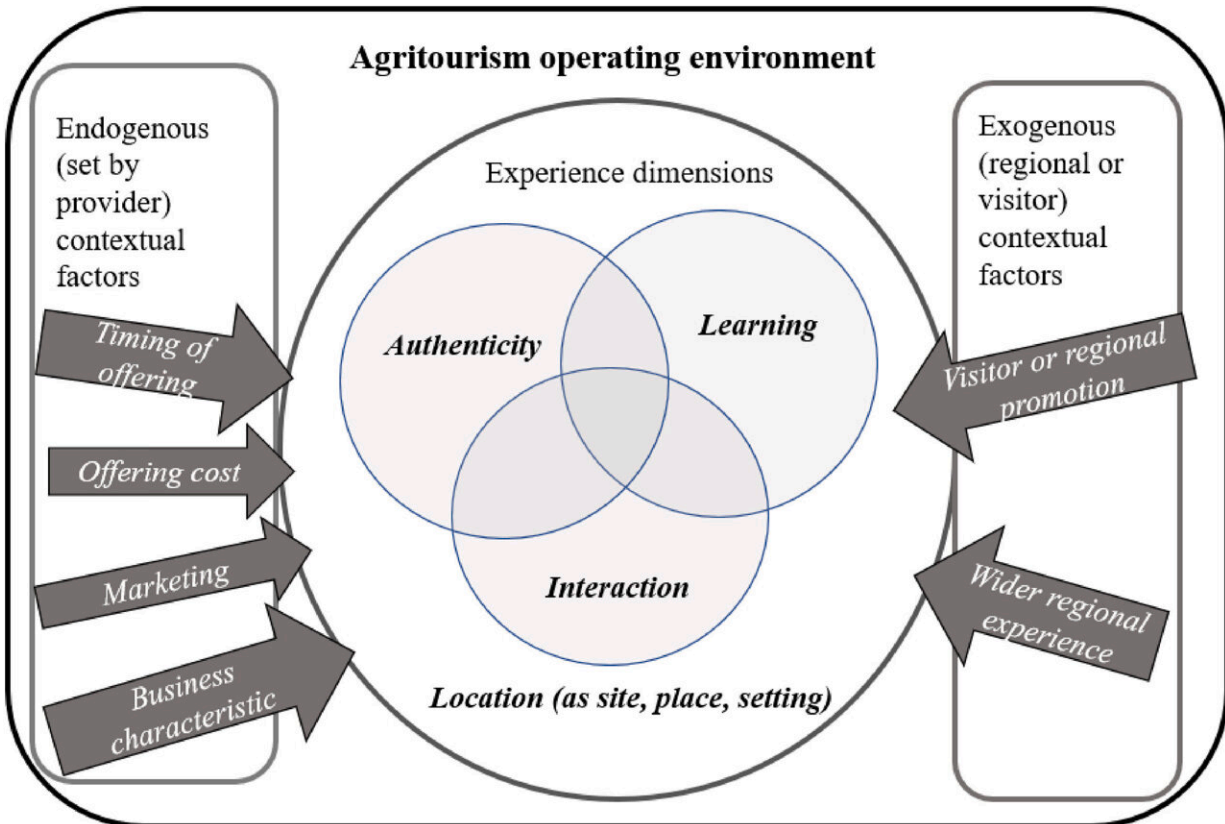


Study explores what helps agritourism grow

May 9 2024, by Annelies Gartner



Experience dimensions and contextual factors influencing the agritourism operating environment. Credit: *Journal of Rural Studies* (2024). DOI: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103294

According to researchers from The University of Western Australia, location, authenticity, interaction, and learning are important factors in enhancing agritourism experiences.

The study, by Associate Professor Kirsten Martinus, Director of the Future Regions Lab from UWA's School of Social Sciences, Associate Professor Bryan Boruff from UWA's School of Agriculture and Environment, and Dr. Adriana Nunez Picado from UWA's School of Social Sciences, was published in the [*Journal of Rural Studies*](#).

"Agritourism is important to [agricultural regions](#) as it attracts many [visitors](#) in search of new experiences and provides alternative incomes to [rural areas](#)," Associate Professor Martinus said.

"However, there is limited knowledge about what contributes directly and indirectly to enhancing the agritourism experience, particularly the role of visitor-provider interaction and [emotional connection](#) to place."

The study examined a survey of providers and in-depth interviews to explore agritourism in the south-west region of Western Australia and included a range of experiences on and off farms, and authentic and staged experiences directly or indirectly related to agriculture.

The agritourism providers offered a range of products, from truffle hunts to beekeeping classes, as well as farm stays and u-pick experiences.

"We found that agritourism comprised four key areas of experiential importance: location, authenticity, interaction, and learning," Associate Professor Boruff said.

"Importantly, tourists who could interact or participate in farming lifestyles or agricultural processes found an experience authentic regardless of whether it was on or off-farm, immersive or staged."

The findings provide guidance for policymakers, regional development agencies, and agritourism providers to develop agritourism "products"

that meet market demands.

"Agritourism has evolved beyond the sale of products on the farm to a range of experiences which include authenticity and storytelling in a range of farm and non-farm settings," Associate Professor Martinus said.

"Our insights could help to increase visitor numbers and sales, improve regional development outcomes, and enhance understandings of rural areas."

More information: Kirsten Martinus et al, Authenticity, interaction, learning and location as curators of experiential agritourism, *Journal of Rural Studies* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103294](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103294)

Provided by University of Western Australia

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