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Agricultural Landscape Preferences: Implications for Agritourism Development

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Abstract

This study examines residents' preferences for agricultural landscape features when engaging in agritourism activities by addressing two objectives: (1) to identify the features of agricultural landscapes that are more appealing to current and potential agritourists and (2) to compare those perceptions across respondents from different genders, agritourism experience, and agricultural attachment. Data were collected through an online survey conducted among three nonrandom panels of residents from Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Texas (250 per state). Results showed that respondents liked most landscape features commonly found in an agritourism farm, especially natural and cultural ones. Among these, the most preferred features they would like to see are wildlife, water resources, historic elements, and farm animals, suggesting that these can serve as farm pull attractions. Multivariate analyses of variance showed significant differences in landscape preferences across gender, levels of agritourism experience, and agricultural attachment, suggesting critical marketing and managing implications for farmers offering agritourism opportunities.

Keywords

agritourism, farm tourism, landscape, rural tourism

Introduction

Agricultural landscapes have been recognized as multifunctional because they not only serve to produce food and fiber but also provide public amenities such as biodiversity conservation, preservation of historic resources, and contribution to the socioeconomic viability of rural areas (Jordan and Warner 2010; Jongeneel, Polman, and Slangen 2008; Marsden and Sonnino 2008; Renting et al. 2009). The many nonconsumable services emerging from the practice of agriculture, especially in terms of landscape beautification and conservation, increase the farmland capacity to provide recreational services for farm families, their neighbors, and visitors (Renting et al. 2009; Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005).

Recreational opportunities on farmlands are a service that agricultural landscapes have historically provided to the American society (Cordell 2008); the countryside is also a top destination for tourism and outdoor recreation in European countries (Aznar, Marsat, and Rambonilaza 2007). Recently, the concept of “recreational multifunctionality” has emerged to capture the mix of recreational services that private landowners commonly provide to their family members, close acquaintances (e.g., neighbors, friends, relatives), and the public (Barbieri and Valdivia 2010a, 2010b). Agritourism, generally understood as the recreational visit to a working agricultural facility (Barbieri and Valdivia 2010a;

Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001), belongs to the realm of “recreational multifunctionality,” in which private landowners offer recreational opportunities with an entrepreneurial purpose (Barbieri and Valdivia 2010a). National agricultural statistics show that the number of agritourism farms and the proportion of agritourism-related revenues have steadily increased in the United States during the last 10 years, especially among smaller farms (USDA: NASS 2007), while the interest on this form of recreation among the public is foreseen to continue growing in upcoming years (Cordell 2008). The appeal of rural living for relaxation and recreational purposes, the greater demand for amenity countryside uses, and the desire to fill the generational gap between rural and urban families are increasing the potential market for agritourism (Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005; Wicks and Merrett 2003).

The diversity of agricultural landscapes in terms of their crops and livestock, production mode (e.g., low input, highly

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specialized), and topography shapes the recreational use of the land in multiple ways (Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005). For example, planting trees in the farmland along with crops diversifies the visual appearance and improves the aesthetics of agricultural landscapes, thus facilitating nature appreciation and supporting various types of recreational activities, such as hiking, skiing, and bird watching (Grala, Tyndall, and Mize 2010; Lovell et al. 2010; Schultz et al. 2009). Evidence suggests that synergies exist between agricultural practices and the recreational enjoyment of farmland (Barbieri and Valdivia 2010a, 2010b) and that specific agricultural practices influence recreational opportunities in rural areas. For example, planting trees to ameliorate wind/soil erosion also increases the appeal to the public and enhances the conservation of natural habitats, providing both the consumptive (e.g., hunting) and nonconsumptive (e.g., bird watching) enjoyment of wildlife (Kenwick, Shammin, and Sullivan 2009; Kulshreshtha and Kort 2009; Garrett, McGraw, and Walter 2009; Schultz et al. 2009).

Taking into consideration that agriculture supports recreational multifunctionality and that different types of agricultural landscapes can shape the type of recreational use, it can be postulated that visitors' preferences and expectations for the visual appeal of agritourism farms' landscapes might vary. Some tourists may hope to be close to nature in a pure and pristine condition, while others may look for traditional living countryside within their cultural landscapes (Aznar, Marsat, and Rambonilaza 2007). However, there is a dearth of knowledge on such preferences among the public constituency comprising current and potential agritourists. To address this knowledge gap, a study was conducted in 2011 to examine residents' preferences for various features composing the agricultural landscape when participating in agritourism activities.

A better understanding of consumers' preferences of the visual appeal of agricultural landscapes when visiting a farm for recreational purposes is urgently needed given the significant increase of farms offering agritourism as well as its projected growth in the near future. Thus, study results can inform the management and marketing intelligence of agritourism to farmers by providing information about consumers' preferred landscape features they can incorporate in their farms. By doing so, agritourism providers can better target and cater to consumers by fostering pleasant feelings (Karjalainen and Tyrvaïnen 2002). Importantly, managing agricultural landscapes by incorporating or preserving certain features (e.g., wetlands, native plants) to appeal to the public can also produce optimal mutual benefits for humans and the ecosystem (Balling and Falk 1982). At the larger scheme, strengthening the offering of agritourism is important because its capacity to alleviate farmers' economic distress, increase local employment, preserve rural landscapes and lifestyles, and conserve natural habitats and resources in a sustainable manner (Barbieri 2013; Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005; Wicks and Merrett 2003).

Study results advance the knowledge of natural resources' role on human behaviors, which has been less examined than the influence of humans on natural resources (e.g., soil compaction), thus deserving further exploration (Henderson and Bialeschki 2005). This study specifically contributes to the scholarship of landscape preferences for recreational purposes in two ways. It expands existing knowledge of visitors' fondness for natural elements (e.g., water resources, trees) in rural landscapes to various cultural and agricultural elements existing in farmlands. It also broadens the understanding of the role that sociodemographic factors have in shaping individuals' preferences for natural sceneries to their experiences with agritourism settings and attachment to agrarian landscapes.

