

Opportunity for Income Generation through Agro Tourism for College of Agriculture and Allied Disciplines

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Opinion

The colleges of agriculture and allied disciplines are the bottom stone and foundation of National agricultural education, research, and extension system in India. These colleges are exclusively meant for imparting basic knowledge of all subjects related with respective discipline and delivering all aspect of academic curriculum. As the first and primary institution for students, the development of infrastructural facilities for practical (both in field and laboratory or observatory) are essential and these infrastructure in mostly permanent in nature and only have academic significance. The research farm, instructional farm, gardens around the it, special farm structure established for research such as threshing and harvesting yard, plant and soil sampling and processing units, cattle unit, bird units (poultry, rabbit, duck, etc), water reservoirs, tillage and other implements are also meant to have research and academic uses and they will be there over long time. These investments are must and it do not expect to generate returns, while accountable and large resources are required for their maintenance. The field activities are regular without interruptions and as per the recommendation requiring higher resources. Besides research and academics, demonstration plots for extension of new varieties, technology, or any other interventions such as tools and implements also need a field and resources. Considering no or very less returns, the avenue for earning from these structures need to be traced and for this agro tourism will one promising options of college established in hilly/forest area with pleasant natural surroundings.

The agro tourism involves showcasing procedures, methodologies, materials, cultivation practices and raring of different animals to city dwellers or tourist from different part of India/world [1]. It also involves allowing the tourist to participate in agricultural activity and work with the farmers. At present 35.5% population of India is living in cities and are not much familiar with village life and agricultural activities. For them, knowing the rural life and working with farmer or at research farm will be tour new and healthy experience. The arranging such tour by college will showcase the college activities and revenue generation will expect from such activity and this will be significant activity for colleges located in Hilly area and surrounded by forest as these places are naturally pleasant and little effort are needed to develop it for tourism. These places are tourist attraction and client availability will be easy and round the year. The college of Agriculture (CAU-I), Kyrdemkulai is one such college and will support such type of activities as it is in juvenile stage with respect to its development. The scope of agro-tourism is explained by location of college in hilly area with several tourist attraction in and around the whole state make the investment worthy and insure client availability; expected and present availability of new crops and animals and farming practices (organic and natural farming); in spot promotion of college technology, products and awareness footprint of eco-friendly agricultural activities; opportunity to see and work with rural residents with cultural exchange and income generation [2-5]. The major guidelines for activities are:

- a) Preparation of education, research, and extension farm/field/block (win-win situation for both college regular activities as well as for agrotourism).
- b) Pursue for funds to develop additional structure required.
- c) Upscaling of human's resource.
- d) Identification of potential off-field (college) service providers.
- e) Planning of facilitate visit (timing, duration, client group, arrangements, organization of village visit, cultural outcomes, field activity day and life enhancing activity (yoga, lectures and worshipping nature).
- f) Role specification of smooth running the agricultural activities and deployment of addition service renders for on-field (college) activities.
- g) Steps to avert any modification of well-planned and set college academic and other activities. The timing of visit needs to be considered as constraint function and need to judge by putting condition such as matching with field activities, holidays and major tourist visit time, matching with regional festival season and matching with college events (field day, exhibitions, cultural events, interaction section, etc.). The duration of visit needs to be restricted for few days/weeks in single year to economies time and prevent the any hurdle in college regular activity.

The impact of agro-tourism on college and adjoining area/locality/community can be explained by economic impacts (revenue generation to college as well as higher liquidity of capitals with local resident due to tourist visit through logistic, residency/hospitality, sale of produce and rendering all kind of services); Social impact (social satisfaction of rendering the services for people's happiness and increased social confidences due to cross talk and idea exchange beyond the reach of local community before such project); cultural impact due to increased investment on cultural

activities thereby by promotion to maintaining cultural identity and diversity and satisfaction of cultural exchange; college activity impact through pushing the developmental aspect and exposure to diverse opinions/judgements/evaluations by diverse demographic structure; and impact on human resource development through faculty up gradation as well as effective utilization of staff.

With opinion type article can be summered as, long term planning, awareness and respect to local belief and tradition to make local community as a part of this agro-tourism journey, working beyond the regular dimension of ARE (academic, research and extension) activity, faculty up gradation for such task, deployment of skilled workers in seasonal basis, infrastructural development, patience for expecting returns on investment, implementing such projects from external funding and advertisement for targeted client groups will be key to success. Besides that, prioritization of key activity and developmental work with least impairment to college regular activities and participation of each component (living and non-living) of college with needful enthusiasm will harmonize such activities and significantly contribution to college welfare.

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