

An Analysis of the **Agritourism Industry** in Western Newfoundland: Potentials & Impediments

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Abstract | The Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishery sector of Newfoundland and Labrador plays important role in terms of its contribution to the employment and gross domestic product despite the fact that the sector has recently been under enormous pressure from structural changes. Producers in Newfoundland and Labrador are facing a series of challenges, including high production costs arisen from increasing inputs prices, rules and regulations imposed by the federal and provincial governments, increased competition in output markets, and the turmoil of global economy. As a result, producers will have to find new ways that generate additional income to the on-farm revenues. Agritourism is one option that can potentially increase the incomes of small farms while preserving the viability of rural economies in the region. This paper aims to analyse the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland by conducting a comprehensive field survey during spring and summer 2008. The recommendations made from the results of this study provide new visions for policy makers to understand better the industry, recognise the impediments, and make appropriate decisions at the local and provincial level.

Keywords | Agritourism, Road Signage, Tourism Survey, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

Resumo | A agricultura, a aquacultura e a pesca desempenham um papel importante em termos de contribuição para o emprego e para o produto interno bruto de Newfoundland e Labrador, apesar do sector ter estado recentemente sob uma enorme pressão devido a mudanças estruturais.

Os produtores de Newfoundland e Labrador têm vindo a enfrentar um conjunto de desafios, entre os quais, elevados custos de produção devido à subida do preço das matérias-primas, políticas e regulamentos impostos pelas autoridades regionais e nacionais, o aumento da concorrência nos mercados produtivos, e a turbulência que se verifica na economia global.

Como resultado, os produtores terão de encontrar formas de gerar rendimento adicional para as receitas de exploração. O Agroturismo é uma opção que pode potencialmente aumentar os rendimentos das pequenas explorações agrícolas, preservando a viabilidade das economias rurais da região. Este artigo tem como objectivo analisar a indústria do Agroturismo em Western Newfoundland, através de uma detalhada pesquisa de campo, realizada durante a Primavera e o Verão de 2008. As recomendações feitas a partir dos resultados deste estudo fornecem novas visões para os decisores políticos compreenderem melhor o sector, reconhecerem os seus constrangimentos e tomarem decisões adequadas a nível local e regional.

Palavras-chave | Agroturismo, Sinalização Rodoviária, Inquérito ao Sector do Turismo, Newfoundland e Labrador, Canadá.

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1. Introduction

The Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishery (AAF) sector has been significantly contributing to the economy of the province in terms of employment and gross domestic product (GDP). In 2007, total farm cash receipts increased from \$95.4 million in the previous year to \$102.2 million (7.13 per cent). Although total revenues received from floriculture and nursery products and egg production, respectively, declined by 11.1 and 2.1 per cent total cash receipts from dairy products and furs increased by 13.1 and 51 per cent, respectively within the same time period (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2008). The provincial aquaculture industry will observe a tremendous increase in its total products caused by a new investment made on Southern Newfoundland and Labrador to establish additional four aquaculture operations. The fishing industry has continued boosting the values added of the Newfoundland and Labrador AAF sector while maintaining the vital role of rural communities in developing the economy of the region. In 2007, the fishing industry generated year-round job for more than 13,000 employees and contributed over \$400 million to the GDP of the province. Although different activities in the AAF sector have generated economic diversities throughout the province and provided unique environment in rural areas it has recently been under enormous pressure from structural changes and serious challenges including global economy turmoil, high production costs arisen from increasing inputs prices, unfavourable exchange rates, and increasing competition in the output markets.

To date, urbanisation has not seriously affected the demand for land-use changes in the most areas of Newfoundland and Labrador because the non-farm industrial and service sectors have not been expanded when it is compared to the other provinces in Canada, such as Alberta and Saskatchewan. However, the substantial real growth in the Newfoundland and Labrador's economy

stemmed from the expansion of the oil and gas, mining, manufacturing, and construction industries will impose high pressures on the AAF sector in the future. This may lessen the sector's compatibility with other sectors of the economy in the province. Western Newfoundland consists of several rural communities. Roberts and Hall (2001) define rural communities as places where social structures are unique, regional sizes are small, population density is not considerable, and the economy's function is slow. Since the Newfoundland and Labrador AAF sector is of particular importance in rural communities, policy makers will have to implement appropriate policies that provide alternative ways of generating supplemental income for producers. These policies will enable producers to stay in the highly competitive businesses while preserving the sustainability of the sector in the province.

