

THE ROLE OF THE DIVERSIFICATION OF FARM TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AREAS NEAR ANIMAL FARMS

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Abstract: *The sustainable development of an area involves the application of creative strategies in animal farms and the practice of alternative farm tourism activities, in order to improve environmental risk management. By monitoring the components of risk management and control of resources, livestock, the number of farm tourists, the degree of tolerability of the area in the vicinity of farms, the need for agri-food products of the local population, a healthy environment and sustainable development can be maintained. To increase the efficiency of environmental risk management, avoid physical, chemical and biological pollution, maintain animal health, tourists visiting the farm, communities in the vicinity of the farm, we suggest some good practice ideas for improving zootechnical and farm tourism activities for sustainable development of the rural area, we propose the development of those activities that have the lowest risk of contamination, environmental degradation and that can be easily managed such as dinner and wedding on the farm, product stand, guided tour of the farm and summer camp for youth at the farm.*

Keywords: *sustainable development, farms, environmental risk, tourism activities*

INTRODUCTION

Given the strong competition in the global tourism industry, the implementation of creative strategies for differentiating tourist destinations has been a concern for the main public and private actors in the territory. Several studies attest to the relevance of creativity, creative industries and creative tourism in local economic, social and cultural development, as they are closely related to visual and performing arts, gastronomy (1, 2) and wines and have the potential to attract customers throughout the year, to tourist farms that have diversified their core business by reducing livestock, implementing alternative activities, farm tourism, agrotourism, equestrian tourism (5, 7, 9), new occupations for farmers, more slightly dependent on

seasonal factors (11, 12) and milder with environmental factors, water, soil, air, in the vicinity of cattle and pig farms and human communities.

In order to practice alternative tourism activities on a successful farm, the farmer, agrotourism, must take into account the following aspects regarding: (3, 10):

- evaluation of the animal farm that reduces its numbers and diversifies its activity from the perspective of practicing farm tourism, zootourism, agrotourism (the need for resources, existing resources, purpose);

- business planning (business plan, business entity, setting realistic revenue targets, budgeting, pricing, keeping accurate accounting records, identifying when to start business, financing, fees, permits and regulations, knowledge- key on land use, tourism, tourism market, national and local regulations on new activities implemented);

- ensuring of some high-quality farm experiences (authenticity, healthy environment and safe facilities, educational experiences, good customer service);

- ensuring the safety of the agrotourism farm (farm agrotourism operation plans, education and training of staff, responsibility towards the location, tourist products offered);

- environmental risk management, regarding the number of animals, the amount of manure used as natural fertilizers;

- marketing (to the 4/7 P of marketing - product, price, placement and distribution, used for the basic activity, animal husbandry, must be added for alternative tourism activities on the farm/zootourism, promotion and positioning on the agritourism market, a plan marketing and marketing matrix

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Environmental risk management ensures the structured, responsible and systematic approach to all animal husbandry activities, farm tourism, which takes place on the animal farm that has diversified its activity, risk management that occurs on environmental protection in the vicinity of the farm, for these reasons, in order to reduce the risks regarding the pollution of the areas in the vicinity of the farms, in this scientific approach, we propose new solutions for sustainable development of the areas for administrators/ managers and all human resources in the zootourist farm, in order to improve risk management and to keep unchanged the

environmental, soil, water, air and biodiversity factors of the floristic and faunal ecosystems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Environmental risk management is a component part of the general management of animal farms and of those who have diversified their activity by implementing zoo tourism activities, being a particular type of management that has to fulfill the following objectives:

- decision making for risk management;
- establishing risk responses.

The improvement of the risk management components can only be achieved by proposing and implementing in animal farms that have diversified their activity only through the following measures:

- rigorous and reliable decisions;
- identification of opportunities and threats;
- managing hazards that threaten the biosecurity of the farm and the communities in the vicinity of the farm;
- allocating resources to improve animal welfare;
- managing situations of environmental degradation through farm activities;
- monitoring the components of risk management and control of livestock, the number of tourists, the degree of tolerability of the area in the vicinity of farms, the need for agri-food products of the population, for sustainable development and maintaining a healthy environment by:
 - a. analysis of the problems associated with risk management and which have influences on the sustainable development of the area;
 - b. prevention of dysfunctions regarding the safety of farms and communities in the vicinity of animal farms;
 - c. achieving the objectives regarding the effectiveness of risk management regarding environmental protection and biodiversity conservation;
 - d. sustainable development of the area through the efficient use of resources.

Achieving these objectives in farms that have diversified their activity by reducing the number of animals and using the surplus space for tourist activities on the farm also involves identifying and taking on new risks such as:

- contamination of agri-food products, by increasing the number of visitors to production processes, walking on the farm, accommodation;

- omissions in the design of utilities for visitors / tourists, due to the reuse of surplus spaces for actions on the farm;
- changes regarding pollution sources;
- sharing risk at the animal and tourist farm.

To increase the efficiency of environmental risk management, avoid physical, chemical and biological pollution, maintain animal health, tourists visiting/staying on the farm, communities in the vicinity of the farm, below, we suggest some good practice ideas for improving zootechnic activities and farm tourism for the sustainable development of rural areas, proposing the development of those activities that have the lowest risk of contamination, environmental degradation and that can be managed to avoid communicable diseases due to biotic or abiotic factors. Regardless of the predominant type of activity on a farm, which has diversified its activity by reducing the number of animals, visitors/tourists are expected to (8):

- the endowment of the surplus spaces to be safe and accessible to all visitors;
- they can easily figure out where to start their visit, where they can take part in farm actions, food;
- the farm has hygienic conditions;
- the farm corresponds to the image they have of a farm;
- staff are visible, welcoming and give instructions to visitors;
- the main area of the farm intended for farm tourism activities is clean and well maintained.

