



# Tribal Agritourism Training Manual

**CASE STUDIES IN TRIBAL AGRITOURISM**



**AIANTA**

American Indian Alaska Native  
Tourism Association







# Tribal Agritourism Training Manual

## CASE STUDIES IN TRIBAL AGRITOURISM

A handbook for ranchers, farmers and other Native food producers interested in sharing culture, heritage and traditional food systems by expanding or developing agritourism enterprises.



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# Letter from AIANTA's Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Sherry L. Rupert

## Dear Members and Friends,

As with all things, I want to begin with gratitude. The manual you have in your hands (or on your screen) is the culmination of many years of work and engagement. I am grateful for the Native wisdom shared through the case studies included in this collection from all six of our regions. For those of you that are old friends of the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) and to those of you that are new friends, I want to thank you for being part of our work and mission to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Tourism. I also want to thank the Native American Agriculture Fund for supporting this project and for all of their work and investments in support of Native farmers and ranchers.

We are in the midst of an exciting time in the tribal food movement—American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians are enjoying a revitalization and reclaiming of food traditions. We are growing traditional foods while restoring fishing, farming and ranching practices. With increased authentic food production and food practices, agritourism and culinary tourism have become part of the broader food sovereignty movement.

This manual is designed as a progressive learning tool. Each unique case study takes a look at agritourism and/or culinary tourism development from a tribal/

native perspective. Each unique case study is followed by learning modules to help guide you through the unique challenges and opportunities inherent to tribal-based agritourism development.

For example, the case study on the Santa Ana Pueblo explores the decision made by the Pueblo to regain sovereignty of their lands previously leased to non-Indians. Their effort to reclaim their lands has had far-reaching cultural and economic impacts. The Santa Ana Pueblo Case Study module breaks down the case study and provides tools to build interconnectivity and to identify funding opportunities.

We encourage you to read each case study and module to give you a broader understanding and perspective of tribal agritourism development. When you are done, please also look to our agritourism resource page at [aianta.org](http://aianta.org) for more learning tools and funding opportunities.

I also want to encourage you to explore Native America. travel, the only consumer-facing destination website dedicated to promoting American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism without charge to tribal enterprises and tribally owned businesses engaged in tribal tourism – including tribal agritourism.

Boneedwa,

**Sherry L. Rupert, CEO**

American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association  
(AIANTA)

# Introduction

Perhaps more than ever in recent times consumers are appreciating healthy food, and the people and stories behind it. Beyond purchasing good food, customers are interested in the cultures and art that have been inspired through agriculture. They want to meet the people growing the food, and to admire and learn from their skills. They want to understand how food has influenced and created strong communities and strengthened family bonds, whether it's a family business or a large tribally owned farm.

Visitors want to take their families to see where food comes from, to drink in landscapes and fields lovingly tended. Our technologically dependent society still understands the importance of agriculture and its influence on culture, and wishes to experience it and share it with their children.

Agritourism defies strict definitions, but at its heart agritourism is cultural tourism. The public values agricultural immersion, and is happy to pay for those experiences. It can be a locally made snack purchased during a road trip to your community, or an immersive experience where visitors take a hand in food production. It can be an annual event or a year-round destination. It can look to the past to teach how agriculture has traditionally influenced a culture, or it can be an entirely new crop that develops a new industry for your community. Agritourism projects can be funded through other programs because of their importance to heritage, or they can be major revenue generators on their own.

In the following pages, six tribal nations have generously shared their agritourism journeys with the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA). We are grateful to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (Choctaw Farms), the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation in California (Séka Hills Olive Oil), the Tlinglit community of Icy Strait Point in Alaska, the Santa Ana

Pueblo in New Mexico (Santa Ana Blue Corn), the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin (Oneida Big Apple Fest) and the Seneca Nation of Indians in New York (Iroquois White Corn Project). They have all done so with the hope that others may learn and gain inspiration from their agritourism businesses.

These case studies represent just a small fraction of the tribal agritourism projects throughout the country. We continually add more tribal and tribal-member agritourism profiles at [NativeAmerica.Travel](http://NativeAmerica.Travel) as well; search for “agritourism.”

These stories offer diverse examples of what is possible in terms of successful agricultural business models. They are not necessarily meant to be templates, but by reading these stories hopefully your own ideas will take root. Following each case study is an educational module designed to highlight key points of the case study, and questions designed to inspire readers to consider how these points may be used in creating their own agritourism projects.

Certainly agritourism is hard work both in terms of laboring in the fields and in running a business. But creativity and positive energy are the nutrients that make any successful agritourism project flourish.

We thank you for spending this time reading this manual. We hope that it helps in developing your own agricultural project that enriches your community and furthers appreciation for your culture's heritage, history, skills, resourcefulness and beauty.



## // Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Case Study

### // Module 1 – Case Study Worksheets



# Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Case Study

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has endured much in the course of its history in regard to food security. In the past few years it has used its resourcefulness to develop new agricultural products and markets that benefit its Tribal members, and have helped make its new businesses unique destinations.

## Chahta Yakni

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (Chahta Yakni) is the third-largest federally recognized Tribe in the United States, and comprises 10.5 counties in southeastern Oklahoma. Its Tribal land is almost 11,000 square miles, and has 223,279 enrolled members (2011 census) throughout the country.

The Choctaw (Chahta) People lived a largely agrarian culture in what is now know as Mississippi, farming communal and family fields as early as 1000 A.D. They were forced by the Jackson administration to leave their ancestral lands of more than 17,000 square miles in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Arkansas in three forced marches between 1830 and 1833. These marches to Oklahoma are collectively called the Choctaw Trail of Tears.

Torn from their fertile fields along the Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas-river valleys, the Choctaw suffered starvation along the three-month journey from Mississippi to Oklahoma. An estimated 17,000 people were forced to make the march, and thousands died along the way. Ration meals during the harsh winter consisted of boiled corn, one turnip, and two cups of hot water a day per person.

The historical trauma of this starvation led the Choctaw Nation to donate the equivalent of \$5,000 to help those suffering during the Great Irish Potato

Famine, just 16 years after the March. The Choctaw knew hunger and felt empathy for any who suffered from starvation. Agriculture and food security are woven into Choctaw heritage.

## Resilience

By the 1860s, less than 30 years after the Trail of Tears, Choctaw Nation members were working their new land and enjoying success through farming, especially in growing profitable cotton.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma continued to grow and become integral and influential in Oklahoma. Choctaw men served in the U.S. Army during World War I, and Choctaw Code Talkers used their language to confound German troops who had been breaking U.S. codes. Inspired by the Civil Rights movement, in the 1970s the Tribe reasserted its sovereignty through such measures as language programs ([www.choctawschool.com](http://www.choctawschool.com)) and further developing its business enterprises. In the 2000s the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma began opening gaming centers and today owns three resorts and six casinos throughout their Nation in southeastern Oklahoma. In 2016, the Choctaw Nation Division of Commerce was created to support Tribal and Tribal member businesses. The division's stated purposes are to help diversify the Tribe's economy beyond gaming, to create jobs and generate revenue to support Tribal services such as health care, education and senior programs.