One of the possible scenarios is to promote agritourism activities throughout the province, especially in Western Newfoundland. Generally, it has been argued that governments and non-governmental organizations in any countries should use and promote tourism as a key tool for development (see, e.g., Hall and Jenkins, 1998, Forstner, 2004). Tourism and agritourism activities are seen as new opportunities and venues for developing the economy of rural communities. McGehee and Kline (2008) express that rural communities are turning to tourism to increase the wealth of these regions. In lieu of this, the European Union has invested more than seven billion euros in five years on various tourism projects that aim to create new alternatives to improve the economy of rural areas (Moscardo, 2008). Similarly, the Australian government spent AUS\$31 million for two years to develop some projects on regional tourism development (AusIndustry, 2005). Agritourism activities are mostly environmentally friendly which help generate additional income for small-scale farms in rural communities in Western Newfoundland. In general, agritourism refers to a commercial enterprise located on a farm, a

ranch, or an agricultural plant that allure visitors by conducting various activities for the enjoyment and educational purposes. Agritourism activities, in nature, are divided into eight-fold: food product, animal farm exhibitions, plants and gardens, on-farm direct sales, entertainment, hospitality services, farm features, and educational experience and outdoor recreation (Agritourism World, 2009).

This paper is drawn from a comprehensive research conducted on the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland during January to August 2008. The main objective of this study is to investigate the status quo of the industry by identifying those farms where any activities related to the agritourism is being operated. The findings of this paper may be of interests of regional policy makers, agritourism operators, and potential investors in the industry. The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. First, we present a brief background on the agritourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. In the next sections, we explain the research method and discuss the findings from the survey analysis. The final section concludes the paper and presents some policy recommendations for managers and policy makers.

2. Background

Literature shows that the study conducted by Knight and Associates in 1998 was the only one that investigated the agritourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, to date. In 1990s, the agritourism activities in the province were not widely spread and few firms operated a series of underdeveloped and non-concentrated agritourism activities. Some areas where one or more of the agritourism activities were observed were Humber Valley Deer Lake, Lethbridge, Harbour Grace, Campbellton, Happy Valley Goose Bay, Whitbourne, Botwood, and St. John's (Knight and Associates, 1999). Indeed, most of the agritourism operations

held in 1990s were farm fairs and festivals. These events were mostly agricultural-oriented operations and emphasised on the promotion of the locally grown foods. Although potential growth for launching various types of agritourism operations was observed, the major concern of the policy makers was the development of the community businesses. In the Knight and Associates (1999) report, 25 agritourism activities were recorded, which agricultural fairs and festivals encompassed 40 per cent of the total events. Other major activities were u-pick (20 per cent) and B&B (12 per cent) operations. The rest of the agritourism activities were winery tours, heritage farms, flea markets, roadside markets, petting farms, emu farms, and organic fruit and vegetables farms.

During 1990s, the annual agricultural fairs and festivals were usually held in September because the tourist season started slowing down. Few types of these events were also observed in May, July, and August. Knight and Associates (1999) report that the majority of tourists visiting the agricultural fairs and festivals in summer came from outside of Newfoundland and Labrador, whereas local and suburb residents were the most who attended these types of events in September. Some examples of the annual events held in September were the Humber Valley Strawberry Festival, the Brigus Blueberry Festival and the Farmers' Field Day and Open House in St. John's. The number of attendees in the agricultural fairs and festivals varied from one event to another ranging from 1,000 in Port-au-Port Agricultural Fair to almost 15,000 in the Humber Valley Strawberry Festival in Deer Lake (Knight and Associates, 1999).

Overall, Knight and Associates (1999) interviewed 15 agritourism enterprises that operated one or more of the agritourism activities, such as u-picks, horse riding, winery tour, and heritage farm. Among these, the u-pick operations were the oldest type of activities that have been conducted for more than 15 years in Newfoundland and Labrador. Most of the time the u-pick farms delivered the products