Literature Review

Agritourism

Agritourism is commonly defined as visiting a working farm or any other agricultural setting for enjoyment, education, or active involvement in an operation's activities (Barbieri and Valdivia 2010a; Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001). However, the meaning of agritourism in the scientific and popular literature has been contentious most likely because of geopolitical contexts associated with government policies (Gil Arroyo, Barbieri, and Rich 2013; McGehee, Kim, and Jennings 2007; Tew and Barbieri 2012). Although agritourism definitions in Europe tend to be comparable because they are legally bound to incentive policies, those in the United States are more freely crafted because of the lack of similar legal frameworks (Carpio, Wohlgenant, and Boonsaeng 2008; Hegarty and Przeborska 2005; Kizos and Iosifides 2007; McGehee 2007). Gil Arroyo, Barbieri, and Rich (2013) summarized the extant literature identifying three main contentious elements in the meaning of agritourism: (1) the type of setting where the activity occurs, such as farms or other agricultural settings; (2) the authenticity of the agricultural facility or the experience, especially related to working operations; and (3) the types of activities involved, especially related to accommodation and educational services. Aiming to smooth those definitional inconsistencies, Gil Arroyo, Barbieri, and Rich (2013) tested Phillip, Hunter, and Blackstock's (2010) taxonomic definition of agritourism among different stakeholders and concluded that a conciliatory definition of agritourism "should include staged or authentic agricultural activities or processes occurring in working agricultural facilities either for entertainment or educational purposes" (Gil Arroyo, Barbieri, and Rich 2013, p. 45).

Within sociological approaches, agritourism is usually placed in the agricultural enterprise diversification scheme as it is primarily developed to adjust farms to current challenging agricultural contexts imposed by a more intensified production mode, economies of scale, and more competitive

markets (Barbieri and Mahoney 2009; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001). By providing recreational and educational experiences to the public, farmers can directly enhance their revenues through agritourism fees, increase the sales of other farm products and services, expand their market share, and respond more proactively to the market needs (Barbieri 2010, 2013; Brown and Reeder 2007; Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005; Marks et al. 2009; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001; Tew and Barbieri 2012; Wicks and Merrett 2003).

Although economic and market-related benefits (e.g., increased revenues, expanded market share) play an important role in driving agritourism development, evidence suggests that those are not the only benefits that farmers seek (Barbieri 2010; Barbieri and Mahoney 2009; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001; Ollenburg and Buckley 2007). Farm households may venture into agritourism development irrespective of income considerations (Cánoves et al. 2004; Hall and Rusher 2004; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001), such as the pursuit of a hobby or for a challenge (Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001; Young and Welsch 1993), or to spend more time with family (McGehee, Kim, and Jennings 2007). Social motivations (e.g., the pursuit of the rural/farm lifestyle, the desire to educate the public about agriculture) appear to be more important than economic ones when pursuing agritourism enterprises (Barbieri 2010; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001; Ollenburg and Buckley 2007). Motivations driving agritourism development seem to be associated to farmers' intrinsic attributes. McGehee, Kim, and Jennings (2007) for example found that contributing to community (e.g., educate the consumer) and providing employment for the family were the main motives driving agritourism female farmers.

Agritourism also delivers a range of benefits to society, including those derived from recreation (Brown and Reeder 2007; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001), and contributes to sustainability to a greater extent than other forms of farm entrepreneurial diversification (Barbieri 2013). Evidence suggests that agritourism stimulates local economy, generates employment for local people, and improves the living conditions in rural areas (Barbieri 2013; Brown and Reeder 2007; Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005; Nickerson, Black, and McCool 2001). From the sociocultural realm, agritourism strengthens the family farm institution, preserves American rural heritage, supports distinctive regional agricultural products, and educates the public about food production (Barbieri 2013; Brown and Reeder 2007; Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005). Agritourism also produces many environmental benefits, such as the maintenance of cherished and picturesque rural landscapes, conservation of natural resources and amenities; and promotion of environmental-friendly farming practices (Barbieri 2013; Brown and Reeder 2007; Che, Veeck, and Veeck 2005). Given such a breadth of benefits, agritourism is used as a policy instrument in Europe and North America to rejuvenate regional economies and preserve rural heritage and landscape (Morris 2006; Ollenburg and Buckley 2007; Paquette and Domon 2003).

Agricultural Landscapes

Different types of occupation and land uses, including forestry, agriculture, urbanization, and even no-use, have shaped the countryside (Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005). In particular, the practice of farming has played a major role in shaping rural landscapes, either by growing commodity or specialty crops, trees and shrubs, or raising livestock (Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005). In this context, agricultural landscapes are defined as the outcomes derived from the interaction between agriculture, natural resources, and the environment (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2001). Agricultural landscapes are composed of three dimensions: the *Structure*, which is the visual appearance of the landscapes; the *Function*, which refers to the cultural, environmental, and economic benefits that the agricultural landscapes provide to society (e.g., production of food and fiber, recreational services); and the *Value*, which refers to the economic assessment of the landscapes, including producers' maintenance and production costs, and society's valuation (OECD 2001). Taking into consideration the aim of this study, only the *Structure* of the agricultural landscape (henceforth referred to as the landscape) is further developed.

Agricultural landscapes are complex because they are shaped by the physiognomy (physical characteristics) and composition (distribution) of the farmland resources, as well as their ecological connectivity, which denotes the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes movement among patches (Dunning, Danielson, and Pulliam 1992; Taylor et al. 1993). Given such complexity, agricultural landscapes can be schematized through three types of features: (1) *Natural Features* are defined by nonmanaged farmland biodiversity (e.g., flora, fauna), habitats (e.g., wetlands, forests), and biophysical elements (e.g., geology, soils, climate, hydrology). (2) *Agricultural Features* are shaped by the type(s) of agricultural land use included on the farm. (3) *Cultural Features* result from the interaction between human activity and the environment and may include farm-related structures (e.g., barns, hedges), other man-made structures (e.g., trails), and evidence of agricultural value-added processes such as wine-making and cheese-crafting facilities (Barbieri and Mahoney 2009; OECD 2001; Balling and Falk 1982; Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005).

Even though for academic purposes the natural, cultural, and agricultural features of the agricultural landscape can be identified, such separation is not readily feasible on the ground because the diversity and complexity of agricultural landscapes is created by the synergies among those features. For example, agricultural features not only shape the visual appearance of the landscape but also influence the ecological diversity of the farmland as biodiversity is dependent on the intensity of agricultural land uses (Fu and Chen 1996; Hendrickx et al. 2007).

