
City of Oceanside

Agritourism Strategic Plan

Prepared for the City of Oceanside, California

Economic Development Office



Project Goal & Objectives

□ **Project Goal**

- To develop a stakeholder-based agritourism strategic plan that can inform local public policy in the creation of an agritourism area for the City of Oceanside.

□ **Project Objectives**

- *Ensure an inclusive process for stakeholders* – To implement an approach that is inclusive to those that will participate in or be impacted by an agritourism area.
- *Develop focused efforts* – To develop a focused strategy that blends the unique aspects of the industry with the broader Oceanside community.
- *Leverage existing efforts* – To leverage agricultural efforts with existing tourism promotion efforts currently implemented by Visit Oceanside.

Agritourism Defined

- Any business conducted by a farmer for the enjoyment or education of the public to promote the products of the farm and to generate additional farm income.
- It includes a variety of facilities and activities that are increasingly available in San Diego County, such as agricultural festivals, farm visits, farm tours, demonstration farms, farm stays, wineries, bursary trails, and agricultural museums.

University of California, Davis

Why the interest in agritourism?

- **A need to generate additional farm profit.**

- Urban Pressure
- Generating additional profits helps farmers to maintain the farm land.

- **A need for farm diversification.**

- Diversify their sources of income in order to minimize their risk of revenue generated from potentially vulnerable sources.

- **A need to improve utilization of all farm resources.**

- Farmers and farms are under constant pressure to improve overall utilization of the farm land asset.

- **A need for distribution channels.**

- For many small farms, agritourism represents a critical distribution channel. Often the only profitable channel of distribution is from farm direct visitation and purchase

Social Trends Impacting Agritourism

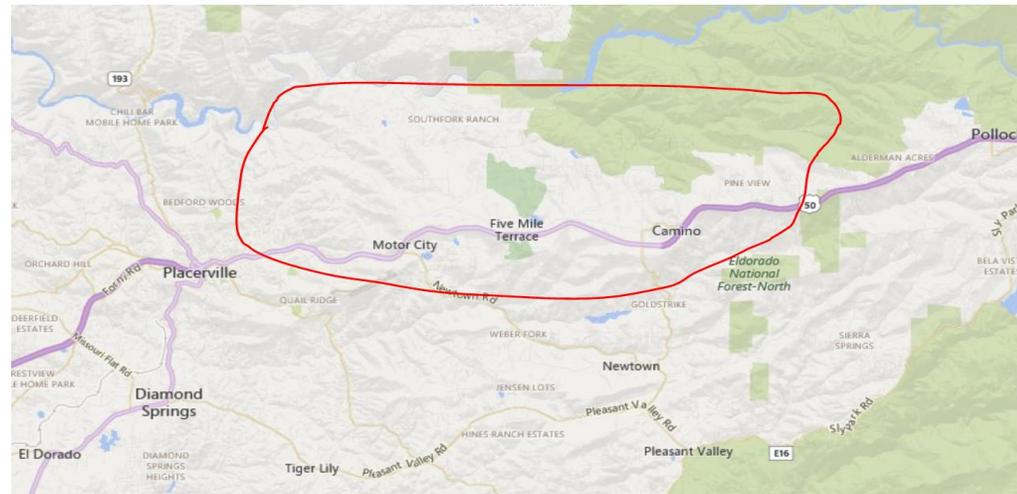
- **The Locavore trend.**
 - This local food movement works to connect food producers (farmers) and food consumers in the same geographic region.
- **National concerns about health and obesity.**
 - Obesity is a growing global health problem.
- **An overall view of wellness that includes the quality and source of food.**
 - Wellness has expanded to the source of their food; where it is grown and how it is grown.
- **Demographic shifts that are changing consumer markets.**
 - This shift includes food consumption habits, as Millennials are more likely to support those food sources that are fresh and organic.
- **A growing support for local farms and businesses.**
 - There is a growing awareness to support local farms and businesses that tailor their offerings to the local community.

Case Study:

Apple Hill

Apple Hill is located in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in El Dorado County.

- Located an hour's drive from downtown Sacramento, this well known agritourism locale is filled with fruit orchards, breweries, tree farms, and wineries.
- Apple Hill is located within the unincorporated part of El Dorado County.