directly to local businesses because farm-tourists usually were not equipped by facilities to store and carry the products. For this reason, the sales of u-pick operations were not higher than that of the sales in roadside stands (Knight and Associates, 1999). In 1998, there were only three B&B farm-operators in the entire Newfoundland and Labrador. These farm-operators tried to combine some types of agritourism activities for the visitors who mostly resided out-of-province. For instance, one farm-operator arranged a farm tour and provided a small museum by demonstrating farm machinery, tools, and equipment so that its visitors observed the experience of living on farm. Another farm-operator provided homemade products including fruit juices, jams, jellies, muffins and berries for its visitors. During the Cabot 500-year event in summer 1997, one of the B&B operators recorded a 100 per cent occupancy rate. Generally, whether a B&B farm-operation is successful or not depends upon where it is located. If the enterprise is placed on the main tourism routes, then chances that it will host more visitors are higher than that of the ones located off-roads. For example, Knight and Associates (1999) reported that the emu farm located on the route to Cape St. Mary, on average, recorded 1,500 farm visitors per year despite any initial intention to open its farm-gate to the public. Finally, roadside markets are another activities that had great impact on the development of the regional economy. Specifically, the majority of tourists visited the Markland winery at Whitbourne and roadside markets located on the Gros Morne National Park (Knight and Associates, 1999).

3. Research plan and methods

To investigate the status quo of the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland, we interviewed all farm-operators involved in any of the activities related to agritourism. In addition, we interviewed those individuals who co-ordinated agritourism

operations in the region including directors of fairs and festivals, members of development boards in rural areas, and the provincial government employees. A modified version of the questionnaire, designed by Knight and Associates (1999) was used to collect up-to-date information related to the agritourism operators in Western Newfoundland. Changes to the initial questionnaire have been made to meet the objectives of this research.

4. Survey analysis

In total, we identified 15 farm-operators that actively involved in one or more of the activities related to agritourism in Western Newfoundland in 2008. Of these, nine enterprises were successfully interviewed. Three farm-operators refused to participate in the survey, and the other three could not be reached. The list of the agritourism operators in the region was obtained from the Newfoundland and Labrador Natural Resources Bureau at Corner Brook. All the interviews were conducted from January to August 2008. The interviews were carried on either by telephone or in person while visiting the agritourism operations despite the fact that these farms are dispersed throughout the region. To support the information collected from the interviews, we completed nine comprehensive questionnaires at the same time the interviews were conducted. It is worth mentioning that the collected data were analysed at the average level in accordance with the confidentiality agreement that we signed with the agritourism farm operators.

Overall, the analysis of the survey shows that the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland is small, dispersed, and not well developed despite its potentials. The majority of farm-tourists in fairs and festivals came from the local and suburb regions. Most of the agritourism enterprises were substantially operating far from their potential economies of scale. Each of the enterprises participated in the

survey states that they view agritourism activities as new sources of earning additional income to the revenues that are directly generated from farm activities. Reviews on the farm balance sheets show that selling agricultural products, such as fruit and vegetables, livestock products (honey and alpacas products) and hays are the most common sources of on-farm revenues. Some examples of fruit and vegetables are beans, beet, cabbages, carrots, cucumbers, currants, lettuce, onions, peas, peppers, plums, pumpkin, squash, strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, turnip, zucchini, and processed wild berry products. The followings specifically show the results of our survey that are broken on the basis of agritourism activities.

Facility and event description

There are several agritourism operations held in Western Newfoundland every year. The annual agritourism season in Western Newfoundland usually starts as early as the first day of May and ends in early November. These activities are divided into the following major categories: outdoor recreation, educational experience, entertainment, hospitality services, and on-farm direct sales. Among the various outdoor recreation activities, the agritourism operators arranged fishing, wildlife study, hiking, horseback and carriage riding, and playground and picnic tables for the visitors. Providing playgrounds for children and setting picnic tables for farm-tourists to have refreshments during visiting the operations were the most prevalent outdoor activities (55.5 per cent) among the other activities. Only two farm-operators provided cannery tours for the visitors. This study found no evidence of cooking classes, winery tasting, displays handmade crafts, and hospitality services, such as farm stays or B&B in Western Newfoundland in 2008. There was only one location where guided tours or outfitter services were provided for tourists. During the course of this study, two agricultural fairs and festivals were held in the region. Almost all of the enterprises in the survey

provided u-pick operations, roadside stands, and on-farm stores to sell their products.

The result of the survey showed that there were two farms that raised alpacas and horses. The alpaca breeding-farm is located on the French Ancestors Route on the Port au Port Peninsula in the community of Felix Cove near Stephenville. The farm where horses are raised is located near the Cache Rapid on the Humber River in the farming community of Reidville in Deer Lake. This enterprise also provided horse-riding lessons for the visitors at all age levels with different training background. In addition, it arranged campground tours for its visitors to experience the western lifestyle.

