
Montana Agritourism Fellows Program
 Developing Leaders to Advance Sustainable AgriTourism
 Seminar Evaluation

The **Montana Agritourism Fellows Program Evaluation** assesses the effectiveness of a series of seminars aimed at increasing participants' knowledge and skills in agritourism. The evaluation focuses on multiple program outcomes aligned with SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) goals, such as enhancing knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential, visitor trends, marketing strategies, business planning, regulatory issues, and sustainable agritourism integration. Each seminar measured changes in participants' self-reported knowledge and abilities through pre- and post-assessments. The findings indicate substantial knowledge gains across all key areas. For instance, participants showed significant improvement in their understanding of visitor trends, funding opportunities, and business risk management. Additionally, their ability to define agritourism, identify strategic resources, and apply business planning skills improved notably. The results suggest that the program effectively built leadership capacity and professional networks among participants, equipping them with valuable tools to advance agritourism in Montana.

The following program outcomes/SARE goals were assessed at the end of Seminar One:

1. Individuals will increase knowledge of the agritourism industry.
2. Professional networks will be created among participants, experts, and organizations.

Participants were prompted to assess their changes in knowledge of grand challenges for agritourism, knowledge of potential of an agritourism enterprise, knowledge of visitor trends, and knowledge of demand for agritourism a result of their participation in Seminar One. Results of the pre- and post-assessments are displayed in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Nearly all ($n=10$; 90.9%) participants indicated entering the seminar with moderate to high levels of knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential. Unsurprisingly, all ($n=11$; 100.0%) participants then indicated post-knowledge levels of moderate to high in knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential.

Table 1
 Seminar One Participants' Pre-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of grand challenges for agritourism	0	0.00	5	45.45	4	36.36	2	18.18
Knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential	0	0.00	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18
Knowledge of visitor trends	2	18.18	7	63.64	1	9.09	1	9.09
Knowledge of demand for agritourism	0	0.00	7	63.64	3	27.27	1	9.09

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Table 2
 Seminar One Participants' Post-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of grand challenges for agritourism	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55
Knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55
Knowledge of visitor trends	0	0.00	1	9.09	7	63.64	3	27.27
Knowledge of demand for agritourism	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55

Self-perceived changes in participants' level of knowledge were recorded in a post-then-pre format and are displayed in Table 3. The highest mean ($M=3.09$; $SD=0.49$) entering Seminar One was in participants' reported knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential. However, the highest increase in reported knowledge ($Diff. = 1.09$) was recorded in participants' knowledge of visitor trends, followed closely by their knowledge of demand for agritourism ($Diff. =1.00$).

Table 3
 Seminar One Participants' Post-then-Pre Knowledge-Summary

Prompt	Pre		Post		Diff.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Knowledge of grand challenges for agritourism	2.73	0.75	3.55	0.50	0.82
Knowledge of agritourism enterprise potential	3.09	0.51	3.55	0.50	0.45
Knowledge of visitor trends	2.09	0.79	3.18	0.57	1.09
Knowledge of demand for agritourism	2.45	0.66	3.55	0.50	1.00

Participants were also prompted to examine their abilities to define agritourism, identify resources available for agritourism operations, identify strategies for visitor engagement, and examine their own operation's resource availability as a result of their participation in Seminar One. Almost every participant (90.9%) indicated they were entering the seminar with slight to moderate abilities in identifying resources available for agritourism operations and strategies for visitor engagement. By the end of the seminar, 72.73% ($n=8$) of participants indicated a high ability to define agritourism. Complete details of the pre- and post-assessments are displayed in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

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Table 4
Seminar One Participants' Pre-Ability Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Ability to define Agritourism	0	0.00	3	27.27	6	54.55	2	18.18
Ability to identify resources broadly	2	18.18	6	54.55	3	27.27	0	0.00
Ability to identify strategies	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55	0	0.00
Ability to examine own resources	0	0.00	4	36.36	7	63.64	0	0.00

Table 5
Seminar One Participants' Post-Ability Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Ability to define Agritourism	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	27.27	8	72.73
Ability to identify resources broadly	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55
Ability to identify strategies	0	0.00	1	9.09	10	90.91	0	0.00
Ability to examine own resources	0	0.00	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09

Self-perceived changes in participant abilities were recorded in a post-then-pre format and are displayed in Table 6. Participant means entering the seminar were similar to one another with a range of only 0.27 in reported abilities. However, the highest increase in reported ability was recorded in participants' abilities to identify resources available for agritourism operations (*Diff.* = 1.45). The smallest reported increase in ability was in examining their own operation's resource availability (*Diff.* = 0.45). All four measured abilities saw a reported increase.