The Role of Agricultural Landscapes in Rural Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

The visual appearance of agricultural landscapes delivers a strong message of rurality composed by an intact nature, an authentic way of countryside living, and cultural attractions (Aznar, Marsat, and Rambonilaza 2007). Such a message of rurality influences the decision-making process to visit rural areas. The visual quality of the rural scenes largely depend on their *Natural Features* mainly in terms of the degree of wilderness, percentage of plant and vegetation cover, availability of water resources, and color contrast (Arriaza et al. 2004). These natural features, in turn, are associated with people's preferences (Shafer, Hamilton, and Schmidt 1969), thus becoming major attractions in the context of nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation (Aznar, Marsat, and Rambonilaza 2007; Gomez-Limon and Fernandez 1999). As for the *Agricultural Features*, Tyndall and Colletti (2007) suggested that rural tourists are more likely to accept well-landscaped farm operations. Specifically, the deliberate incorporation of trees or shrubs in combination with other farming features (e.g., animals in the fields) helps to diversify the visual appearance of agricultural landscapes, enhance opportunities for recreational activities, and reduce odor problems, thereby improving the aesthetics of the farmland (Grala, Tyndall, and Mize 2010; Tyndall and Colletti 2007). Regarding *Cultural Features*, well-preserved man-made structures and buildings (e.g., barns, storage sheds) and farm mechanization features (e.g., tractors, windmills) have been suggested to be important elements associated with the visual quality of rural landscapes and, thus, need to be considered when planning the modernization of rural areas (Arriaza et al. 2004; Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005).

Sociodemographic and experiential factors shape preferences for natural landscapes. In terms of sociodemographics, females have stronger preferences for greener landscapes than males (Lyons 1983); age has also been associated with landscape preferences especially in terms of floristic composition (Balling and Falk 1982; Lyons 1983). In terms of experiential factors, individuals prefer their familiar biome (i.e., close to their residence) or those in which they had a previous experience (Hammit 1979; Lyons 1983). Specifically related to familiarity/attachment to agrarian settings, overall countryside dwellers (farmers and nonfarmers) report similar levels of preference for the aesthetics of typical agricultural croplands (Rogge, Nevens, and Gulinck 2007) while farmers (as compared to nonfarmer residents and visitors) perceive nature development plans less beautiful than agrarian settings (Van den Berg, Vlek, and Coeterier 1998).

Although evidence suggests that natural, cultural, and agricultural features of the landscape serve to increase the appeal of rural destinations for tourism or outdoor recreation purposes (Arriaza et al. 2004; Grala, Tyndall, and Mize 2010; Lovell et al. 2010; Tyndall and Colletti 2007; Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005), to the extent of the authors' knowledge, no studies have comprehensively

assessed public preferences for natural, agricultural, and cultural landscapes features for participating in agritourism activities. Also, the extent to which sociodemographic and experiential factors determine landscape preferences for visiting agritourism farms is yet to be investigated.

Research Methods

Results presented in this manuscript are part of a larger research study that investigated residents' perceptions of agricultural landscapes in terms of awareness of the benefits delivered to society and preferences of specific features. This manuscript focuses on preferences for agricultural landscape features when engaging in agritourism activities by addressing two objectives: (1) to identify the features of agricultural landscapes that are more appealing to current and potential agritourists and (2) to compare those perceptions across respondents from different genders, agritourism experiences, and agricultural attachment levels.

Selection of Residents' Panel

Considering the exploratory nature of this study, and to ensure a minimum sample size for statistical analysis, this study surveyed three nonrandom panels of residents from Missouri ($n = 250$), Pennsylvania ($n = 250$), and Texas ($n = 250$). These states were selected because they fit three criteria. First, they represent different levels of agritourism development in terms of percentage of farms engaged in agritourism and average agritourism-related farm income within their states (USDA: NASS 2007). Missouri has the lowest agritourism development level; only 0.6% ($n = 588$) of its farms are engaged in agritourism and only 2.9% of the state farm sales come from agritourism-related operations. Texas enjoys the highest level of agritourism development; the 2.2% of Texas farms ($n = 5,322$) offering agritourism activities reported an average 16.5% of their income associated with these operations. Pennsylvania represents a moderate agritourism development with 552 farms (0.9%) engaged in agritourism, reporting on average 7.6% of agritourism-related sales.

Second, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Texas are located in different geographic, agricultural, and ecological regions, thus offering a very diverse landscape composition (USEPA 2011). Such diversity is critical for the purpose of this study to control for specific landscape images that residents may have. Missouri, geographically located in the Midwest, belongs to the Corn Belt; its rich soil and good climate favors the production of feed grains, soybeans, wheat, corn, beef, cattle, hogs, and dairy products (U.S. Census Bureau 2007; USDA 2009). Pennsylvania belongs to the Northeastern agricultural region; it has suitable climate and soil for raising grains and forage for cattle (USDA 2009). Texas stands in the Southern Plains region, whose smooth topography coupled with extended pastures favor the production of livestock and cotton (USDA 2009).

Third, and despite the aforementioned differences, these states share similar agricultural characteristics and sociodemographic composition. At least 20% of their total land is dedicated to agriculture, especially for growing crops, which suggests that agricultural landscapes are commonly observed; they also have a similar farm size distribution in terms of annual sales, with about 40% classified as small farms reporting less than \$200,000 and about 15% classified as large farms reporting at least \$1,000,000 (USDA: NASS 2007; U.S. Census Bureau 2007). From the sociodemographic composition, most of their residents are 45 years old or younger and about a quarter have at least a bachelor's degree; the median household income in all these states ranges between US\$41,974 and US\$44,537 (U.S. Census Bureau 2007).

Survey Procedures, Statistical Analysis and Study Segments

Based on the study aim and objectives, an electronic survey instrument was developed to collect information from the residents' panel on (1) past visits to agritourism farms and willingness to visit one in the next 12 months; (2) preferences of the visual appearance of 15 agricultural landscapes features through a 5-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (like very much) and 5 (dislike very much); and (3) sociodemographic characteristics of respondents. The use of no-opinion options (e.g., I don't know) was not included in landscape preference questions as they do not enhance data quality but may preclude measurement of meaningful opinions in attitude measures (Krosnick et al. 2002). The online survey was launched in August 2011. The contracted marketing agency emailed the survey link to their residents' panels. When clicking on the survey link, participants first accessed a home page that described the study purpose, confidentiality, and privacy protocols. The first survey screen included a filter question, where respondents were required to answer whether they reside in Missouri, Pennsylvania, or Texas; those residing in a different state were exited from the survey. Data collection was concluded once the number of completed responses reached the study quota (250 per state).