## Choctaw Farms

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has several agricultural businesses under its Division of Commerce Agriculture. Its largest and most well-known project is its pecan farm.



## SECTION 1

Traditionally, hickory nuts were an important part of the Choctaw diet. Upon arriving in Oklahoma, the Choctaw discovered wild pecan trees. Called Oksak Fvla (“shelled hickory nut”), pecan nuts soon became a year-round staple because they could be eaten raw or ground into a flour, and kept over winter.

While Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Tribal members have long collected pecans, it wasn’t until 2016 that the commercial pecan business was created.

“We’ve always had native trees, they were just on our cattle ranches,” says Doyle McDaniel, Tree Production Manager for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. “We would have a harvester come in until we realized that we had enough trees to support buying our own equipment and to make this a business and create jobs.”

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma owns six ranches totaling 65,000 acres on which they graze 3,000 Certified Angus Beef cattle. In 2015 native pecan trees were identified throughout the ranches, pruned and managed. As more grazing land was developed, more wild pecan trees were discovered in the thick brush. The following year the pecan department was officially created under the Division of Commerce Agriculture, and McDaniel was brought over from the Tribe’s wildlife department to oversee pecan production. He contacted pecan tree experts from the Noble Research Institute ([www.noble.org](http://www.noble.org)) and Oklahoma State University to help develop the pecan orchards and learn how to keep existing trees healthy and how to best add new orchards.

Choctaw Farms now has three separate orchards, and grows and processes 150,000 pounds of pecan nuts annually harvested from about 5,000 trees throughout 1,500 acres. Pecans are shelled, processed and packaged in 16-ounce bags, in flavors that include plain, cinnamon sugar and salted roasted. They are sold at the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma’s 17 Choctaw Nation Travel Plazas throughout its 10.5 counties, as well as the Choctaw Welcome

Center at the Oklahoma/Texas border on US 75 ([choctawcountry.com](http://choctawcountry.com)). And the Tribe continues to create its own businesses for distributions of its pecan products.

## Choctaw Country Markets

In 2016, the Tribe opened its first Choctaw Country Market in Clayton, followed by a second and third store in Boswell and Coalgate in 2019.

“It’s a part of this Tribal Council to keep our communities alive,” said Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Chief Gary Batton at the Boswell location opening. “We have people driving upwards of 30 miles to get groceries, and I’m thankful for everyone investing in Boswell to rise our tide for the greater good of all our tribal people.”

The opening of the second market in Boswell reportedly created 28 area jobs.

Choctaw Farms pecans are prominently displayed at the markets, and now other Choctaw Farms-labeled products are offered as well. Spicy garlic okra, pickled jalapeños, pickled quail eggs, Choctaw Farms BBQ Sauce, Ghost Chili Salsa, maple bourbon pear butter and a variety of jams and jellies are a few of the products Choctaw Farms sells at the markets, where customers can also purchase fresh produce and meats.

Choctaw Farms products are also sold through the Choctaw Store ([choctawstore.com](http://choctawstore.com)). This online store sells and ships a wide range of products made by Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Tribal members and departments. In addition to Choctaw Farms products, jewelry, original art, books and Choctaw-seal branded items such as mugs, patches and clothing are sold. Choctaw Farms products are also available at the Choctaw Museum gift shop, located in the Historic Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Capitol Museum in Tvshka Homma. Here, visitors learn about the history of the Chahta People in the 1884 redbrick building that served as the Tribe’s capitol building until 1907. Visitors



learn about the Tribe’s pre-European contact history, the Trail of Tears, its contributions to Oklahoma history and its traditional arts and agrarian cultures.

## Growing a Community

Beyond commercial agriculture and agritourism, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is working to ensure its members have access to healthy food and agriculture support for growing their own food. Begun in 2017, the Nihi Hokchi-Edible Schoolyard Project helps Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma school children plant gardens, build garden irrigation systems and raised beds, and learn about the importance and fundamentals of agriculture. The project was created by the Chahta Foundation, whose stated goal is to “connect communities with Choctaw health and wellness initiatives that enrich the quality of life, establish sustainability and reconnect generations of Choctaw people with their agrarian heritage.”

The Chahta Foundation ([www.ChahtaFoundation.com](http://www.ChahtaFoundation.com)) also brought raised garden beds to Choctaw elders

residing in senior living communities. More than 70 raised beds were donated to Choctaw elders as well as soil, mulch, hoses, gardening implements, vegetable plants and herbs, gloves, straw hats and sunscreen. The project has enabled Choctaw elders to grow some of their own fresh foods, to exercise and stay active, and to connect with their neighbors and community.

Additionally, the Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach Program, begun in 2016, helps Tribal members and businesses develop their own gardens and businesses. The program applied for and was awarded several agricultural-related grants, including the Specialty Crop Block Grant ([www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp)), Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program ([nifa.usda.gov](http://nifa.usda.gov)), The 2501 Program ([www.usda.gov/partnerships/socially-disadvantaged-farmers-and-ranchers](http://www.usda.gov/partnerships/socially-disadvantaged-farmers-and-ranchers)) and the Farmers Market Promotion Program ([www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmppp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmppp)). With these resources, the Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach Program has



been able to help agricultural-based Tribal-member businesses such as Achukma Pecan Oil. This neutral-flavor oil is low in saturated fat and rich in Omega 3 and 6 vitamins, as well as Vitamin E and zinc. It can be used in baking, cooking and salad dressings. Based in Coleman, Achukma is owned by father and son Dan and Mark Hamilton ([www.achukma.com](http://www.achukma.com)). The name Achukma is a Choctaw word meaning good or beautiful, and was suggested by Mark’s mother. Through the Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach Program the Hamiltons were able to meet with Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma business development officials, who are now helping Achukma Pecan Oil be carried in Choctaw Nation Travel Plazas and other tribal stores, as well as expanding into other markets.

Through its heritage of agriculture, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma continues to help its members and others strive for health and independence through food security for generations to come.

For more information about the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, visit [www.choctawnation.com](http://www.choctawnation.com).