Apple Hill



Apple Hill Marketing

- Branding
- Promotions
- Website



Elements of Agritourism

On Farm Activities

- Corn mazes
- U-Pick operations
- Petting and feeding zoos
- Hay rides
- Demonstration farms
- Agricultural museums
- Living history farms
- On-farm farmers markets
- Winery tours and wine tasting
- Rural bed & breakfasts
- Garden tours

Elements of Agritourism

Off the Farm/From the Farm Activities

- Farmers markets
- Vendor at state and county fairs
- Roadside produce stand
- Farm to Table restaurant distribution

Oceanside Agritourism Elements/ Experience

Crop	Acre(s)	Crop	Acre(s)	Crop	Acre(s)
Avocado	232	Marjoram	7	Raspberry	4
Bean Succulent	0.5	Mint	12.1	Rosemary	19.2
Blackberry	1.5	Grow Plants/Containers	10.9	Sage	11.1
Chervil	2.9	Outdoor Container Plants	327	Soil	1
Chive	12	Outdoor Cut Flowers	58	Strawberry	247
Cilantro	14.8	Nuts	0.8	Sweet Basil	10
Dill	14	Oats	40	Tangerine	2
Edible Flowers	0.4	Misc Trees	165	Tarragon	3
Wine Grapes	0.2	Oregano	12	Thyme	17.8
Herb Spice	1.65	Palm	7	Tomato	161
Lemon	114	Parsley	5.2		
Lime	18.5	Pomegranate	2.5		

Top Ten Crops

Crop	Acre(s)
Outdoor Container Plants	327
Strawberry	247
Avocado	232
Misc trees	165
Tomato	161
Lemon	114
Outdoor Cut Flowers	58
Rosemary	19.2
Lime	18.5
Cilantro	14.8

Oceanside Farmers Market

Oceanside has farmers markets.
There are approximately 30-40 in San Diego County,

Location	Location	Location
Escondido	UCSD	Carmel Valley
City College	Encinitas	El Cajon
Coronado	Ocean Beach	San Diego
Mira Mesa	Santee	Linda Vista
Chula Vista	Carlsbad	SDSU
Pacific Beach	Temecula	Warner Springs
Allied Gradens	Borrego Springs	Imperial Beach
Kearney Mesa	La Mesa	Del Mar
Fallbrook	Lemon Grove	Solana Beach
Poway	Ramona	Scripps Ranch
Julian	La Jolla	Lucadia
Murrieta	Point Loma	San Marcos

Farm to Table Restaurants

- ☐ Masters Kitchen and Cocktails
- ☐ Mission Ave Bar and Grill
- ☐ Local Tap House
- ☐ Flying Pig
- ☐ Wrench and Rodent
- ☐ Hill Street Cafe
- ☐ Pour House
- ☐ Privateer Pizza, Wine and Cheese Bar
- ☐ Blvd Asian Fusion
- ☐ Bagby Beer Company
- ☐ Urge Gastro Pub

Agriculture as part of the Oceanside Tourism Experience

Food	Arts & Community	Sports & Recreation	Natural Wonders	Agritourism
Fine Dining	Surf Culture	Water Based	California coast	On site farm experience
Dining Choices	Tours	Surfing	Beaches	Education
	Oceanside Museum of Art	Beach play	Oceanside Harbor	Farm to Table in Restaurants and Grocery stores
	California Surf Museum	Kayaking	Oceanside Pier	Farm Stands
	<u>Muramid</u> Mural Museum	Boating		
	Mission San Luis Rey	Swimming		
		Land Based		
		Golf		
		Road biking		

Oceanside SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Proximity to markets□ Developed tourism infrastructure□ Farm to Table distribution□ Historical agriculture industry□ Concentrated agricultural industry□ Regional agricultural industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Limited superstructure (roads, water and sewage)□ Lack of knowledge and training for new farmers□ Lack of a complete tourism experience in the South Morro Hills region

Oceanside SWOT

Opportunities

- Increase the value of agricultural land in an effort to preserve it
- Maintain open space and community ambiance
- Increase competitiveness of the Oceanside tourism industry
- Growing consumer trends
- National and regional tourism promotion efforts
- Key industry alliances
- Environment
- Training and education
- Build the South Morro Hills brand name for agricultural production
- Strengthen industry organization

Threats

- Federal, state and local regulations
- Competition
- Land values for housing
- Lack/cost of water
- Distrust between elements of the local community with regard to development
- Potential political shifts
- Development pressure
- Zoning

Agritourism strategy goal

- Develop an increased value for agricultural land within the City of Oceanside:
 - by developing a sustainable and profitable agritourism program which will help to increase farmer profits and maintain the current land uses, resist development, and at the same time strengthen the local tourism economy by providing potential visitors with an additional reason to visit the area.