Descriptive analyses were performed to assess preferences on 15 natural (e.g., wildlife), agricultural (e.g., farm animals), and cultural (e.g., petting zoos) features of agricultural landscapes commonly found in the literature (Barbieri and Valdivia 2010a, 2010b; Lovell et al. 2010; OECD 2001; Vanslebrouck and Van Huylenbroeck 2005). Mean scores were calculated for each of the three types of landscapes features (i.e., natural, agricultural, and cultural); Cronbach's alphas were computed to test the internal reliability within each type of landscape feature. Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) were then conducted to compare preferences of landscapes features across respondents with different characteristics. Dependent variables were the items comprising each type of feature (natural, agricultural, or

cultural). Independent variables (referred to from now on as study segments) were gender, agritourism experience, and relationship to a farm/forested land. Significant MANOVA results were followed with post hoc analyses of variance or independent *t*-tests, as applicable. Significance levels for all statistical tests were measured at the .05 critical levels.

Based on frequency distribution of data gathered, mutually exclusive study segments were constructed to address the second study objective. The first segmentation captured a gender-based distribution of respondents composed by a larger proportion of females ($n = 525$; 70.9%) than males ($n = 216$; 29.1%). The extent to which respondents have participated in agritourism in the past (i.e., agritourism experience) was used to segment respondents into three groups: *Nonagritourists* ($n = 266$; 35.6%), defined as those who have never participated in agritourism; *Sporadic Agritourists* ($n = 210$; 28.1%), defined as those who have rarely or very rarely participated in agritourism; and *Recurrent Agritourists* ($n = 272$; 36.4%), defined as those who participate in agritourism at least on an occasional basis. The third segmentation captured three levels of respondents' attachment with agricultural lands: *Direct Relationship* ($n = 263$; 35.2%) comprised respondents who themselves or their significant others live or have lived on a farm/forested land. *Indirect Relationship* ($n = 270$; 36.1%) comprised those who do not belong to the first group but have other family members (e.g., parents, offspring) or close friends living or who have lived on a farm/forested land; and *No Relationship* ($n = 214$; 28.6%) indicated those who do not belong to any of the other segments, and thus do not have any type of relationship with a farm or forested land. Table 1 summarizes the composition of the three study segmentations.

Results

Respondents' Sociodemographic and Agritourism Experience Profile

On average, respondents were in their mid-forties ($M = 46.9$ years); 21.5% respondents were less than 30 years old, 29.4% were between 30 and 50; a quarter were in their fifties (23.1%) or over 60 (25.8%; Table 2). More than one-third of respondents (35.9%) had no more than a high-school degree, 29.6% had some college studies, and 34.4% had at least a two-year college degree. At the time of the study, 26.3% of respondents were full-time employees, 23.8% were retired, 20.3% were homemakers, and a relatively large proportion (17.0%) was unemployed; a very low proportion (0.4%) were farmers. Overall, there was a large representation of respondents with low household incomes; 48.0% earned less than \$35,000 annually, 36.0% between \$35,000 and \$74,999, and only 16.0% earned at least \$75,000. The vast majority of respondents (85.7%) lived with at least another person in their household. Over one-third (37.9%) lived within an urban area with at least 50,000 residents while 27.6% lived at least 30 miles away.

Table 1. Composition, Description, and Labels of Study Segments.

Segment Labels	Segment Description	n	%
Gender			
Male	Male respondents	216	29.1
Female	Female respondents	525	70.9
Agritourism experience			
Nonagritourists	Have never participated in agritourism	266	35.6
Sporadic agritourists	Participate on agritourism rarely or very rarely	210	28.1
Recurrent agritourists	Participate in agritourism at least occasionally	272	36.4
Agricultural attachment			
Direct relationship	Themselves or their significant other live or have lived on a farm or forest	263	35.2
Indirect relationship	A relative or close friend live or have lived on a farm or forest, but not themselves or their spouse	270	36.1
No relationship	Do not have any family member or close friend living or having lived on a farm or forest	214	28.6

From the 64.5% of respondents ($n = 484$) who had participated in agritourism in the past, about half (46.1%) recalled that their first farm visit was at least 10 years ago, while a smaller proportion (29.0%) did so in the past five years (Table 3). Among those with at least one previous agritourism experience, only 22.0% reported not having had such experience during their childhood and 30.3% used to visit agritourism while young often or very often. Although a large proportion of respondents (43.7%) has not participated in agritourism in the last five years, 16.3% did so three to five times, and 21.5% at least six times ($M = 5.4$ times). Over a third (35.9%) of respondents indicated they would be likely or very likely to participate in the next 12 months suggesting a positive outlook for agritourism.

Preferences of Agricultural Landscapes Features

Cronbach's tests showed high internal reliability among the natural ($\alpha = 0.828$), agricultural ($\alpha = 0.843$), and cultural ($\alpha = 0.783$) features of agricultural landscapes (Table 4). Organized by dimensions, respondents would prefer seeing natural features ($M = 3.9$) when visiting an agritourism farm, followed by cultural ($M = 3.9$) and agricultural ($M = 3.8$) features. The most preferred specific features that respondents would like to see are natural ones: wildlife, such as deer ($M = 4.2$), and water resources, such as a lake or creek ($M = 4.2$). Other highly preferred features included historic elements (cultural feature), such as log cabins or antique tractors ($M = 4.1$) and farm animals (agricultural feature), such as cattle or horses ($M = 4.1$). The least preferred landscape features were wetlands, such as swamps or marshes ($M = 3.3$), and intensive monoculture (one-crop) landscapes ($M = 3.4$).

Comparing Landscape Preferences among Respondents Segments

MANOVAs resulted in three significant models, indicating gendered preferences regarding natural (Hotelling's trace =

0.113; $F = 16.061$; $p < .001$), agricultural (Hotelling's trace = 0.057; $F = 8.095$; $p < .001$), and cultural (Hotelling's Trace = 0.113; $F = 16.125$; $p < .001$) landscape features when visiting an agritourism farm (Table 5). Females had higher preferences than males for native plants, flowers, or grasses ($M_{fem} = 4.1$; $M_{mle} = 3.7$), farm animals ($M_{fem} = 4.2$; $M_{mle} = 3.9$), planted trees or shrubs ($M_{fem} = 4.1$; $M_{mle} = 3.7$), a variety of specialty crops ($M_{fem} = 4.0$; $M_{mle} = 3.7$), trails ($M_{fem} = 4.1$; $M_{mle} = 3.9$), and petting zoos, corrals, or stalls ($M_{fem} = 4.1$; $M_{mle} = 3.6$). Male respondents had stronger preferences than females for wetlands ($M_{mle} = 3.4$; $M_{fem} = 3.1$) and farm equipment ($M_{mle} = 3.7$; $M_{fem} = 3.5$). No significant differences were found in the remaining natural, agricultural, and cultural features of agritourism farms landscape.