### Agritourism Tips from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

- Utilize what you already have. Can land serve dual purposes? For example, can pumpkins be planted in addition to other crops in order to have a fall festivals after harvest? Can a harvested cornfield be turned into a corn maze? In the case of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, random pecan trees found while clearing ranch land created an additional industry.
- Every Tribal entity can serve as a point-of-sale location for Tribal products. Gas stations, visitor centers, any Tribal outlet that accepts cash from the general public is a potential store front for shelf-stable Tribal agricultural products.
- Go after the grants. There are many grants both big and small available for agricultural projects. It’s worth the time to research and pursue these grants. Well-used small grants create a successful resume when pursuing larger grants.
- Engage the Elders. Senior citizens and their experiences can be invaluable in developing agritourism projects. What traditional foods and snacks did they enjoy as children? What would they enjoy now? What stories do they remember from their grandparents? What games, songs and stories did they enjoy when helping with the family garden or during Tribal events? Make sure to record these stories to pass on not only to other Tribal members but also to enrich agritourism experiences for visitors.
- Consider a U-Pick-It business model. Especially suited for pumpkins, berries, nut trees and apples, U-Pick-It agritourism models charge visitors by the weight of produce they pick. This cuts out harvesting, processing, shipping and other cost associated with bringing products to market. It’s easy to add additional businesses to these types of operations, such as food stands and art shows.
- Identify markets beyond Tribal outlets. What businesses in neighboring communities would be willing to carry Tribal agricultural products wholesale? Would your products create competition for any nearby agricultural businesses? How can your Tribal products best work with other locally available products, strengthening the overall regional agricultural economy and gaining support from neighboring communities?

# Module 1 – Case Study Worksheets

## Module Overview

Module One provides an introduction to starting an agritourism venture and gauging the assets you already have. It also covers the importance of keeping your original mission in mind as you grow from a small venture to a thriving enterprise. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma case study shows how the Choctaw People utilized their cultural assets and traditional knowledge to grow a thriving agritourism venture.

## Objectives

This module will explore the following:

- Developing a guiding business plan and mission
- Evaluating existing assets
- Creating tourism and cultural committees for your enterprise

## Case Study Summary

The Choctaw Nation has created a diverse group of agricultural businesses. Their orchards and ranches produce goods that are sold at native-owned marketplaces and online. By establishing multiple points of sales, Choctaw Farms distributes goods through tribally-owned storefronts, which in turn provides jobs for tribal members and economically empowers the region. Their guiding mission of achieving food security and community vibrancy keeps Choctaw Farms expanding and innovating.

## Reflection Question

The following question is related to the case study and will help you think more deeply about your agriculture venture.

### Highlights from the case study

- Turned cultural practice of pecan collecting into a commercial enterprise
- Established multiple marketplaces and points of sale
- Connected Choctaw communities to health and wellness initiative through agriculture
- Perpetuated culture and resilience within the community

Q: Keeping the Choctaw Farm in mind, what are some of your enterprise’s guiding values?

Reflection: \_\_\_\_\_

## Digging Deeper

### Initial steps

Indigenous agritourism is a unique subset within tourism because Native culture, history, knowledge and understandings of the world are infused throughout every aspect. A valuable activity for every agritourism venture is creating a guiding mission statement. Your mission statement should highlight your personal and cultural values. Think about the present and future when creating your ventures’ mission. What do you want for your business, community and for future generations? How does your venture support that vision? Remember that most agritourism ventures start small with very little funding, few resources and only a couple employees or volunteers. As you grow, your resources and funding options will also grow.

### Identifying your assets

Another initial step in creating an agritourism



business is assessing your personal skills and business experience. Be honest with yourself about the skills you possess and the areas you can bolster with others’ skills. Seek the help of family, friends and community members. A diverse group of people with unique perspectives will strengthen your human resources and can provide sound management or at least a business start-up team.

Make note of your farm or ranch assets including facilities, equipment and the land itself. This will help you determine what activities and experiences you offer to guests. In the case of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, wild pecan trees found throughout their grazing lands create an additional industry. Take note of the plants, animals and other natural features of your

agricultural land. You may find that existing resources will help attract guests and create unique experiences.

There are many options for what your agritourism venture can offer, from farm or ranch lodging to gleaning events and agri-tainment activities such as basket weaving from reeds (Table 1). These options help generate income from a variety of sources in the form of fees, venue rentals and marketplaces (Table 2).

Table 1: Examples of Agritourism Enterprises<sup>1</sup>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harvest Events: Annual events that celebrate the harvest of crops such as apples, corn and pumpkins, with produce sales. Can include food, artist and vendor booths, as well as cultural demonstrations that showcase art and skills. Corn mazes are a popular attraction as well.</li><li>• U-Pick-It: Visitors pick crops such as raspberries, blueberries, peppers, pumpkins and corn and are charged based on container size or weight. Food booths and other businesses/attractions can be set up as well.</li><li>• Ethnobotany Tours: Guests walk with an expert who details how plants were traditionally used, and then enjoy a meal prepared with plants gathered along an educational tour.</li><li>• Cooking Classes/Demonstrations: Guests learn about traditional ingredients and cooking techniques as they prepare a meal or specialty item.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ranch Tours: Guests learn about the inner workings of bison, cattle or sheep ranching, then enjoy a meal or crafting session such as wool weaving afterward.</li><li>• Farm Tours: Groups are shown native farm operations, and any traditional crops and farming principles are showcased. Produce is offered for sale.</li><li>• Product-making Classes: Traditional products and skills such as maple syrup making, rice harvesting, fish smoking, game harvesting and other food-related activities are taught and enjoyed.</li><li>• Farmers Markets: Weekly events that sell produce, baked goods and other food items grown and/or made by native farms and /or individual producers.</li><li>• Fishing and Hunting: Guests pay for access to native lands for seasonal fishing and hunting opportunities with access to Native outfitters.</li><li>• Food Product Sales: Packaged native farm products are sold through native owned outlets such as convenience stores, gift shops, museum stores and visitor centers.</li></ul>
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1. <https://rvs.umn.edu/Uploads/EducationalMaterials/902cc28b-7174-43a4-951b-93ecbd756971.pdf>

Table 2: Sources of revenue<sup>2</sup>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admission fee</li><li>• Craft and souvenir sale</li><li>• Class / skill-building fee</li><li>• Facility rental</li><li>• Farm lodging</li><li>• Food service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sales of fresh farm product</li><li>• Sales of processed (value-added) farm product</li><li>• Show fee</li><li>• Tasting fee</li><li>• Tour fee</li></ul>
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Your community is one of your greatest assets. Community spaces can act both as a place to host a farmers market and support producers, catchers, artisans and community members. Choctaw Farms created brick-and-mortar marketplaces in their community as well as an online shop to provide local healthy foods. Farmers markets, mobile markets, co-operatives and monthly food box subscriptions are several ways to introduce your products into your community and to the online market as well. Figure 1 is designed to get you thinking about the steps for starting a farmers market to compliment your agritourism enterprise.