Agritourism Vision

- First, is to further develop the on-farm experience, and second, to develop restaurant and tasting room elements within the downtown area to complement the South Morro Hills agriculture.
- Within South Morro Hills, the agritourism efforts are designed to build on the existing agricultural assets necessary to **develop a legitimate agritourism experience** from the perspective of a visitor and to improve the competitive position of Oceanside.

Regional Agritourism Assets

□ **Agricultural setting**

- South Morro Hills' 3,000 acres of greenery and picturesque rolling hills with excellent accessibility from downtown Oceanside.
- These two elements can facilitate an ag tourism synergy for Oceanside that strengthens the destination from the perspective of the local and visitor alike.

□ **Crops**

- A variety of crops that offer a deliciously unique experience for visitors.

□ **Landscape**

- The beautiful landscape and views make an individual feel as if they are in a true agricultural region that reinforces the overall agritourism experience.

Oceanside Agritourism Strategy Platform

Develop Agritourism Infrastructure

Develop
Agritourism
Programs

Expand
Agritourism
Marketing
Programs

Food
Systems

Education
& Training

Reduce
Regulatory

Regional
Alliances

Core Strategy Element

- **Develop an Agritourism Infrastructure**
At the heart of a sustainable agritourism strategy is the ability for visitors to actually visit and experience the farms.

Product/ Marketing Strategy Elements

□ **Developing the Agritourism Experience**

- With unique elements that will include, logistics, etc. Everything from farm visit to Farm to Table programs need to be considered.

□ **Expanded Marketing Programs**

- Aggressive marketing program can be developed and implemented through Visit Oceanside and South Morro Hills outreach. It is critical that agricultural representatives be engaged in the process in order to accurately convey the experience.

□ **Food Systems**

- Farm to Table restaurants provide exposure for the industry, and work to create awareness and demand.
- A second and equally important component is the development of local retail distribution for local farm products.
 - Several local grocery stores would have an interest in carrying local farm products which typically includes in-store promotional efforts such as sampling, wine tastings, etc.

Enabling Strategies

□ **Education and Training**

- Education for farmers is critical especially small farms that don't have the expertise and or economies of scale.

□ **Regulatory**

- A second enabling strategy is reforming the regulatory framework at the federal, state and local level.
- These efforts should be able to provide necessary protection, while at the same time reducing costs to reasonable levels.

□ **Strategic Alliances**

- Given Oceanside's agritourism small size, developing strategic alliances at the regional level is critical.
- These cooperative approaches help to leverage funds and increase distribution and reach of agritourism marketing efforts.

Agritourism Strategy

Tier 1

- Builds on existing agritourism elements.
- Does not focus on significant capital investment.

Tier 2

- Involves significant public and private capital expenditures.
- South Morro Hills AVA.

Tier 1 Strategy Characteristics

The Tier 1 strategy is focused primarily on small operators on small parcels. Characteristics include the following:

- ❑ Projected Farm Stands 3 to 5 seasonal operations - Includes a small number of farm visit venues operating on a seasonal level for visitors to engage with.
- ❑ One or two food/cooking/tasting experience venues as part of an estate.
- ❑ Expanding Farm to Table dining that reinforces agritourism attraction to consumers.
- ❑ Creation and implementation of the South Morro Hills agritourism brand and increased directional signage to participating farms.
- ❑ Establishing Fam tours with local chefs and groceries to promote purchase of locally grown foods.
- ❑ Marketing - Marketing support and brand management from Visit Oceanside to develop demand/traffic for the agritourism experience.

Tier 2 Strategy Characteristics

Tier 2 strategy builds on the Tier 1 efforts, but involves significant level of capital investment on the part of both farms and the City of Oceanside. Characteristics include the following:

- Build out of strategic retail outlets that would be supplied from farm operations and trucked in.
- Daily operations of retail outlets to ensure ongoing product demand. Increased employment opportunities and sales tax as a result of retail operations which is positive for the City.
- Development of major supporting events like festivals to bring additional tourism.
- Infrastructure improvements required to upgrade water, sewer and roadways and bring recycled water to the farms. The infrastructure requirements will impact capital expenditures but bonding could be completed to implement improvements.
- Formation of a South Morro Hills AVA (American Viticulture Area).

Agritourism Brand Platform

The Countryside Experience

- South Morro Hills offers one of the last places along the San Diego County coast that has agricultural open space with quiet country roads, vistas of rolling hills leading to the mountains, orchards, and farm life. Today's urban resident wants to find that setting, and immerse themselves in it to escape.