Other outdoor recreational activities that were held in Western Newfoundland during the course of this research were botanical classes and boardwalk arrangements labelled "See Word File," and "Open Farm Day." As mentioned earlier, we interviewed nine active agritourism farm-operators and completed nine comprehensive questionnaires. The oldest farm-operator began to provide services to farm-tourists in 1988, whereas the most recent one started in 2005. The remained agritourism ventures were established between these two periods. In 2008, we did not find any new farm-operator that plan to enter the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland. The incumbent farm-operators presented several reasons as to why they added agritourism activities into their farm production. For example, one farm-operator stated that he did not see any support from local businesses, especially chain stores, to purchase locally grown fruit and vegetables at fair prices. It is argued that chain stores in the region would prefer to import fruit and vegetables from outside the province rather than buy from localised farms. As a result, this farm-operator opened a store in the city of Corner Brook to sell its products directly to consumers. Other reasons expressed were to increase on-farm revenues, promote farm products, conduct retirement projects, and increase economies of scale by purchasing other farms.

Although none of the farm-operators in the survey did have any place to house tourists for over-night staying, they provided several facilities to help tourists feel more comfortable during visiting the operations. Some examples of these facilities were washrooms, handicap access, parking, seating, picnic tables, tack shops, tea-rooms, interpretation materials, petting farm, and canteen and food services.

Tourism market

None of the agritourism enterprises disclosed how many visitors, on average, they had during the tourism season in 2008. Instead, they were able to present information related to what percentage farm-tourists came from either local area with less than two hours driving time, other geographical areas of the province, or outside Newfoundland and Labrador including international countries. On average, one-third of the total tourists who visited the alpaca-breeding farm equally came from suburbs, within the province, and outside Newfoundland and Labrador. This farm did not report any international tourists. On the contrary, about 30 per cent of the visitors of the farm where wild berry processing products were made came from international countries. The wild berry processing plant farm, located in Griquet also, also reported that 60 per cent of its total visitors in 2008 came from outside Newfoundland and Labrador and the remained 10 per cent resided in the province.

Promotional strategy

Almost 90 per cent of the agritourism farm-operators advertised their businesses. Of these, 33.5 per cent carried out their advertisement locally, while near two-thirds of them advertised both provincially and nationally. The advertisement expenditures varied from one agritourism-operator to another and depended on the scale and nature of the enterprise's activities. By and large, the mean and median of the advertisement expenditures was \$1,590 and \$950,

respectively. The result of the survey shows that different channels of advertising were used by the agritourism-operators to disseminate information related to their operations. Some examples of these methods were provincial and local tourism guide, design and print own brochures, media including television, radio and newspapers, Internet, road signs, agriculture programs and trade shows. Among the agritourism ventures that spent money on advertising, 37.5 per cent co-ordinated their promotion strategies with other institutions involved in the agritourism activities, such as the Strawberry Festival and Fall Fairs, Viking tour, and the Open Farm Day event. In addition, 62.5 per cent of those enterprises that carried out advertisement declared that they received assistance from different levels of government. These aids were in the form of receiving recipe cards, colouring books, pencils, magnets, sings, and stickers. In the world of competition, 50 per cent of the agritourism-operator knew about who their competitors were and how they were running their businesses.

Insurance coverage

There was a promising sound with respect to public liability insurance among the agritourism enterprises in Western Newfoundland. Except one farm-operator, all of the agritourism enterprises participated in the research insured their visitors in 2008. Among these businesses, only two enterprises disclosed that, on average, they spent \$2,250 on public insurance coverage. The agritourism-operator that did not purchase insurance for its visitors stated that it was too hard for him to find insurance companies that offer reasonable price for its services. The rest of the enterprises, however, did not report any difficulties in providing insurance coverage for their visitors. Almost 88 per cent of the agritourism-operators satisfied by the services provided by the insurance companies. Finally, there was almost a unanimous agreement that the insurance costs have continued increasing since 2005.

Association membership

The result of the survey shows that four agritourism enterprises were the members of the tourism associations in Western Newfoundland. The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, the Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, the Viking Trail Tour Association, the Canadian Llama Association, and the Western Newfoundland Destination Market organization (DMO) are some examples of the agritourism associations in the region. Of the nine agritourism-operators participated in the survey, four ventures were in favour of establishing a separate regional agritourism association in Western Newfoundland, while the remained five agritourism-operators were not interested in establishing a new association in the region. Nevertheless, all the nine ventures agreed on the future roles of the tourism associations in training qualified employees, promoting, networking, and setting standards for the industry in the region. Finally, five of the nine agritourism enterprises had not heard about the services and programs provided by the Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador prior to the time of the survey. This organization, founded in 1983, is primarily responsible for the development and promotion of the tourism and hospitality in the province. The lack of knowledge about the services provided by the Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador indicates that insufficient efforts have been made to introduce the organization and its visions on the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland.

