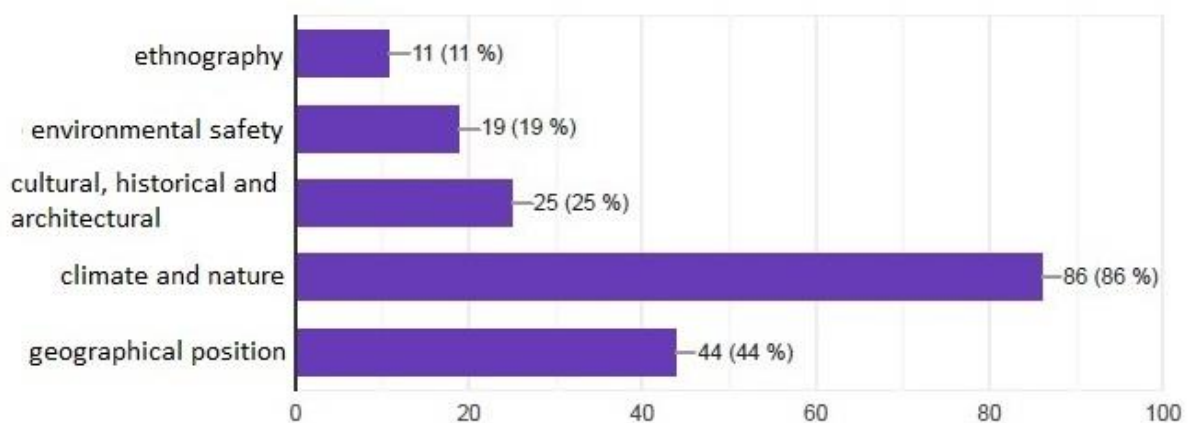


Figure 4. Answers to the question “What factors favorably influence the development of agritourism in your municipality?”, %.

86% of respondents unequivocally believe that this is climate and natural resources; 44% unanimously decided that the geographical location; because of cultural, historical and architectural monuments, in conjunction with infrastructure development and state support, the region has a unique

natural resource potential, rich in history, which, combined with infrastructure development and state support, are ideal conditions for the development of this type in the tourism industry.

It should be noted that 78.4% of respondents have a positive attitude to the possibilities of developing agrarian tourism in the locality of their residence. They quite rightly believe that the influx of tourists will positively affect the development of agricultural territories [10–11]: the number of jobs will increase, alternative sources of employment will appear, the welfare of the local population will increase, the process of migration of rural residents to cities will decrease, etc. The activation of this type of tourism will also contribute to the preservation of the natural environment, the revival and development of folk customs, folklore and crafts, preservation of local attractions.

Answers to the question “What is the greatest obstacle to the development of agricultural tourism in your area?” are illustrated in figure 5.

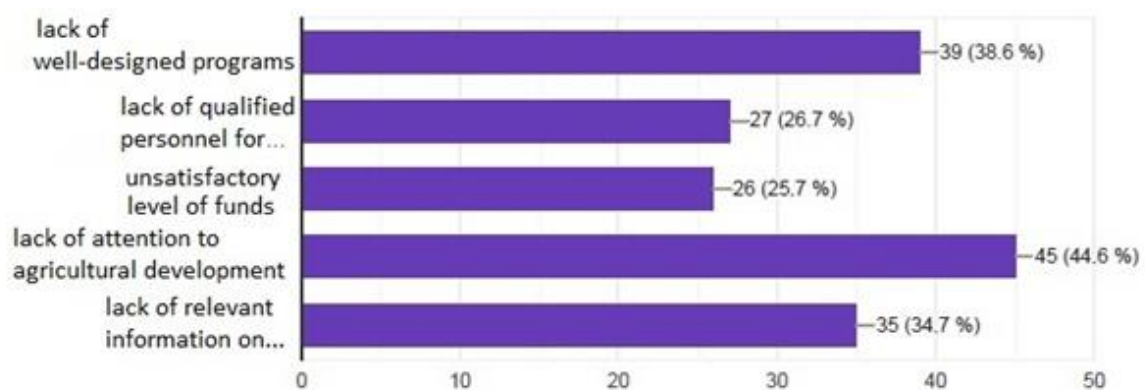


Figure 5. Answers to the question “What is the greatest obstacle to the development of agricultural tourism in your area?”,%.

The responses of 44.6% of respondents indicate that the main factor hindering development of agritourism is the neglect of this type of tourism as one of the effective ways to increase the revenue of the municipal replenishment of the local budget. About 38.6% of respondents believe that the main reason is either the complete absence or lack of programs for the development of agricultural tourism in rural settlements. Moreover, this situation is typical for most constituent entities of the Russian Federation [12]. The lack of necessary information on agritourism was reported by 34.7% of respondents; 26.7% indicate a lack of qualified personnel; 25.7% noted a mismatch in the quality of accommodation facilities and a low level of development of tourist infrastructure in the countryside as a barrier.

The most likely directions of agrarian tourism according to the respondents:

- family vacation in the countryside (52 answers);
- hunting and fishing (41 answers);
- health tourism (38 answers);
- cultural and educational tourism (31 answers);
- ecological tourism (29 answers);
- other types of tourism (27 answers).

Respondents receive information on agritourism mainly from electronic information resources (57.4%), the media (31.7%), from personal experience (15.8%), from seminars and other events (10.9%).

The study confirms the hypothesis that the development of agrarian tourism in the Krasnodar Krai is a strategic vector that reduces the percentage of rural population migration, has a stimulating effect on rural infrastructure, and contributes to the creation of added value, the use of innovations [13–14], diversification of tourism products and a kind of guarantee that the maximum profit will remain in the

local economy, which, in turn, will have a beneficial effect on the socio-economic development of rural areas.

The most important result of the development of agritourism should be the sociocultural and spiritual effect as a result of the activation of local creative resources, the preservation and development of the national natural, historical, cultural and spiritual heritage, the increase of self-esteem of local communities, the emergence of a positive social perspective [15]. The development of agricultural tourism will contribute to the revival of folk crafts, culture and identity, the preservation, effective use and development of the potential of the countryside, the solution of socio-economic problems, overcoming the economic, social and spiritual crisis of rural municipalities. Integration of agriculture and tourism will positively affect the competitiveness of rural areas, the well-being of rural residents and the strengthening of the country's agriculture as a whole [16].

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