The mildest farm tourism activities, which have a low impact on the environment and contribute to the sustainable development of the rural area in the vicinity of the proposed farm, are the following:

- dinner at the farm, which can be an interesting way to present to visitors / tourists the products obtained on the farm, the event is not complicated because the balance between profit and work is often delicate but this experience has five motivating factors strong:
 - a. the sensory attraction for the products obtained on the farm;
 - b. cultural experience that does not require much effort on the protection of the natural environment;
 - c. health care, fresh products can be easily managed communicable diseases from farm animals to consumers;
 - d. the delight of spending time at the place of production;
 - e. interpersonal relationship;
 - f. low environmental risk;
 - g. possibilities for sustainable development of the farm, area, community; (8).

- wedding at the farm can provide opportunities to diversify your business with something other than selling farm products, without risk of degradation of the natural environment. Organizing a farm wedding assumes:

- a. the evaluation of the farm from the perspective of such an event;
- b. identification of visitors' expectations;
- c. farm marketing;
- d. event planning;
- e. environmental risk.

- the stand for sale at the entrance to the farm, whose organization for visitors involves compliance with regulations in force including sustainable development, insurance food safety, risk management, product marketing, business planning, type stand, sales staff.

-the farm tour can be designed for consumers of curious products, for large groups or small, for professionals of a certain trade or for the elderly or preschool children.

Organizing of a farm tour involves organization, budgeting, promotion and safety because the farmer has to check: what the weather will be like; if the current flowing through the electric fences has been interrupted; whether the cost of disposing of garbage in the group charge has been taken into account; if dogs have been confined, if dangerous areas have been marked and isolated (manure pit, pond, equipment); if the bathroom can handle all visitors or has to rent flying toilets; if there are signs on the electric fences; if there are signs on the doors of the house indicating a private property; if there is enough sheltered space to proceed with the visit in case of bad weather; if there are enough rubbish bins along the route of the visit; if there is a place for hand washing outside the bathroom; if the farm is visible from the road and clearly marked; if the signs and the map are ready; whether the promotional materials (business cards, mailing lists, order forms) and the guest card have been prepared; if emergency phone numbers are displayed in a visible place; if the persons involved have badges with their names; whether it is known which visitors may have mobility problems and whether it has taken the appropriate measures in this regard; if the boot wash station is ready; if everyone will be able to tour the farm; if all fertilizers, pest control products and medicines have been well stored.

- stay on the farm. Organizing a stay on the farm involves evaluating the farm from the perspective of such an activity, planning this activity, planning activities for visitors, establishing policies for visitors, establishing the business structure, setting the financial target, risk management and

service marketing. The offer for customers may include: drinks, horse riding, visit to the agricultural park with old equipment, contact with renewable energy systems, baskets for products purchased on departure, area guide for nearby attractions, place for campfire, information about the farm or pastures, understanding the way of life of parents or grandparents, walking on the farm, milking animals, slaughtering pigs and cooking, learning opportunities, educational about family animal husbandry, rural culture, local history, food production, discounts on products purchased.

- farm camp for young people. Organizing a summer camp on the farm involves business planning, budget planning, pricing, setting the theme, philosophy and culture of the summer camp, personnel management, camp management, marketing, risk management and evaluation final activity. Activities for children participating in a summer camp on the farm are much more diverse and numerous than you might think: searching for food, collecting eggs, building mud baths for pigs, "cooking with mud" (pots, pans, spoons, mud and imagination), animal feeding.

In order to achieve the economic objectives of the animal farm that diversified its activity by implementing tourist activities on the farm, the activities carried out for visitors aimed to improve the risk management components by reducing the number of animals, so pollution, diversification of production, knowledge and of new risks by receiving tourists / visitors on farms. We consider that due to this fact the risk management must be permanently improved by:

- identification of the health status of the animals, the quality of the products, the biosecurity measures that are required, in order to avoid contamination;

- determining the expected value, analyzing the risk through the decision trees and proposing for implementation measures regarding the eradication of vectors that contaminate the farm, the natural environment, the communities in the vicinity of the farms;

- analyzing the effects on the natural and anthropic environment and the measures required, the control of livestock, the amount of manure used as natural fertilizer, the number of tourists, the degree of tolerability of the area;

- actions to reduce, eliminate or allocate risk,
- measures to contribute to the sustainable development of the whole area.

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of new farm tourism activities by diversifying the basic activity, raising animals, requires the farmer to evaluate his new business, in order to provide tourists with quality experiences, ensuring the safety of the agrotourism farm and avoiding environmental risk. Improving the components of risk management can only be achieved by proposing and implementing in animal farms that have diversified their activities only by implementing hazard management measures that threaten the biosecurity of farms and neighboring communities, monitoring the efficient use of resources, management components risk, controlling the number of animals, the number of farm tourists, the degree of tolerability of the area in the vicinity of farms, for sustainable development and maintaining a healthy environment. Increasing the efficiency of environmental risk management, avoiding physical, chemical and biological pollution, maintaining animal health, tourists visiting the farm, communities can only be achieved by implementing good practices to improve livestock zootechnic and tourism activities for the sustainable development of rural space. Low-risk farm tourism activities are proposed regarding contamination, environmental degradation and easy to manage by farmers, farm dinner and wedding, farm stay, farm tour and farm summer camp for young people.

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