Table 6
Seminar One Participants' Post-then-Pre Ability Summary

Prompt	Pre		Post		Diff.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Ability to define Agritourism	2.91	0.67	3.73	0.45	0.82
Ability to identify resources broadly	2.09	0.67	3.55	0.50	1.45
Ability to identify strategies	2.55	0.50	2.91	0.29	0.36
Ability to examine own resources	2.64	0.48	3.09	0.29	0.45

The following program outcomes/SARE goals were assessed at the end of Seminar Two:

1. Individuals will increase knowledge of communication practices to better educate farmers and ranchers about sustainable agritourism.
2. Individuals will be able to recognize ways to enhance their quality of life and ensure the viability of rural communities, for example, by increasing income and employment,

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especially profitable self-employment and innovative marketing opportunities in agricultural and rural communities.

Participants were prompted to assess their changes in knowledge of marketing and communication strategies, strategic business planning, and funding opportunities as a result of their participation in Seminar Two. Results of the pre- and post-assessments are displayed in Tables 7 and 8, respectively. Nearly all ($n=10$; 90.9%) participants indicated entering the seminar with moderate to high levels of knowledge in marketing and communication strategies. Similarly, all but one ($n=10$; 90.9%) participant indicated moderate to high post-knowledge levels in strategic business planning and funding opportunities.

Table 7
 Seminar Two Participants' Pre-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of marketing and communication strategies	0	0.00	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18
Knowledge of strategic business planning	0	0.00	3	27.27	6	54.55	2	18.18
Knowledge of funding opportunities	0	0.00	3	27.27	7	63.64	1	9.09

Table 8
 Seminar Two Participants' Post-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of marketing and communication strategies	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55
Knowledge of strategic business planning	0	0.00	1	9.09	5	45.45	5	45.45
Knowledge of funding opportunities	0	0.00	1	9.09	5	45.45	5	45.45

Self-perceived changes in participants' level of knowledge were recorded in a post-then-pre format and are displayed in Table 9. The highest mean ($M=3.09$; $SD=0.49$) entering the seminar was in participants' reported knowledge of marketing and communication strategies. However, the highest increase in reported knowledge ($Diff. = 0.55$) was recorded in participants' knowledge of funding opportunities.

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Table 9
 Seminar Two Participants' Post-then-Pre Knowledge-Summary

Prompt	Pre		Post		Diff.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Knowledge of marketing and communication strategies	3.09	0.49	3.55	0.47	0.45
Knowledge of strategic business planning	2.91	0.64	3.36	0.63	0.45
Knowledge of funding opportunities	2.82	0.55	3.36	0.48	0.55

Participants were also prompted to assess their abilities in identifying opportunities for increased visitor engagement, identifying funding resources available for agritourism operations, examining their own operation's strategic business plan, and applying strategic planning as a result of their participation in Seminar Two. Almost every (90.9%) participant indicated entering the seminar with slight to moderate abilities in all four measured areas. By the end of the seminar, 93.18% of participants indicated moderate to high abilities in all four areas. Complete details of the pre- and post-assessments are displayed in Tables 10 and 11, respectively.

Table 10
 Seminar Two Participants' Pre-Ability Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Ability to identify visitor engagement	0	0.00	3	27.27	6	54.55	2	18.18
Ability to identify funding resources	2	18.18	6	54.55	3	27.27	0	0.00
Ability to examine your operation's plan	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55	0	0.00
Ability to apply strategic planning	0	0.00	4	36.36	7	63.64	0	0.00

Table 11
 Seminar Two Participants' Post-Ability Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Ability to identify visitor engagement	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	54.55	5	45.45
Ability to identify funding resources	0	0.00	1	9.09	6	54.55	4	36.36
Ability to examine your operation's plan	0	0.00	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18
Ability to apply strategic planning	0	0.00	1	9.09	7	63.64	3	27.27

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Self-perceived changes in participant abilities were recorded in a post-then-pre format and are displayed in Table 12. Participant means entering the seminar were similar, with a range of only 0.28 in reported abilities. However, the highest increase in reported ability was recorded in participants' abilities to identify opportunities for increased visitor engagement (*Diff.* = 0.82) and identify funding resources available for agritourism operations (*Diff.* = 0.82).

Table 12
Seminar Two Participants' Post-then-Pre Ability Summary

Prompt	Pre		Post		Diff.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Ability to identify visitor engagement	2.64	0.46	3.45	0.48	0.82
Ability to identify funding resources	2.45	0.48	3.27	0.61	0.82
Ability to examine your operation's plan	2.36	0.46	3.09	0.38	0.73
Ability to apply strategic planning	2.45	0.63	3.18	0.57	0.73

The following program outcomes/SARE goals were assessed at the end of Seminar Three:

1. Individuals will increase their knowledge of business management strategies and regulatory issues affecting agritourism to protect themselves and their operations better.

Participants were prompted to assess their changes in knowledge of business management strategies and regulatory issues affecting agritourism as a result of their participation in Seminar Three. The pre-and post-assessment results are displayed in Tables 13 and 14, respectively. A little more than one-third ($n=4$; 36.4%) of participants indicated entering the seminar with none to slight knowledge of legal regulatory issues and business resources. After participation in Seminar Three, every participant ($n=11$; 100.0%) indicated moderate to high post-knowledge levels in all five assessment prompts.