The level of agritourism experience was also associated with the preferences of natural (Wilks's lambda = 0.914; $F = 6.552$; $p < .001$), agricultural (Wilks's lambda = 0.879; $F = 9.516$; $p < .001$), and cultural (Wilks's lambda = 0.877; $F = 9.804$; $p < .001$) landscapes features (Table 6). When controlling for other variables, analysis showed significant differences in all 15 features examined; post hoc Tukey's tests indicated that the more agritourism experience, the stronger the preferences for most examined features. Recurrent Agritourists reported the strongest statistical preference while Nonagritourists reported the least statistical preference for wildlife ($M_{rec} = 4.5$; $M_{spo} = 4.2$; $M_{non} = 4.0$), water resources ($M_{rec} = 4.4$; $M_{spo} = 4.1$; $M_{non} = 4.0$), farm animals ($M_{rec} = 4.4$; $M_{spo} = 4.1$; $M_{non} = 3.8$), planted trees or shrubs ($M_{rec} = 4.3$; $M_{spo} = 4.0$; $M_{non} = 3.7$), variety of specialty crops ($M_{rec} = 4.2$; $M_{spo} = 3.9$; $M_{non} = 3.7$), grassland and pastures ($M_{rec} = 4.0$; $M_{spo} = 3.6$; $M_{non} = 3.4$), trails ($M_{rec} = 4.3$; $M_{spo} = 4.0$; $M_{non} = 3.8$), and petting zoos, corrals or stalls ($M_{rec} = 4.3$; $M_{spo} = 4.0$; $M_{non} = 3.7$). Recurrent Agritourists also showed significantly higher preferences than their counterparts (with no differences between the Sporadic and the Nonagritourists) for: native plants, flowers or grasses ($M_{rec} = 4.2$; $M_{spo} = 4.0$; $M_{non} = 3.8$), forests ($M_{rec} = 4.2$; $M_{spo} = 4.0$; $M_{non} = 3.9$), wetlands ($M_{rec} = 3.5$; $M_{spo} = 3.2$; $M_{non} = 3.1$), intensive one-crop

Table 2. Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents.

Sociodemographic Indicators	<i>n</i>	%
Age, years (<i>n</i> = 739)		
18–29	158	21.5
30–39	111	15.0
40–49	107	14.4
50–59	171	23.1
60–69	123	16.6
≥70	69	9.2
Mean (in years)		(46.9)
Education level (<i>n</i> = 743) ^a		
High school graduate or less	267	35.9
Some college	220	29.6
College degree ^b	200	26.9
Postgraduate studies	56	7.5
Occupation (<i>n</i> = 749)		
Full-time employee	197	26.3 ^c
Retired	178	23.8
Homemaker	152	20.3
Unemployed	127	17.0
Part-time employee	89	11.9
Full/part-time farmer	3	0.4
Annual household income before taxes (<i>n</i> = 736) ^d		
<\$25,000	205	27.9
\$25,000–\$34,999	148	20.1
\$35,000–\$49,999	128	17.4
\$50,000–\$74,999	137	18.6
≥\$75,000	118	16.0
Household composition (<i>n</i> = 743)		
One-person family unit	148	19.9
Multi-person family unit	595	80.1
Residence proximity to an urban area (<i>n</i> = 746) ^e		
Live in a 50,000-population city	283	37.9
Less than 10 miles	105	14.1
10–29 miles	152	20.4
30–59 miles	110	14.7
≥60 miles	96	12.9

a. Measured on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (less than high school degree) to 6 (postgraduate studies).

b. College degree includes two-year and four-year college degree.

c. Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than category.

d. Measured in an 8-point scale anchored in 1 (Less than \$25,000) and 8 (\$200,000 or more).

e. Measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (I live in a 50,000-population city) to 6 (60 miles or more). An urban area was defined as having at least 50,000 people.

farms ($M_{rec} = 3.7$; $M_{spo} = 3.3$; $M_{non} = 3.2$), historic elements ($M_{rec} = 4.4$; $M_{spo} = 4.1$; $M_{non} = 4.0$), farm-related buildings ($M_{rec} = 3.9$; $M_{spo} = 3.5$; $M_{non} = 3.4$), and farm equipment ($M_{rec} = 3.9$; $M_{spo} = 3.4$; $M_{non} = 3.3$).

Results also showed that the relationship to a farm/forested land is associated with landscape preferences when visiting an agritourism farm; respondents with No Relationship, Indirect Relationship, and Direct Relationship to a forested/farm land significantly differed on their preferences regarding

Table 3. Indicators of Agritourism Participation among Respondents.

Agritourism Indicators	<i>n</i>	%
Past participation (<i>n</i> = 750)		
Have visited a farm for recreation	484	64.5
Have never visited a farm for recreation	266	35.5
First agritourism participation (<i>n</i> = 484) ^a		
In the last 12 months	41	8.5
1 or 2 years ago	43	8.9
3–5 years ago	56	11.6
6–9 years ago	42	8.7
At least 10 years ago	223	46.1
Do not recall	79	16.3
Frequency of agritourism during childhood (<i>n</i> = 438) ^a		
Never		
Rarely	106	22.0
Occasionally	140	29.0
Often	112	23.2
Always	34	7.1
Do not recall	46	9.5
Number of agritourism visits in the last 5 years (<i>n</i> = 744)		
0	325	43.7
1–2	136	18.2
3–5	122	16.3
6–10	81	10.9
11–20	48	6.4
≥21	32	4.2
Mean (in number of times)		(5.4)
Likelihood of future agritourism participation in the next 12 months (<i>n</i> = 747) ^b		
Very unlikely	197	26.4
Unlikely	130	17.4
Undecided	152	20.3
Likely	162	21.7
Very likely	106	14.2
Mean		(2.8)

a. Only includes those that have visited at least once a farm for recreation purposes (*n* = 484; 64.5%).

b. Measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely).

natural (Wilks's lambda = 0.938; $F = 4.624$; $p < .001$), agricultural (Wilks's lambda = 0.949; $F = 3.767$; $p < .001$), and cultural (Wilks's lambda = 0.952; $F = 3.580$; $p < .001$) features (Table 7). When controlling for other variables, preferences for all features were significantly different across segments, except for seeing a variety of specialty crops. When compared pairwise, results indicate that those with no contact with any agricultural land have significantly lower preferences than those with any type of relationship, either of an indirect or direct nature. Respondents who either had an Indirect or Direct Relationship to a farm/forested land (with no differences between them) had higher preferences than those with No Relationship for seeing: wildlife ($M_{dir} = 4.4$; $M_{ind} = 4.3$; $M_{no} = 3.9$), water resources ($M_{dir} = 4.4$; $M_{ind} = 4.2$; $M_{no} = 4.0$), native plants, flowers, or grasses

Table 4. Preferences of Landscape Features When Visiting an Agritourism Farm.