Training needs

The analysis of the survey shows that three farm-operators had some training related to the agritourism activities. One agritourism-operator took some tourism courses offered by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The other two agritourism-operators had some knowledge about the agritourism activities through the informal

method of "in-house" training. Five agritourism-operators expressed that they participated in several tourism workshops within the past three years. These agritourism-operators stated that the workshops helped them improved their businesses. They look forward to attending more workshops related to different aspects of tourism to learn new techniques on the identification of market segments, streamlining, and logo-work training.

Economics

In terms of generating revenues from the agritourism activities, two of nine farm-operators earned 100 per cent of their income through these activities. These two businesses were the wild berry processing plant and horse-riding-and-training farms. Another farm-operator whose annual revenue mostly (70 per cent) generated from operating agritourism activities was the alpacas breeding farm. The other six ventures did not significantly earn income through these types of activities. It is obvious that the first two agritourism-operators allocated 100 per cent of their time to their businesses. The owner of the alpacas breeding farm allocated half of his time to run his business on farm. Nevertheless, we should interpret this statements with cautious because it is not completely known that the stated revenues generated solely from visiting farm-tourists or the functioning of the ventures. The percentage of time spent on the agritourism activities by other six ventures varied between 10 to 30 per cent. In terms of employment, four out of nine agritourism-operators hired staffs to run the businesses. The number of people hired by these farms ranged between four to ten persons in 2008. All of the operators interviewed in the survey used their family members who lived on-and-off farm to operate the business. The number of on-farm family members was around two to three persons, whereas the number of off-farm family members varied from two at the beginning to 20 in the peak of the tourism season.

Future development

The agritourism-operators participated in the survey were asked to share their plans and visions on the possible development of their businesses in the future. Five enterprises responded positively on the expansion of their agritourism activities in Western Newfoundland. One farm-operator intends to establish a 10-15 acres cranberry farm. The other is going to build a new facility in Little Rapids for bee production. Another enterprise has recently increased the size of its farm's boardwalk. An incumbent agritourism-operator considers establishing a petting farm and opening a farmer's market in her farm. Finally, one of the agritourism-operators has decided to build an indoor riding facility so that it can provide horse-riding services to visitors all year round. The Marble Mountain Ski Resort located in Western Newfoundland is a famous ski-resort where hosts a lot of visitors each year from all over the world. This implies that potential demand for indoor horse-riding activity exists in the winter season. It also contemplates purchasing few alpacas and Llamas to diversify its tourism attractions.

Almost all of the agritourism-operators participated in the survey stated that they have difficulties with the provincial government to put the sign of their businesses up on the main road. Most of the areas designated by the provincial government were far away from their operations. Other impediments on the development of the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland are insufficient sources of inputs and lack of knowledgeable labour force in the field of tourism. By launching the B.A. program of Tourism Studies at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College of the Memorial University of Newfoundland at Corner Brook in 2006 and other tourism programs held in the College of North Atlantic it seems the problem of inadequate qualified tourism experts will be resolved in the future. Other problems, pointed out by the participants in the survey, were difficulties in taking loans out from financial institutions, rising gasoline prices at the time of survey, insufficient

supports from the local and provincial governments, small number of population, and short length of the tourism season. In Northern Peninsula there is not an extended ground-and-air transportation network during the tourism season. This region also suffers from insufficient number of places to host visitors who intend to stay overnight. For example, the town of Griket can only accommodate one or two busses in one time. The excess visitors will, therefore, have to go back to St. Anthony for overnight staying.

Finally, the result of the survey shows that the agritourism industry in Western Newfoundland has enough room to expand its operation scale. New projects, such as establishing waterslide parks, petting zoo, indoor horse riding facilities, playgrounds, dumping station for tourist trailers, activity centre for children, B&B, and ratites farm to raise emu and ostrich are considered. Moreover, the diversification of the current crop pattern as well as the expansion of the existence roadside stands, road signage stations, points of direct sales of locally grown fresh products in addition to offering home-made products including local jams, jellies, and crafts is of great interest.

5. Conclusion and policy recommendations

It has been observed for almost a decade that agricultural producers in Western Newfoundland have not been able to generate sufficient on-farm income to support their families and maintain sustainable businesses that keep them functionally active in highly competitive markets. Farmers have now realised that the reliance on income solely earned from directly selling agricultural products, given limited resources, is not feasible any more and other efforts should be made to find alternative ways that generate additional income.

