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Vermont Agri-Tourism 2002

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A special "THANK YOU" goes to the Vermont agricultural producers who helped us by completing the Agri-Tourism Survey during July and August, 2003. Support for this project was provided by Vermont Farms! Association, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, and USDA Rural Development.

Income from Agri-Tourism Totals \$19.5 Million in Vermont

Income from agri-tourism related activities on Vermont farms in 2002 totaled \$19.5 million, an increase of 86 percent from the value of agri-tourism in 2000. One-third of all farms in Vermont received income from agri-tourism in 2002. These 2,200 farms received an average of nearly \$8,900 per farm from agri-tourism.

Smaller farms, in terms of acreage, tended to be more involved in agri-tourism than larger farms. Thirty-eight percent of farms with less than 50 acres received income from agri-tourism in 2002. This compares to about 34 percent of the farms with 50-149 acres and 29 percent of farms with 150 or more acres.

While a greater percentage of smaller farms were involved in agri-tourism, larger farms had a higher average income. Farms with less than 50 acres received an average of \$5,750 from agri-tourism related activities in 2002. Farms

with 500 or more acres received an average of \$15,300 from agri-tourism related activities in 2002.

The most common source of agri-tourism income was from on-farm sales of commodities produced and sold at the farm. Sales were led by maple syrup and maple products, followed by fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, cut flowers, nursery products, cheese, and an assortment of other items produced on Vermont farms. Other categories of agri-tourism generating income for farms included accommodations, outdoor recreation, education, and entertainment. Some survey respondents expressed concerns about the increased liability and additional labor costs that certain agri-tourism activities required.

The \$19.5 million generated from agri-tourism activities represented approximately four percent of the total gross farm income generated in Vermont in 2002.

VERMONT: Agri-Tourism 2000 and 2002

Size of Farm	Total Number of Farms		Farms with Agri-Tourism Income		Income Received from Agri-Tourism	
	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002
Acres	Number		Number		Dollars ^{1/}	
1 - 49	2,000	2,100	800	800	2,700,000	4,600,000
50 - 149	1,800	1,750	600	600	3,800,000	5,300,000
150 - 499	2,400	2,200	550	650	3,000,000	7,300,000
500 +	600	550	150	150	1,000,000	2,300,000
Total	6,800	6,600	2,100	2,200	10,500,000	19,500,000

^{1/} Dollars were not adjusted for inflation.

Agri-tourism is a commercial enterprise on a working farm conducted for the enjoyment, education, and/or active involvement of the visitor, generating supplemental income for the farm. Many farmers in Vermont are opening up their operations to the public by producing and selling products directly from the farm, operating bed-and-breakfasts, conducting educational farm tours, offering hay and sleigh rides, and many other agri-tourism activities which bring the farm experience to more people and provide additional revenue to support their farming operation.

farms were selected at random from the New England Agricultural Statistics database of Vermont farms. The sample was drawn based on a 95 percent confidence interval with a five percent margin of error based on the proportion of farms within each size group.

Trained interviewers contacted farmers during July and August 2003. To accurately account for all income from agri-tourism activities, questions were divided into five general categories: outdoor recreation, educational tourism, on-farm sales, accommodations, and entertainment. The survey was not designed to provide statistically reliable estimates by each of these categories. The data were thoroughly analyzed and estimates set based on the survey indications using standard USDA-NASS methodology.

Survey Methodology: A sample of approximately 1,500 farms across Vermont was selected to participate in the survey. Of those, approximately 400 farms had participated in the 2000 Vermont Agri-Tourism Survey, with approximately 73 percent of those operations reporting positive agri-tourism income in 2000. The remaining 1,100

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