2. <https://rvs.umn.edu/Uploads/EducationalMaterials/902cc28b-7174-43a4-951b-93ecbd756971.pdf>  
3. <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/agriculture/starting-a-farmers-market/>





Figure 1: Farmers market guide

## Guide: Starting a Farmers' Market to Complement Agritourism

### Networks, partners and allies

Visit with local individuals, families, tribal departments and programs, producers, tour guides and others to assure community participation and buy-in. Support and encouragement from local families will help spur new ideas and provide opportunities to fully express local culture and heritage, making the market particularly unique to your community. Support from businesses and organizations from both in and outside your community can provide financial and marketing opportunities to bolster the market. Plan with partners so that special events can be hosted together or become a part of a weekend tour route or other events.

### Analyze your local agritourism economy

Talk with local agriculture and tourism related enterprises. Talk with local networks, partners, allies, vendors and entertainers to get a good idea of what visitors want and what the local economy can provide. The following are a few questions that will help you organize a farmers market that will pair local supply with visitor demand:

- What will make it worth it for local farmers, ranchers, fishers and other vendors to participate? (e.g. price, location, shared values, overall convenience)
- What is grown/available locally?
- Is there anything that will need to be purchased from outside of your community or region?
- What do visitors usually do when they are in the area?

### Connect with vendors and entertainers

Examples of vendors and entertainers include farmers, ranchers, fishers, gardeners, buffalo care-takers, tour guides, chefs, storytellers, weavers, carvers, painters, ethnobotanists (cultural knowledge holders of plants), dancers and even DJs. Ensure that there is a diversity of produce and entertainment. Though vendors who sell goods will need to pay for a space and/or contribute a percentage of their income, entertainers such as dancers and DJs may get paid to attend the market. Develop a schedule and fees. Contact entities such as your food sovereignty initiative, agricultural program, fish and wildlife division, TIPO, visitor center, chamber of commerce or another similar entity to find a list of vendors and entertainers.

### Hire the right leaders

A market can become complicated with many moving parts. Consider hiring a full-time (or depending on size part-time staff or an intern or volunteer) marketing manager who has retail experience, experience working with teams and is respected by community members. Also look for interns and volunteers from the tribes' agricultural program, food sovereignty initiative, tourism committee and other local supportive initiatives and organizations.

### Seasonal change

Think about the different seasons and what unique opportunities each season offers. Will the market be open during all seasons? Are some seasons not feasible to host visitors in your area? Create a plan focused on seasonal events and activities. Examples include: changes in produce, changes in other products, changes in entertainment types and even changes in venue (e.g. outdoor vs. indoor).

### Location, location, location

Think of the following when searching for a location:

- Proximity to visitors and formal and informal tour routes
- Parking availability
- Protection from the elements

- Seating
- Assure proper permissions are granted from heirs if the event is held on trust land

### It's all in a name

Assure the market has adequate signage and a name that honors your community and is appealing to visitors. Develop logos, tag lines and branding that speaks to agritourism and the unique opportunities in your community.

### Cast your net

The market needs to be advertised. Public radio and local newspaper ads are more cost-effective than billboards. Talk with your state tourism agency and tribal programs related to tourism for marketing opportunities. Use social media channels such as Facebook and Instagram. Advertise the market in conjunction with larger community events such as annual pow-wows and rodeos. Utilize NativeAmerica.travel to advertise your market and/or agritourism programming.

### Insurance and other safeguards

Shop for an insurance specialist who is best suited for your agritourism enterprise and farmers market. Ask your provider to assist you in ensuring you have proper signage, safeguards and prevention measures to ensure the safety of visitors. Also ensure you have the appropriate releases and/or liability waivers for vendors and entertainers.

### Check for relevant Tribal, Federal or State laws

Check with the appropriate governing bodies to include tribal, state and federal offices for any protocols or permits. Make sure federal, state and tribal tax codes and retail laws are understood. Check with your attorney to ensure you are in compliance. Many times your local Native Community Development Financial Institution may offer courses or training on codes and laws if needed. Another excellent resource is the Intertribal Agriculture Council.

### Develop bylaws and market rules

- Vendors and entertainers code of conduct (a few things to consider):

- Share protocols for good customer service.
- Share ideas for posted visitor protocols.
- Create expectations on representing the market and community.
- Outline what is culturally appropriate to market and what is not.
- Establish clear agreements related to marketing the vendor or entertainer goods and services.
- Establish a clear cost structure for vendors and entertainers. How much will it cost them to use their space? Are there discounts if they volunteer or bring in customers (e.g. making the market a part of their usual tour guide)?
- Make sure your market is in compliance with federal, state and tribal tax codes.
- Define dates, times and seasonal differences.
- If the market is part of an extended family, clan, village or other collective enterprise establish clear expectations for all involved.
- Local vs. visitor: Will there be different prices for local families, families in need, elders or other special groups? Will EBT be accepted? If so, are you able to partner with Double Up Food Bucks programs? Doing this can create a more inclusive and authentic community environment.
- Pricing for goods/avoid price gouging.
- Prioritize Native vendors and Native-made and Native-grown goods, products, arts and crafts.

### Cultural and tourism committees

Seek individuals and groups with a deep understanding of your customs, traditions and history that are willing to help you make tourism-related decisions that affect the whole community. Contact knowledgeable and willing individuals who can help develop tour scripts, informative signage for history displays, planning and more. Reach out to the school



district, Head Start, Public Safety department, Elders, Cultural Departments and other groups.

Consulting with tribal Elders may also help meld historically significant agricultural practices with new technologies. our venture may be able to employ the same techniques that your ancestors used on the land. For example, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma used their knowledge of the hickory nut to adapt to and cultivate the pecan, a similar nut.

Business planning

A business plan will convey your ideas and vision of sustainability to potential partners and funders. It will also provide you with an initial guiding document to align your actions with your mission.

There are currently over 60 Native Community Development Financial Institutions (Native CDFIs) and many non-native CDFIs. Many Native CDFIs assist with business planning and other business-related technical assistance. For example, Native American Community Development Corporation - Financial Services (NACDC) works with Native Americans throughout Montana. Among other services, they provide business plan technical assistance and The Business of Indian Agriculture & Business Planning Development training workshop. NACDC also provides agriculture lending. Reach out to see if your tribe and/or area has a Native CDFI or if there is a CDFI in your area. The Intertribal Agriculture Council provides resources and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers across the nation. For more information, contact your IAC regional technical assistance specialist at [www.indianag.org/](http://www.indianag.org/) technical assistance.