Agritourism activities are non-traditional innovative farm operations that enable farmers to earn supplemental income and attain the economic

viability of their farming operations. The results of this research show that farmers in Western Newfoundland generally tend to offer outdoor recreation (i.e., horseback riding) and entertainment (i.e., arranging farm festivals) to farm-tourists. In addition, the analysis of the survey indicates that the volume of on-farm direct sales (i.e., u-pick operations or roadside stands) have gone up drastically from the time farmers started supplying farm-products directly to the market. Specifically, this study found that producers who sold their farm output directly through retailing method earned more income than of those who sold their products through conventional market channels. Among the former group, the more direct sales stations were close to the urban areas, suburbs, and commercial zones the more were the likelihood of earning higher income levels.

The findings from this research led us to present the following policy recommendations that aim to help policy makers in Western Newfoundland make appropriate decisions toward promoting the agritourism industry in the region.

- Overall, the agritourism industry has not been well developed and dispersed to date. Most of the nine agritourism-operators seek governmental assistance on how to improve the businesses. The majority of the farm visitors came from local regions and suburbs.
- The low number of the agritourism-operators indicates that the majority of producers have doubts on the outcomes of adding one or more of the agritourism activities to their businesses. It is recommended that government and non-government organisations collegially get involved in promoting the industry by arranging few sample farm exhibitions in different places and have them visited by the regional producers. One possible outcome of implementing such policy is to improve community capacity building. The idea of community capacity building has widely been supported by experts and numerous research projects can be found in the literature (see, e.g., Monypenny, 2008, George *et al.* 2007, Dollahite *et al.*, 2005, etc.)
- The results of this research show that there are great opportunities for producers in Western Newfoundland to initiate the production of new products and enhance the existing tourism products, while developing new markets in the province, other provinces in Canada, and international countries. Some examples of new products are cultural tourism activities, organic fruit and vegetables, specialized livestock products (i.e., sheep, goats, fur, emu, etc.), handmade crafts, and farm-based food and non-food products including jams and jellies, handmade crafts, and etc.
- The setting up of several farmer's markets throughout the Western Newfoundland will help local producers market their farm and home-based products directly to both the urban and rural communities. It is recommended that government agencies with the aid of zone boards in the province facilitate such establishments where consumers and producers can interact easily and sharing their views. These facilities would eventually become places where public awareness on the current agritourism activities that are being operated is raised. This can be done by providing tourism pamphlets devoted to each region, which can showcase and transmit traditional trades of knowledge of various activities that are currently carried out in different farm places.
- The results of this study show a lack of formal education in tourism among agritourism-operators. To build a successful agritourism venture it is very important to know how to strategize and implement different agritourism operations. Every agritourism-operator must have a documented plan on how to run the business from the beginning until the end of the tourism season. In light of this, a strong and organised customer service would help the farm-operators

assess the services provided to farm-tourists and evaluate comments they receive from their visitors. It is recommended that the agritourism-operators shall participate in at least one or two training courses in the field of tourism. The training courses should be in collaboration with the provincial government or its agencies. By the inauguration of the B.A. program in tourism at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College of the Memorial University of Newfoundland in Corner Brook it is predicted that the lack of qualified expertise with a solid knowledge of tourism will be abated in the near future. Developing short programs such as a one-year certificate of tourism is also recommended to train people who are not interested in studying the B.A. program for four years.

- This research found that agritourism-operators had serious problems in posting signage and symbols to advertise the businesses. Road signs are usually posted far from highways and main routes, which prevent tourists from searching out and identifying agritourism operations. It is recommended that provincial government and its agencies develop transparent guidelines toward posting signage and symbols and make it readily available to the agritourism-operators so that road signs are standardised and posted in accordance with the rules and regulations.
- Different market segments should be identified as the culture, age, and interests of farm-tourists are different. It is recommended that the government of Newfoundland and Labrador develops a joint vacation-program with the collaboration of neighbouring provinces (i.e., Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) to invest on different marketing projects aimed to segregate market segments in the agritourism industry.
- Finally, in accordance with the current enhancement in the information technology sector, new methods of advertising should be examined. For example, the intensive use of various search

engines in the World Wide Web which winds up to find the Newfoundland and Labrador natural sightseeing, attractions, and accommodations is recommended. To do this, popular web sites, such as Orkut, Facebook, or Twitter where Internet users usually share their views and photos from travel experience to each other should be targeted.

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