Diversity of Product

- Currently there are two major agricultural product categories that offer consumer visitation opportunities.
 - Avocado
 - Wine

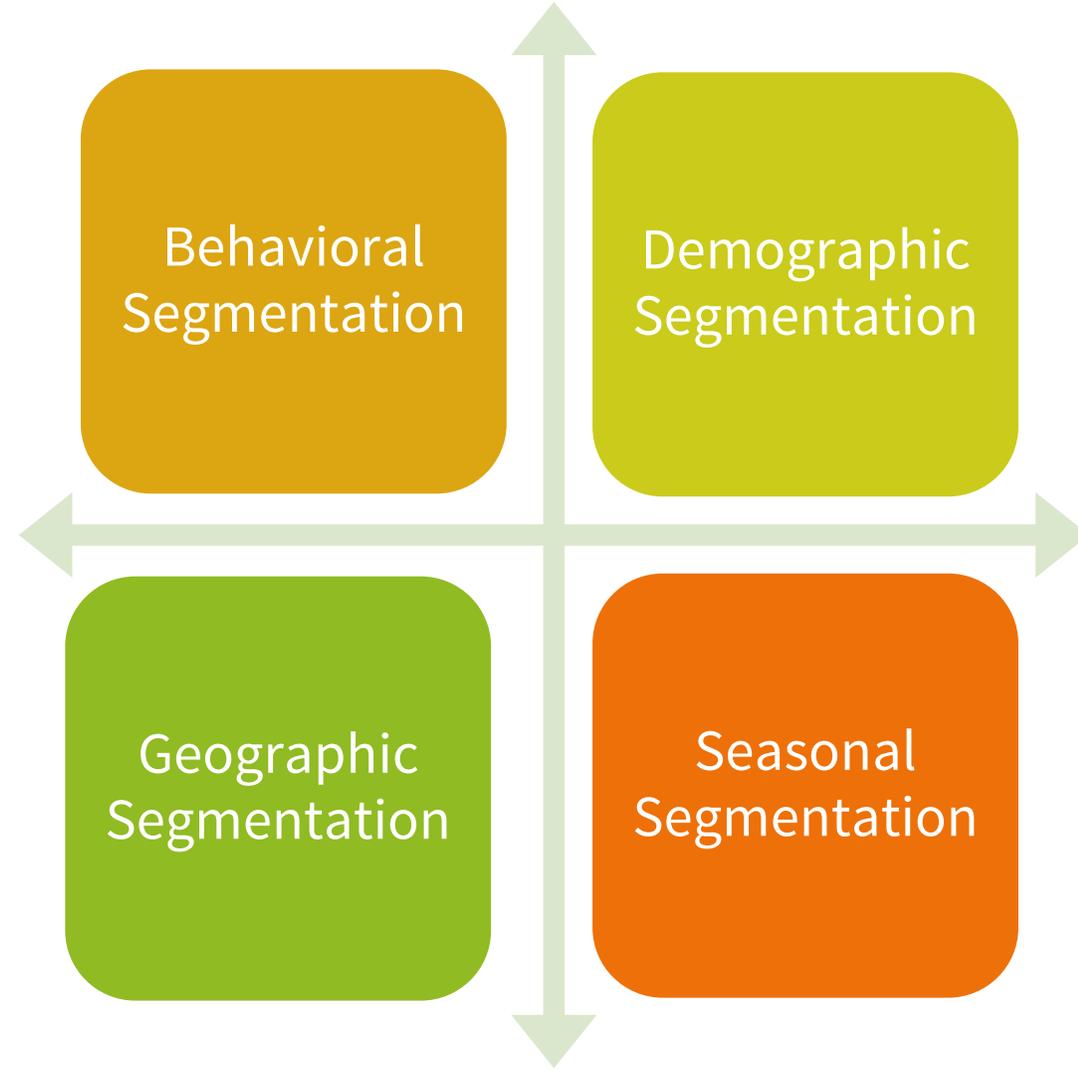
Droughty Resistant Flowers

Water concerns are not going to leave California any time soon, and the landscape industry has been impacted as a result.

Urbanized Sophistication

- Given South Morro Hills is in the city of Oceanside, the proximity of an urban setting to support visitation is somewhat unique.