Landscape Features	<i>n</i>	Dislike Very Much (%)	Dislike (%)	Neither Dislike nor Like (%)	Like (%)	Like Very Much (%)	<i>M</i> ^a	SD
Natural features ($\alpha = 0.828$)								
Wildlife	738	1.1	2.8	12.6	40.8	42.7	3.94	0.68
Water resources	749	1.3	2.1	12.7	45.0	38.9	4.21	0.85
Native plants, flowers, or grasses	743	0.9	2.8	20.2	45.8	30.3	4.18	0.83
Forests	742	1.2	3.4	20.1	42.9	32.5	4.02	0.84
Wetlands	745	5.0	16.9	35.6	29.9	12.6	4.02	0.88
Agricultural features ($\alpha = 0.843$)								
Farm animals	742	1.5	2.7	17.3	41.6	36.9	3.82	0.71
Planted trees or shrubs	745	1.5	3.9	18.9	44.7	31.0	4.10	0.88
Variety of specialty crops	745	1.7	2.8	22.3	46.4	26.7	4.00	0.89
Grassland and pastures	747	2.7	6.6	32.3	39.5	19.0	3.94	0.87
Intensive one-crop farm	741	2.8	9.4	43.2	32.8	11.7	3.66	0.95
Cultural features ($\alpha = 0.783$)								
Historic elements	748	1.2	2.8	15.9	40.9	39.2	3.41	0.92
Trails	744	1.9	3.9	16.3	44.2	33.7	3.86	0.69
Petting zoos, corrals, or stalls	746	1.5	5.5	19.4	40.5	33.1	4.14	0.87
Farm-related buildings	742	2.8	8.5	30.5	39.8	18.5	4.04	0.91
Farm equipments	745	3.0	8.6	36.6	35.7	16.1	3.98	0.94
							3.63	0.97
							3.53	0.96

a. Measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (dislike very much) to 5 (like very much).

Table 5. A Comparison of Landscape Preferences between Male and Female Respondents.

Landscapes Features	Preference Mean ^a		Statistical Values	
	Male (29.1%)	Female (70.9%)	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> -Value
Natural features (<i>n</i> = 714) ^b				
Wildlife	4.19	4.22	0.338	.561
Water resources	4.12	4.20	1.860	.173
Native plants, flowers, or grasses	3.71	4.13	44.460	<.001
Forests	3.99	4.03	0.557	.456
Wetlands	3.43	3.22	4.714	.030
Agricultural features (<i>n</i> = 715) ^c				
Farm animals	3.90	4.17	17.348	<.001
Planted trees or shrubs	3.73	4.11	27.795	<.001
Variety of specialty crops	3.73	4.01	15.000	<.001
Grassland and pastures	3.59	3.68	1.931	.165
Intensive one-crop farm	3.31	3.45	3.522	.061
Cultural features (<i>n</i> = 721) ^d				
Historic elements	4.07	4.16	1.939	.164
Trails	3.90	4.10	7.052	.008
Petting zoos, corrals, or stalls	3.59	4.14	52.273	<.001
Farm-related buildings	3.64	3.61	0.021	.884
Farm equipment	3.68	3.47	7.140	.008

a. Measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (dislike very much) to 5 (like very much).

b. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) statistics: Hotelling's trace = .113; $F = 16.061$; $p < .001$.

c. MANOVA statistics: Hotelling's trace = .057; $F = 8.095$; $p < .001$.

d. MANOVA statistics: Hotelling's trace = .113; $F = 16.125$; $p < .001$.

($M_{dir} = 4.1$; $M_{ind} = 4.1$; $M_{no} = 3.8$), farm animals ($M_{dir} = 4.3$; $M_{ind} = 4.2$; $M_{no} = 3.8$), planted trees or shrubs ($M_{dir} = 4.1$; $M_{ind} = 4.1$; $M_{no} = 3.9$), and petting zoos, corrals, or stalls ($M_{dir} = 4.1$; $M_{ind} = 4.1$; $M_{no} = 3.8$).

Direct Relationship respondents showed significantly higher preferences than their counterparts for the presence of forests in the landscape ($M_{dir} = 4.2$; $M_{ind} = 4.0$; $M_{no} = 3.8$). The Direct Relationship segment also had stronger preferences

Table 6. A Comparison of Landscape Preferences among Respondents with Different Levels of Agritourism Experiences.

Landscapes Features	Preference Mean ^a			Statistical Values	
	Non Agritourists (35.6%)	Sporadic Agritourists (28.1%)	Recurrent Agritourists (36.4%)	F	p Value
Natural features (<i>n</i> = 721) ^b					
Wildlife	3.97 _a	4.18 _b	4.48 _c	24.513	<.001
Water resources	3.96 _a	4.14 _b	4.42 _c	22.190	<.001
Native plants, flowers or grasses	3.84 _a	4.00 _a	4.20 _b	13.309	<.001
Forests	3.85 _a	4.00 _a	4.20 _b	10.166	<.001
Wetlands	3.08 _a	3.22 _a	3.54 _b	14.693	<.001
Agricultural features (<i>n</i> = 722) ^c					
Farm animals	3.80 _a	4.07 _b	4.40 _c	31.340	<.001
Planted trees or shrubs	3.72 _a	3.95 _b	4.30 _c	30.156	<.001
Variety of specialty crops	3.68 _a	3.88 _b	4.23 _c	29.948	<.001
Grassland and pastures	3.39 _a	3.59 _b	3.97 _c	27.159	<.001
Intensive one-crop farm	3.24 _a	3.30 _a	3.66 _b	15.676	<.001
Cultural features (<i>n</i> = 728) ^d					
Historic elements	3.96 _a	4.05 _a	4.38 _b	16.501	<.001
Trails	3.80 _a	4.00 _b	4.30 _c	20.729	<.001
Petting zoos, corrals, or stalls	3.67 _a	4.00 _b	4.27 _c	27.354	<.001
Farm-related buildings	3.40 _a	3.50 _a	3.93 _b	24.056	<.001
Farm equipment	3.30 _a	3.41 _a	3.85 _b	25.138	<.001

Note: Any two values with different subscript letters *a*, *b*, and *c* were significantly different in post hoc Tukey's pairwise comparisons.

a. Measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (dislike very much) to 5 (like very much).

b. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) statistics: Wilks's lambda = .914; *F* = 6.552; *p* < .001.

c. MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = .879; *F* = 9.516; *p* < .001.

d. MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = .877; *F* = 9.804; *p* < .001.