Another opportunity to consider is Agplan, a business planning service created by the University of Minnesota, Center for Farm Financial Management: <https://agplan.umn.edu/>. It is not specific to agritourism. However, it is a free service that guides users through the development of an agriculture business plan with specifics related to value-add,

commodity, organic transition, personal and small business planning.

Despite the available resources for native agriculturalists there are few resources available specific to native agritourism enterprises. As a leader in the native agritourism field, AIANTA maintains an Agritourism Resource page at [www.aianta.org](http://www.aianta.org) and has developed a “Creating An Agritourism Business Plan” resource: <https://www.aianta.org/creating-an-agritourism-business-plan/>.

4. <http://www.nacdcfinancialservices.com/index.html>  
5. <https://agplan.umn.edu/>

Activity One: Mission and Vision Statement Assessment

MISSION EXAMPLE:

With an indigenous entrepreneurial spirit we embrace sustainable practices, food sovereignty and generosity to provide safe and healthy opportunities for our children, communities and guests.

Instructions: Using AIANTA’s checklist, write your mission and/or vision statement(s) and assess it below.

Your mission statement:

Your Mission Statement			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Does your mission reflect your values and goals?			
Does your mission promote relationship building between partners?			
Does your mission promote tribal health and wellbeing?			
Does your mission support the local economy in unique ways?			
Does your mission address the importance of food and or food sovereignty?			
Does your mission address the importance of guests or hospitality?			
Does your mission address the importance of agritourism?			



Activity Two: Reflecting on Myself

Personal Assessment:

The following questions are designed to assist you in assessing your business experience and personal skills.

Business and Personal Skills			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
I have managed a business before.			
I have a business plan for my current enterprise.			
I consistently maintain production and finance records.			
I like sharing my culture and family with others.			
I like food and sharing it with others.			
Other experiences and qualities that I possess:			

Valuable Skills			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Advertising/public relations.			
Business planning.			
Managing a team.			
Social media marketing.			
Sharing knowledge with others.			
Speaking in crowds.			
Other skills I have that will come in handy:			

Activity Three: Native Agritourism Assessment

The following questions are designed to assist you in assessing your enterprise’s assets.

Enterprise’s Assets			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Your enterprise benefits your tribal community.			
All tribal or native cultural content is appropriate and follows local protocols.			
Cultural heritage displays are accessible to view (e.g. hand plows, fishing nets, baskets).			
Plants, art and other attractive designs are culturally appropriate and appealing.			
There is signage or other materials to instruct people on culturally specific protocols or codes of conduct.			
Partners and staff are organized and work together well.			
Activities are designed in a sustainable way (e.g. traditional plants will not be harvested in a disrespectful way, proper waste management is in place).			
It is easy to find the entrance.			
Road signs are clear and visible.			
Road signs are inviting and reflective of culture and heritage.			
Guests can easily and safely enter/exit the premises.			
There are clearly marked directional signs for traffic flow.			
Parking is accessible, clearly marked and easy to utilize.			
Hazards are mitigated (e.g. electrical cords are taped, farm chemicals are locked up, animals are properly handled, manure is properly maintained).			
Fields and grassy areas are mowed.			
Comfortable seating and protection from the elements are available.			
Designated children’s area and activities are clearly marked and maintained.			
Restroom facilities are available and can accommodate visitor demand.			
Soap, water and/or hand sanitizer is available.			
Designated public access areas are marked and safely maintained (e.g. fields, pens and animal holding areas).			
Locally sold food and beverages are available.			
Locally provided entertainment is available, if appropriate.			
Locally owned sleeping accommodations are available.			
Signs, activities and staff encourage visitors to visit other tribal events or activities (e.g. family food stand, local smoked salmon, horse races, hand games and more).			
What improvements can you make? Be specific.			
Indicate your priorities.			



Activity Four: Business Plan Checklist

Instructions: As you work to develop your agritourism business plan, this list from AIANTA’s “Creating an Agritourism Business Plan” resource is designed to assist you in outlining what you need or what you have completed for your business plan. Depending on your specific enterprise, you may need to include more or less than what is on this checklist.

Business Plan Checklist			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
ALWAYS START WITH THE STORY			
Define who you are, what is your story?			
What is your core purpose/mission?			
Who do you want to serve?			
What do you hope to accomplish?			
Identify clear understanding of goals and how to achieve them.			
CAPTURE THE OVERVIEW OF YOUR BUSINESS AND BUSINESS NEEDS			
Brief description of products/services.			
Description of your operation (size, activities, facilities, acreage, etc.).			
Match current and needed assets - will you need to borrow money?			
Determine time and labor needs.			
Identify any new skills you will need to learn.			
Research safety, legal and accessibility concerns (dangers, sanitation needs, local regulations, permit or license needs, insurance, etc.).			
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES			
Define attainable goals (broad accomplishments you hope to achieve).			
Define attainable objectives (measurable steps you take to achieve your goals).			
CONDUCT A MARKET ANALYSIS			
Research what other similar businesses are doing well and why.			
Determine if there are industry trends your business can respond to.			
Get to know your competition.			
Identify any potential partners (your competition could be potential partners).			
BUILD OUT AN OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN			
Determine the legal structure of the enterprise.			
Will you need additional insurance?			
Who do you plan to hire and for which positions?			
Identify skills and responsibilities required for those involved.			
Determine how to find and attract the right personnel.			

6. <https://www.ainta.org/creating-an-agritourism-business-plan/>

Activity Four: Business Plan Checklist Con’t.

Instructions: As you work to develop your agritourism business plan, this list from AIANTA’s “Creating an Agritourism Business Plan” resource is designed to assist you in outlining what you need or what you have completed for your business plan. Depending on your specific enterprise, you may need to include more or less than what is on this checklist.

Business Plan Checklist			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
IDENTIFY YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY			
Determine who your desired customer will be.			
Identify this customer’s general needs and interests.			
Determine how you will reach this customer (online, print, media, etc.).			
Is there a local Destination Marketing Organization or Chamber of Commerce who can help with marketing efforts?			
DEVELOP YOUR FINANCIAL STRATEGY			
Identify financing needs.			
Develop financial statements (profit-loss statement, balance sheet and cash-flow projection).			
Understand what your costs will be, and have a projection for where your break-even point is.			
Identify how you plan to finance the operation.			
Research potential funding opportunities (loans, grants, assets).			
CREATE AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY			
Create a one-page summary of your venture.			
Include the business description.			
Include your mission statement.			
Include the market and its potential.			
Include an overview of your management team.			
Include your financial analysis.			



## // Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Case Study

### // Module 2 – Case Study Worksheets



## Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Case Study

The story of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is one of its journeying back to its land. Located in the rolling hills of California's Capay Valley, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation was almost extinguished through colonization and forced removal. But through its strength and tenacity, the Tribe not only regained its land, heritage and name, but has placed the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation in firm control of its future. Gaming has made the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation wealthy, but agriculture has made it rich.

### Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is in northern California's Yolo County, which borders Sacramento to the east. Yolo comes from the Patwin word Yo-loy, "Place abounding in rushes," a reminder of the wetlands that used to dot this area. Reeds were woven into baskets to gather the abundant fruit, vegetables and nuts that grew naturally throughout the Capay Valley. Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation are part of the larger Wintun People that includes six other federally recognized tribes in northern California. The Patwin are the southern band of Wintun, and Patwin is also the traditional language of Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. Wintun have lived in the fertile, rolling hills of the Capay Valley since 500 A.D. In addition to foraging and hunting, fishing for king salmon completed their traditional diet.

### A Painful Past

The Native People of northern California suffered greatly as Spain, Mexico and later the United States expanded into California with colonization, trapping, ranching and gold mining. New diseases afflicted many of California's Native American population,

including the Wintun. Some Native Americans were enslaved by settlers, including Americans. By the time California became a state in 1850, California's Native population had been reduced to approximately 150,000 people, about half of what it had been before contact, and the population would continue to decline. Native villages that numbered in the thousands were now fortunate to number above 100.

In 1907 ancestors of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation were forcibly moved from their village to a reservation in Rumsey, California. Named the Rumsey Indian Rancheria of Wintun Indians of California by the government, this new land was not suited for foraging, agriculture or hunting. The Wintun people faced malnutrition and were solely dependent upon federal government supplies that were much different from their traditional diet.

### A Smart Gamble

In 1940, just 33 years after they had been forced from their traditional land, Tribal leadership successfully petitioned the federal government to relocate to a small piece of land within the Tribe's traditional territory. This 185 acres near Brooks in the Capay Valley enjoyed a Mediterranean-like climate, with summer temperatures rarely breaking into the 90s with cool nights. Cache Creek flows 87-miles from Clear Lake to the west through Yolo County before entering the Sacramento River, providing good irrigation despite having been contaminated by mining in the past. With this fertile land and water source, the Tribe was finally able to grow crops and feed itself. It was still dependent upon the federal government for additional food and services, a vast difference from the self-sufficiency Elders of the Tribe could remember.



## SECTION 2

But this dependency began to change on July 25, 1985, only 45 years after their move to their new land, when the doors to Cache Creek Indian Bingo & Casino opened. The passing that year of the California Lottery and the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act allowed Tribal Nations to enter into gaming operations, and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation took full advantage. Located on the Tribe’s land in Brooks about an hour’s drive west of Sacramento, the bingo hall almost immediately began to bring in revenue at levels the Tribe had never dreamed of. In the 1990s the bingo hall added table card games, expanded to 1,200 seats and added three restaurants including a Las Vegas-style buffet. When the California State Gaming Compact was signed in 1999, slot machines and table games were added, making Cache Creek the largest and most successful casino in northern California.

Thanks to this revenue, in 2004 the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation added a \$200 million resort and renamed the complex the Cache Creek Casino Resort. This new resort included 200 guest rooms, 10 restaurants, the 700-seat Club 88, a 20,000-square-foot event center, a spa, an outdoor pool, and an 18-hole championship golf course. The casino now totaled 2,700 slot machines, 120 table games, 14-table poker room and a convenience store.

Gaming revenue has made the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation very wealthy. A 2007 court case in which the Tribe, then still called the Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians, was suing a former lawyer for embezzlement revealed that the Tribe then was worth almost \$1 billion, and that the casino then was making more than \$300 million a year. Ongoing as of 2020, 459 additional guest rooms are being added as is an event center, a new restaurant, meeting spaces and a second resort-style pool.

## Back to the Land

So why would a wealthy Tribe of fewer than 100 members want to venture into farming, a notoriously capricious industry?

“For centuries this land has sustained and supported the forbearers of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation,” says Ben Deci, the public information officer for the Tribe. “One of the Tribe’s concerns all along has been to continue a connection to this land and protect this land, and one of the best ways to do that in practice is through agriculture. The Tribe has taken care of the land, and the land is taking care of the Tribe.”

Thanks to gaming revenue, the Tribe has been able to purchase thousands of acres of its traditional range. More than 22,000 acres of its Capay Valley land has been devoted to agriculture and conservation. Of that, 3,000 acres is being farmed, and more than 1,200 acres are in permanent conservation easements. Crops being grown, harvested and sold by the Tribe include alfalfa, almonds, oat hay, ryegrass, safflower, garbanzo beans, sunflowers, sorghum, walnuts and wheat. Asparagus, tomatoes and squash are planted on 250 acres dedicated to organic growing, and 800 head of cattle are raised on 10,000 acres of rangeland. Wine vineyards originally placed around the golf course for aesthetics are producing several varietals of wine. But it’s olives that drive Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation’s agritourism. More than 3,000 olive trees are planted on 550 acres, and the Tribe takes great pride in making some the finest extra virgin olive oil in the world.

## On to Olives

The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is at the same latitude as southern Italy and Greece, and shares a similar climate. This makes the Capay Valley perfect for growing a variety of crops, but the Tribe had 82 acres that were classified as Class 3, “Severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require special conservation practices, or both,” by the USDA. However, after working with an agricultural team from the University of California, it was determined that this dry acreage would be perfect for olive trees. In 2008, Arbequina olive trees were planted on this initial 82 acres, and the Tribe harvested its first crop in 2011.



Tribal Chairman Marshall McKay at the time cited recent reports about the poor quality of olive oil—if it was even olive oil—being sold in the U.S. and saw a market for a product for which the Tribe was ideally suited to grow. The olive oil made from that first 2011 crop sold out. Wanting to completely control the quality of their in-demand olive oil, the Tribe invested in a state-of-the-art olive mill that was imported from Italy and operational for the 2012 season.

The Tribe could now produce extra virgin olive oil within hours of picking the olives, producing some of the nation’s freshest, awarding-winning estate olive oil that earned gold medals at the 2020 Good Food Foundation Awards competition for its Picual Extra Virgin Olive Oil and 2020 California Olive Oil Council Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition for its Estate Grown Taggiasca, among other honors. Picual, Frantoio, Taggiasca and Coratina olive trees produce a variety of flavor profiles for which the Tribe is known. The Tribe strives for an overall zero-waste stream, and wastewater is used for irrigation and olive pulp helps feed the Tribe’s cattle herd.