Agritourism Target Markets



Tier 1 Action Steps

□ **Planning & Regulatory**

- Case Study Education: Apple Hill Visit and gain their knowledge.
- Review existing zoning regulations to enable farm stands

□ **Public and Private Infrastructure Development Action Steps**

- Identify private infrastructure needs and participating farms. The South Morro Hills Association can be a catalyst to initiate these efforts working with private farmers.
- Specific development of on-site tasting rooms to encourage visitation and farm experience is also needed

Tier 1 Action Steps Continued

□ **Community Support Action Steps**

- It is recommended that the City of Oceanside **engage with key partners** in the agricultural industry and develop an outreach program designed to educate local residents and businesses.
- Develop an **outreach approach to work with the local elementary, middle and high schools** in the positive aspects of farming and locally sustainable products.
- **Develop an agritourism grant program** designed to engage local entrepreneurs and businesses in an effort to build and support the agriculture components of Oceanside. A grant program can be very beneficial since funds help to reduce risk and actually get programs developed and implemented.

Tier 2 Action Steps

□ **Planning and Regulatory**

- Develop a community plan to determine long-term direction of South Morro Hills.
- Implement study to determine the current value of the agricultural open space to Oceanside and local residents.
- Financial feasibility for agritourism.

□ **Public and Private Infrastructure Development Action Steps**

- South Morro Hills should consider forming an infrastructure committee to assist in the Community Planning effort and be a catalyst for development projects.
- Private farms wanting to develop retail areas should consider meeting with the City of Oceanside to determine specific requirements for their proposed ideas or projects.
- Work with local vintners to develop grape varieties.

Tier 2 Action Steps

- **Community Support Action Steps**
- Engage the community in a community planning process.
- Encourage the South Morro Hills Association to provide ongoing communication to local residents and public officials about issues, trends etc. happening in the area.
- Provide Visit Oceanside with communications and marketing activities targeted at the local market segment can inform the local community and government officials about local agritourism issues.

Tourism Marketing

□ Tourism Marketing Action Steps

- Key to support the agritourism effort is to develop the systems **between South Morro Hills and Visit Oceanside so there is ongoing communication between the organizations and participating farms.**
- **Expand the Farm to Table program and feature it in Visit Oceanside promotions.**
- Visit Oceanside and the South Morro Hills Association should jointly work with local restaurants and farmers to **identify what the needs of each group are and how more restaurants can be encouraged to adopt farm-to-table concepts and offerings.**
- **Developing food event(s) that emphasize the agricultural component of Oceanside,** integrating farms and crops into the events in order to showcase the unique agritourism experience in South Morro Hills.

Organization Development and Capacity Building

□ **South Morro Hills Branding**

- In order to clearly differentiate South Morro Hills and to effectively position it as a unique agritourism region, it is critical that it develop a clear brand identity, one that represents the character and local culture of the entire region.

□ **Website Development/Online Marketing**

- With the majority of travelers using the Internet for vacation planning and with limited marketing funds, it is critical that the South Morro Hills Association develop a consumer friendly agritourism website focused on the local culture supported by online marketing efforts and other tactics.

□ **Marketing**

- The South Morro Hills agritourism effort will have to rely heavily on marketing support from Visit Oceanside. As such, it is critical that South Morro Hills provide constant updates and content that can be integrated into the Visit Oceanside marketing systems.

Training & Education Actin Steps

□ **Training and Education**

- Work with the South Morro Hills Association to determine local farmer education and training needs.
- Contact University of California Davis for available education and training elements that can be of assistance to both large and small scale local farmers.
- Contact the San Diego County Farm Bureau to determine availability of resources for local farmer training and education needs.
- Work with Visit Oceanside to develop a local tourism education outreach program that educates the local tourism community about the potential benefits of agritourism opportunities for Oceanside.
- In conjunction with the South Morro Hills Association, the City of Oceanside, DMO, and appropriate private sector participants should develop a local community education program, designed to inform local citizens regarding the benefits of agritourism to the community.

Strategic Alliances Action Steps

- **Strategic Alliances**
- Develop and/or strengthen alliances and seek the best opportunities for South Morro Hills including sales, cooperative advertising, public relations, etc.
- Become more active with Alliance organizations, identifying additional opportunities and creating more awareness for South Morro Hills within the regional agricultural industry.
- Seek collaboration that supports the agritourism industry and its component parts.

Key factors for success

- **Work Together**
- **Political Support**
- **Community**
- **Culture of Innovation**

Summary Comments

- Oceanside is at a unique point in time with regard to agriculture and the community.
- Economic & regulatory pressures and the potential to lose agricultural land to development is real.
- The agritourism strategy is important as a way to assist farmers in increasing the uses and revenues from farming activities.
- Tier 1 strategy implementation can happen now while Tier 2 strategies can help in developing a comprehensive approach to infrastructure development that can provide sustainable agritourism programs.