Table 7. A Comparison of Landscape Preferences among Respondents with Different Relationships to a Farm or Forested Land.

Landscape Features	Preference Mean ^a			Statistical Values	
	No Relationship (28.6%)	Indirect Relationship (36.1%)	Direct Relationship (35.2%)	F	p-Value
Natural features (<i>n</i> = 720) ^b					
Wildlife	3.91 _a	4.28 _b	4.38 _b	19.902	<.001
Water resources	3.96 _a	4.21 _b	4.35 _b	13.523	<.001
Native plants, flowers, or grasses	3.80 _a	4.07 _b	4.12 _b	9.546	<.001
Forests	3.84 _a	4.03 _a	4.18 _b	8.424	<.001
Wetlands	3.12 _a	3.31	3.40 _b	4.273	.014
Agricultural features (<i>n</i> = 722) ^c					
Farm animals	3.82 _a	4.17 _b	4.28 _b	17.220	<.001
Planted trees or shrubs	3.85 _a	4.05 _b	4.08 _b	4.348	.013
Variety of specialty crops	3.82 _a	3.98	4.00	2.833	.059
Grassland and pastures	3.49	3.66	3.80 _b	6.097	.002
Intensive one-crop farm	3.27 _a	3.45	3.48 _b	3.640	.027
Cultural features (<i>n</i> = 727) ^d					
Historic elements	4.00 _a	4.15	4.26 _b	5.060	.007
Trails	3.89 _a	4.09	4.16 _b	5.719	.003
Petting zoos, corrals, or stalls	3.80 _a	4.06 _b	4.07 _b	5.977	.003
Farm-related buildings	3.43 _a	3.61 _a	3.80 _b	8.994	<.001
Farm equipment	3.30 _a	3.50 _b	3.76 _c	13.814	<.001

Note: Any two values with different subscript letters *a*, *b*, and *c* were significantly different in post hoc Tukey's pairwise comparisons.

a. Measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (dislike very much) to 5 (like very much).

b. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) statistics: Wilks's lambda = .938; *F* = 4.624; *p* < .001.

c. MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = .949; *F* = 3.767; *p* < .001.

d. MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = .952; *F* = 3.580; *p* < .001.

than those with No Relationship for seeing in the landscape wetlands ($M_{dir} = 3.4$; $M_{no} = 3.1$), grassland and pastures ($M_{dir} = 3.8$; $M_{no} = 3.5$), intensive one-crop farm ($M_{dir} = 3.5$; $M_{no} = 3.3$), historic elements ($M_{dir} = 4.3$; $M_{no} = 4.0$), and trails ($M_{dir} = 4.2$; $M_{no} = 3.9$) when visiting an agritourism farm. The Direct Relationship segment ($M = 3.8$) have stronger preferences for seeing farm-related buildings than their counterparts ($M_{ind} = 3.6$; $M_{no} = 3.4$), with no significant differences between the other two groups. Significant pairwise comparisons showed that the closer the relationship with the land, the stronger preferences for seeing farm equipment in the landscape ($M_{dir} = 3.8$; $M_{ind} = 3.5$; $M_{no} = 3.3$).

Discussion and Implications of Study Results

This study builds up knowledge on public landscape preferences for agritourism purposes, in spite of some limitations. Given its exploratory nature, the use of an online survey instrument among a nonrandom sample does not diminish its value, but cautions for further generalizations. Although caution is also suggested because of the unbalanced gender distribution in the sample, such unbalance provided the opportunity to have a greater insight from female consumers who have a primary role in selecting holiday choices (Mottiar and Quinn 2004). Even though a significant effort was placed in selecting three states representing different levels of agritourism development and a diversity of landscapes while holding similar agricultural characteristics and residents' sociodemographic composition, extrapolating results to other similar regions should be done with prudence. Taking into consideration these limitations and the implications of this exploratory study for knowledge and development of agritourism, it is suggested that this study be replicated using a random sample and optimistically at a larger geographic scale, not only for generalization purposes but to further investigate similarities and differences within and across regions.

Overall respondents prefer appreciating natural features, especially wildlife, water resources, and native flora when visiting an agritourism farm, confirming that the degree of wilderness, percentage of vegetation cover, and availability of water resources play a critical role on the visual quality of rural scenes (Arriaza et al. 2004; Rogge, Nevens, and Gulinck 2007; Shafer, Hamilton, and Schmidt 1969) and landscapes for outdoor recreation (Carls 1974; Gomez-Limon and Fernandez 1999). Historic elements also appeared as a highly preferred feature of the agritourism landscape, which is in line with previous studies concluding that log cabins are favored for accommodations in farm settings because these offer a unique experience (Hong, Kim, and Kim 2003). Therefore, those aforementioned natural and cultural features could be considered as "pull" agritourism factors, with the capacity to attract visitors to a destination (Kim, Lee, and Klenosky 2003). On the other hand, weak preferences for

certain landscapes features (e.g., wetlands, intensive monoculture) can inform farmers of educational topics they can incorporate into their agritourism offerings. For example, farmers can develop interpretation materials to educate the public about the ecological function of wetlands in overall farm ecosystem health, despite their reduced visual appeal. Providing educational materials seems important and pertinent to agritourism farmers given their strong interest in educating the public about agriculture (Barbieri and Mahoney 2009; McGehee and Kim 2004).