This success and return to the land inspired the Tribe to do something else. When the Tribe was interned in 1907 away from its traditional lands, the federal government named the Tribe the Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians. As the Tribe reclaimed its heritage and identity through agriculture, in 2009 it successfully petitioned to change its name to the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. Yocha Dehe in the Tribe’s traditional Patwin language means ‘Home by the Spring Water,’ which is what its ancestral village in the Capay Valley was called. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation has returned home, and literally planted roots to reclaim its rich heritage.

## The Tasting Room

In 2012, the Tribe fully entered into agritourism with the opening of its Séka Hills Tasting Room. Séka is the Patwin word for “blue,” a nod to the rolling hills of their land that can appear blue in the distance, depending on the humidity.

The 14,000-square-foot facility showcases its Alfa Laval olive oil mill imported from Florence, and guests



can watch through large observation windows the process of pressing perfectly ripened olives to extract certified extra virgin olive oil, renowned for its flavor and health benefits such as being rich in antioxidants. Guided tours of the mill and olive-oil making process are offered as well.

“Our guides go through the entire process from growing olives to making our award-winning extra virgin olive oils,” says Christopher Gates, marketing manager for Yocha Dehe Farm and Ranch. “But they also tell the story of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, the Tribe’s connection to the land and all they have gone through to be here. We are able to share the Tribe’s story through what we’ve grown on this land.”

The tasting room itself is a tasteful space of reclaimed barn wood, accent lighting and an olive-tree shaded patio with lavender plants that looks out to olive groves and the rolling hills of the Capay Valley. Meeting space is available for private events. Light fare is served including cheese and charcuterie boards, salads and sandwiches using ingredients farmed by the Tribe such as Séka Hill heirloom tomatoes and, of course, Séka Hills olive oil.

“During our olive oil tastings we help guests appreciate our different olive oils the way one would taste wine,” Gates says. “When you slurp olive oil you can taste pepper and spices, depending on the type of olive. Fresh, extra virgin olive oil can be as complex as any wine. It’s our land in those flavors, too.”

The Tribe has another tasting room in Clarksburg, minutes from downtown Sacramento, called the Tasting Room at the Old Sugar Mill. At both tasting rooms, the Yocha Dehe Golf Club and two gift shops at the Tribe’s resort, other Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation agricultural products are sold as well.

Wildflower honey is produced by bees that pollinate the Tribe’s thousands of acres of crops. In addition to olive trees, almond and walnut trees produce nuts that are used to make Cinnamon Glazed Almonds,

Chocolate Toffee Almonds, Garlic and Herb Almonds as well as all-natural almonds and walnuts. Séka Hills Beef Jerky is made from the Tribes cattle herd, Séka Hills Hummus is made from its garbanzo bean crop, and its Séka Hills Pickled Asparagus is a local favorite. Séka Hills Balsamic Vinegar pairs perfectly with its extra virgin olive oil and is made from grapes that are also used to make Séka Hills Wine.

While Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation considers its olive oil to be its signature product, its grapes make nine varietals worthy of northern California. Grown and harvested at Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation and sent to wine-makers off-site, Viognier, Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah are among the varietals that were originally planted as landscaping for the Yocha Dehe Golf Club. It was soon realized, however, that the vineyard was producing exceptional wine grapes, and the Tribe created its Séka Hills wine label. Its Tuluk’a, Viognier, Syrah, Tribal Reserve are some of the Séka Hills wines served in the Tribe’s casino restaurants and tasting rooms, and offered online.

## Sharing Their Wealth

Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation’s hard work and entrepreneur energy have made its enterprises very successful, and the Tribe has shared that wealth with its neighbors in Yolo County. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Fire Department, established in 2004, serves the entire county and is the only Native American fire department accredited with the Commission of Fire Accreditation International.

Its mill is available to other olive growers in the Capay Valley, saving other operations many hours-long trips to the next closest olive mill, thereby reducing environmental impact and helping to ensure that their olive oil is of a high-quality as well which further raises the profile of the entire Capay Valley.

The Tribe has donated millions of dollars to the Woodland Healthcare Foundation to purchase state-

of-the-art medical equipment for the Family Birth Center and the Nuclear Medicine Suite at Woodland Memorial Hospital. In 2018 the Tribe donated \$2.6 Million to Esparto Unified School District, and that same year donated \$1 million to victims of the Camp Fire in neighboring Butte County. For the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, sharing its success with others is a fundamental part of its heritage.

“For all of Tribe’s successes, it hasn’t forgotten the hardships of its past,” Gates says. “It’s ingrained in the Tribe’s culture to take care of others when you can. That is how California Tribes have survived. And thanks to its land, Yocha Dehe has worked hard to be in a position to help not just its members, but others as well.”

To learn more, visit [www.sekahills.com](http://www.sekahills.com) and [www.yochadehe.org](http://www.yochadehe.org).

## Agritourism Tips from the Yocha Dehe Nation

- Work with local universities and agricultural outreach agencies to learn the best crops for your topography and soil. Don’t force crops that won’t do well just because there seems to be a higher profit margin or there’s a trend.
- Reinvest in your land. Keep an eye toward purchasing land when able. Profits in farming are all about volume.
- Be a good neighbor. How can you use your equipment and resources to generate income and goodwill with neighboring farms and communities?
- Pursue sustainable agriculture. Not only is that a gift for people to come, but it is also a desirable marketing point to attract regional, domestic and international visitors.
- Develop a brand. Keep it authentic to your Tribe’s

heritage. Your brand isn’t just a marketing tool, it’s a way to educate the greater public about your Tribe. It instills pride with Tribal members and promotes quality products.

- Invest in a focal point for visitors for agritourism. Whether it’s a tasting room or just a beautiful area to enjoy your products, consider developing a space that encourages visitors to come to your community and purchase your products. Having your own retail outlet simplifies logistics and increases profit margin as well. It doesn’t have to be fancy or expensive, even a few tents for shade and places to sit at a seasonal pumpkin patch will lengthen the time visitors stay, and thereby purchase more products. It can also create a focus for other Tribal or independent businesses such as food and art vendors.







# Module 2 – Case Study Worksheets

## Module Overview

Module Two highlights important considerations when creating a welcoming space for agritourism visitors. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation case study provides an example of how the tribe reconnected with their land, strengthened cultural self-determination and utilized their agricultural ventures and surroundings to establish a focal point for visitors.

## Objectives

This module will explore the following:

- Identifying and curating focal points within your venture
- Identifying your visitor market

## Case Study Summary

The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation successfully built an agritourism enterprise by physically reclaiming and spiritually reconnecting with their traditional lands. They strategically utilized funding from their casino and resort to invest in various agritourism ventures. They also exchanged knowledge with outside

entities to further their understanding of their fertile surroundings in the Capay Valley. The Tribe's hard work has made them successful and in the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation way, the Tribe shares its success with members and with the larger community.