Table 13
Seminar Three Participants' Pre-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of business management strategies.	0	0.00	2	18.18	7	63.64	2	18.18
Knowledge of legal regulatory issues.	0	0.00	4	36.36	6	54.55	1	9.09
Knowledge of business resources.	0	0.00	4	36.36	6	54.55	1	9.09
Knowledge of safety and risk management strategies.	0	0.00	3	27.27	8	72.73	0	0.00
Knowledge of challenges in Agritourism.	0	0.00	1	9.09	9	81.82	1	9.09

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Table 14
 Seminar Three Participants' Post-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of business management strategies.	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	63.64	4	36.36
Knowledge of legal regulatory issues.	0	0.00	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
Knowledge of business resources.	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	63.64	3	27.27
Knowledge of safety and risk management strategies.	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	54.55	5	45.45
Knowledge of challenges in Agritourism.	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	6	54.55

Self-perceived changes in participants' level of knowledge were recorded in a post-then-pre format and are displayed in Table 15. The lowest mean and tightest standard deviation ($M=2.73$; $SD=0.45$) entering the seminar were participants' reported knowledge of safety and risk management strategies. The greatest increase in reported knowledge from pre- to post-test ($Diff. = 0.73$) was recorded in the same area, participants' knowledge of safety and risk management strategies. All five assessment prompts saw an increase in participants' pre- and post-knowledge.

Table 15
 Seminar Three Participants' Post-then-Pre Knowledge-Summary

Prompt	Pre		Post		Diff.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Knowledge of business management strategies.	3.00	0.60	3.36	0.48	0.36
Knowledge of legal regulatory issues.	2.73	0.62	3.09	0.29	0.36
Knowledge of business resources.	2.73	0.62	3.30	0.46	0.57
Knowledge of safety and risk management strategies.	2.73	0.45	3.45	0.50	0.73
Knowledge of challenges in Agritourism.	3.00	0.43	3.55	0.50	0.55

The following program outcomes/SARE goals were assessed at the end of Seminar Four:

1. Individuals will increase their knowledge of sustainable agritourism, business management, and communication skills to serve themselves and their operations better.

Participants were prompted to assess their changes in knowledge of sustainable agritourism, business management, and communication skills as a result of their participation in Seminar Four. The pre-and post-assessment results are displayed in Tables 16 and 17, respectively. One-third ($n=2$; 33.3%) of participants indicated entering the seminar with none to slight knowledge of integration strategies for merging sustainable agriculture, economic, social, and environmental

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practices into an agritourism enterprise. After participation in Seminar Four, every participant ($n=6$; 100.0%) indicated moderate to high post-knowledge levels in all five assessment prompts.

Table 16
 Seminar Four Participants' Pre-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of available resources.	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	54.55	0	0.00
Knowledge of integration strategies for merging sustainable agriculture, economic, social, and environmental practices into an agritourism enterprise.	0	0.00	2	18.18	4	36.36	0	0.00
Knowledge of communication skills to better educate others about sustainable agritourism.	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	1	9.09
Knowledge of business planning and management strategies of current agritourism operations.	0	0.00	1	9.09	5	45.45	0	0.00
Knowledge of marketing and promotion of agritourism operations and products.	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	45.45	1	9.09

Table 17
 Seminar Four Participants' Post-Knowledge Distribution

Prompt	None		Slight		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Knowledge of available resources.	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	54.55
Knowledge of integration strategies for merging sustainable agriculture, economic, social, and environmental practices into an agritourism enterprise.	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	9.09	5	45.45
Knowledge of communication skills to	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	9.09	5	45.45

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better educate others about sustainable agritourism.									
Knowledge of business planning and management strategies of current agritourism operations.	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	18.18	4	36.36	
Knowledge of marketing and promotion of agritourism operations and products.	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	9.09	5	45.45	

Self-perceived changes in participants’ level of knowledge were recorded in a post-then-pre format and are displayed in Table 18. The lowest mean ($M=2.67$) entering the seminar was participants’ reported knowledge of integration strategies for merging sustainable agriculture, economic, social, and environmental practices into an agritourism enterprise. The greatest increase in reported knowledge from pre- to post-test ($Diff. = 1.17$) was recorded in the same area, participants’ knowledge of integration strategies for merging sustainable agriculture, economic, social, and environmental practices into an agritourism enterprise. All five assessment prompts saw an increase in participants’ pre- and post-knowledge.

Table 18
 Seminar Four Participants’ Post-then-Pre Knowledge-Summary

Prompt	Pre		Post		Diff.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Knowledge of available resources.	3.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	1.00
Knowledge of integration strategies for merging sustainable agriculture, economic, social, and environmental practices into an agritourism enterprise.	2.67	0.47	3.83	0.37	1.17
Knowledge of communication skills to better educate others about sustainable agritourism.	3.17	0.37	3.83	0.37	0.67
Knowledge of business planning and management strategies of current agritourism operations.	2.83	0.37	3.67	0.47	0.83
Knowledge of marketing and promotion of agritourism operations and products.	3.17	0.37	3.83	0.37	0.67