Study results can serve agritourism farmers to enhance the aesthetic appeal of their farms, thus increasing their capacity to capture the interest of potential visitors and satisfy their current clientele (Huffman and Kahn 1998). For example, attracting wildlife with feeders, propagating native plants, flowers, or grasses can beautify the landscape of agritourism farms without compromising agricultural practices. Developing trails or viewpoints to facilitate the appreciation of water resources, when available, is especially important because of their attractiveness and popularity in outdoor recreation landscapes (Carls 1974). However, caution is advisable to assess the economic feasibility (costs vs. revenues) associated with incorporating some of these features in the farm landscape. For example, restoring historic cabins for accommodations or other purposes (e.g., gift shops) may represent a high economic burden, which could be a major constraint for farms with low liquidity or limited access to credit. The identification of visitors' landscape preferences can also help destination marketing organizations (DMOs) to enhance the efficiency of their informational transactions between agritourism providers and potential agritourists (McGehee 2007). The proposed marketing implications of this study are likewise beneficial to cultivate the relationship between savvy agritourism providers and DMOs, thus strengthening the tourism product of the region (McGehee 2007).

When examining preferences among visitors and tourists, it is important to recognize that sociodemographic characteristics and experiential factors (e.g., agritourism experiences, relationship to a farm/forested land) may influence their preferences and choice (Lyons 1983; Middleton et al. 2009). Genderwise differences on preferences for specific agritourism landscape features were found. Females not only reported stronger preferences than males for native flora, trees/shrubs, and specialty crops, confirming their inclination for greener scenes in natural environments (Lyons 1983), but also for seeing farm animals and cultural features (e.g., trails, petting zoos). On the contrary, males showed stronger preferences than females for appreciating farm equipment, which may be associated with the traditional male dominance in bearing outdoor housework responsibilities such as yard work (Greenstein 1996). These results expand the existing knowledge on gendered preferences of natural landscape features to cultural and agricultural elements existing on agrarian settings. Acknowledging these differences can assist agritourism farmers to better target customers, thereby increasing

their market share and, in turn, strengthening visitor satisfaction. For example, promotional agritourism materials aiming specifically at female consumers (e.g., women's retreats) should predominantly portray native flora or specialty crops, while those aiming at male visitors could display farm equipment.

Results also showed that the more agritourism experience, the stronger the preference of landscape features by respondents, most likely because frequent visits to agrarian settings deepen and increase appreciation for their different landscapes features. These results expand existing evidence of the effect of past tourism experience on intended future travel from specific regional destinations (Sönmez and Graefe 1998) to a specific activity (agritourism). Therefore, agritourism entrepreneurs should employ ongoing customer relationship management (e.g., through regular newsletters) to enhance customer loyalty, repeat visit, and farm brand recognition (Pike 2005; Winer 2001). Given that results suggest that previous agritourism experience increases landscape appreciation, it would also be advisable that loyal customers are encouraged to bring along their family and friends by providing them with group discounts or other types of family perks.

The overall strongest preferences for most landscape features among those with some sort of relationships with a farm/forested land are most likely due to their familiarity with agricultural landscapes because people tend to favor familiar biomes (Rogge, Nevens, and Gulinck 2007; Lyon 1983; Van den Berg, Vlek, and Coeterier 1998). However, agritourism farmers willing to increase their market share may arouse the interest of the general public, including those with no exposure to agricultural lands, by presenting diversified landscapes with natural and historic features in their promotional material. Those resources not only appeared as the preferred ones in this study, but evidence suggest that natural resources, rural scenes with old structures, and a combination of both are becoming more appealing to visitors (Arriaza et al. 2004; Kent and Elliot 1995; McGranahan 1999; Strumse 1996) and stimulate agritourism participation (Gascoigne, Sullins, and McFadden 2008). Additionally, distinctive elements that some agritourism farms may have (e.g., old barns, artifacts) can be used to attract this group to maximize the pull effect of a destination's uniqueness (Santos, Belhassen, and Caton 2008). The emergence of agrarian landscape features appealing to the public in this study (e.g., variety of crops, corrals, farm equipment) suggests that further examination is needed to have a comprehensive understanding of the role of landscape features as pull destination factors, especially related to agritourism and overall rural tourism.

Concluding Remarks

This study aimed at examining preferences for landscape features when visiting agritourism farms. Results showed

that respondents liked most of the landscape features commonly found in an agritourism farm, especially natural and cultural ones. This study also found that different segments (i.e., gender, level of agritourism experience, and relationship with a farm/forested land) have significantly different preferences for these landscape features, results that carry critical marketing and management implications for farmers offering agritourism opportunities.

Besides expanding our understanding of the role of landscape features in capturing visitors' interest for agritourism development, this study sheds light into future research directions. It is advisable that future research on landscape preferences is carried out among actual agritourists, preferably on site, to better capture their preferences and account for romanticized images of the agricultural landscape suggested in related literature (Buijs, Elands, and Langers 2009). This study focused on preferences of features commonly found and/or inherent to agriculture (e.g., wildlife, farm equipment, farm animals, pasture); however, assessing the impact of nonagricultural features (e.g., gas pipes, wind turbines) on the agritourism landscape also merit further study as previously suggested (Marks et al. 2009). Taking into account the popularity of natural landscape features among respondents, following studies may consider exploring in more detail how specific natural features are presented (e.g., grass islands, wildflower meadows), especially those that could be easily incorporated into agritourism farm landscapes. Similarly, more effort could be invested in exploring preferences for agritourism landscapes incorporating a mix of natural, agricultural, and/or cultural features.

Given that this study revealed that landscape preferences vary across different types of respondents, additional analysis should be continued to explore preferences among other types of segments and to deepen examination within specific segments. For example, further analysis is needed to explore consumers' preferences with different socioeconomic backgrounds, as previous research in other topics has provided valuable insights on this subject (Page and Ridgway 2001; Van den Berg, Vlek, and Coeterier 1998). Further statistical analysis can also be conducted by gender across different sociodemographic descriptors (e.g., annual house income, education) to explore whether women's landscape preferences are associated with their sociodemographic conditions. Given that this study found that different types of relationship to the land (i.e., direct, indirect, no relationship) are associated with landscape preferences, future research should consider examining more closely such relationships. This is especially important as the number of landowners seeking farming as a means for enjoying the rural lifestyle is increasing in the United States (Hoppe 2001).

By examining public landscape preferences for agritourism purposes, this study has expanded our understanding of the role that natural, cultural, and agricultural features have in their capacity to attract visitors to the farm. In doing so, this study not only contributes to the scholarship of landscapes

and agritourism but also provides valuable marketing intelligence and managerial insights that farmers can implement to develop or strengthen their offerings by better responding to their visitors' needs and increasing their levels of satisfaction.

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