## Reflection Question

The following question is related to the case study and will help you think more deeply about your own agricultural venture.

Q: Thinking back to the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation case study, can you turn a facility on your property - like the olive oil mill - into a space that attracts guests and provides entertainment value? How so?

Reflection: \_\_\_\_\_

## Digging Deeper

### *Your enterprise's unique focal point*

Focal points create attractions that unify your agricultural assets, indigenous heritage and entertainment offerings. Your agritourism venture will likely have several focal points – a retail center, processing facility and topographic or natural features. Likewise, those focal points may not be on the land at all. They may be specific stories, ways of knowing or being from an indigenous perspective, waterways, sunsets, ethnobotanical tours and other cultural and heritage-based assets that add a unique richness to your community.

Table 1 highlights examples of various culturally rich and well designed focal points created by Native owned agritourism ventures. Each of the agritourism ventures from the AIANTA case studies listed below carefully developed unique focal points that considered their tribe's rich culture and history as well as visitors' needs (Table 1). These enterprises really

## Highlights from the case study

- Appealed to guests' diverse tastes and entertainment needs
- Created spaces for guests to enjoy product processing and final goods
- Reclaimed and reconnected with homelands to share with guests
- Shared prosperity from agriculture lands with tribal and surrounding communities



know their guests. Tracking guest data (age, gender and distance traveling, etc.) will help you identify your main clientele’s requirements and desires in a space. For example, international and out of state guests may require more amenities and resources such as city maps, than compared to locals who are familiar with the area. Drinking fountains and child-friendly areas like play zones or group seating can be useful if you frequently host school groups.

When determining your unique focal point(s) for guests it’s important to remember that it doesn’t need to be permanent, costly or luxurious. Tents for shade and temporary seating – like hay bales at a

seasonal pumpkin patch – provide a comfortable area for visitors which will increase their length of stay and may encourage them to purchase more products. Focal points can also create an opportunity for other tribal or independent businesses such as food and art vendors to sell their goods. Having your own retail outlet as a part of your focal point simplifies logistics and increases profit margin as well.

Case Study	Focal Point	Characteristics
Choctaw Nation	Choctaw Country Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Multiple locations</li><li>Spicy-garlic okra, pickled jalapeños, quail eggs, Choctaw Farms BBQ Sauce, Ghost Chili salsa, maple bourbon pear butter, jams, jellies and more</li><li>Fresh meat</li><li>Arts, crafts, souvenirs and clothing items</li></ul>
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation	Séka HillsTasting Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stylish space of reclaimed barn wood, olive tree shaded patio and lavender plants</li><li>View of Capay Valley</li><li>Located near olive oil mill with observation windows</li><li>Light fare and wine served</li><li>Sells a variety of agriculture products (e.g. honey, nuts and confections)</li></ul>
Icy Strait Point	Alaskan Salmon Cannery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Restored structure from 1912</li><li>Full restaurants, museum and retail shops</li><li>Accessible nature trails</li><li>Located on the beachfront where guests can enjoy views, whale watching and exploring the area</li></ul>
Santa Ana Pueblo	Prairie Star Restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Historic Adobe ranch house</li><li>Incorporates Santa Ana pottery, art and murals throughout the resort and restaurants</li><li>Located near the tribe’s corn mill and has sunset views of the Sandia mountains</li><li>Serves Gruet Winery spirits, blue and yellow corn grown on the property</li><li>Part of a larger business sector that includes casino, Hyatt RegencyTamaya Resort &amp; Spa, garden center &amp; nursery</li></ul>

Case Study	Focal Point	Characteristics
Oneida Nation Big Apple Fest	Apple Orchard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>30-acre apple orchard</li><li>Offers tours of traditional Oneida Longhouse and log homes</li><li>Annual festival with family friendly activities: petting zoo, apple pie eating contest, farmers market and more</li><li>Signs are marked with cultural iconography</li><li>Grounds also include cultural heritage center</li></ul>
Iroquois White Corn Project	Ganondagan State Historic Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Features a recreated Haudenosaunee Longhouse</li><li>Art &amp; Culture Center</li><li>Miles of hiking trails winding through traditional farmland</li><li>Relies on partnerships from nonprofits, the State, Gakwi:yo:h farms and general public</li></ul>

Weaving culture and heritage throughout

Culture, heritage and traditions passed down from generation to generation can be incorporated into your focal points and shared with guests in a variety of ways. Consider consulting with design experts to create a modern space that highlights traditional symbols, stories and events. Visit the American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers for a list of experts in your area.





Activity One: What is your enterprise’s unique focal point?

To help you design a space that is welcoming for guests, first consider the places you have enjoyed visiting. Did you like the decor, the atmosphere created by music or how you interacted with other guests and staff? Were your surroundings relaxing, exciting or inspiring? Now, think about your agritourism destination. What are some of the unique, sharable elements of your culture, art, land, waterways and community? Could you add features like lighting, seating or something entirely unique to enhance the ambiance of your property?

Conversely, consider places you have not enjoyed. What made it unfavorable? The proximity of the tables, the smells of animals or perhaps you needed amenities that were not available. The next activity will help you gather ideas for your agritourism enterprise’s focal point.

The following questions are designed to assist you in beginning to assess your operations.

Enterprise’s Assets	
What do you specialize in?	<div></div> <div></div>
What are the unique, sharable elements of your culture, homeland and community?	<div></div> <div></div>
What makes your agricultural operation different from others in the area?	<div></div> <div></div>
What is your climate and soil type? What countries, territories, or other native nations have climate and soil type similar to yours?	<div></div> <div></div>
Are there any views, natural elements or outdoor spaces you can highlight?	<div></div> <div></div>
Are there any existing structures or facilities (e.g. historic sites, processing plants, animal enclosures) that can draw in guests? Are there any that are off limits?	<div></div> <div></div>
What can you do to create a welcoming and unique space for guests to enjoy your agricultural products?	<div></div> <div></div>
What words and/or phrases in your language and stories most accurately describe the climate, geography and other characteristics that could help make positive agritourism related decisions?	<div></div> <div></div>
Do you have capacity for visitors including parking, bus parking, handicap accessible and/or bathrooms.	<div></div> <div></div>

Activity Two: Agritourism Attraction Assessment

The following questions are designed to assist you in beginning to assess your attraction.

Agritourism Attraction Assessment			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Does your attraction uniquely reflect your culture and heritage?			
Is your culture visibly incorporated in the design and appearance of the space?			
Do you welcome your guests in your own language?			
Do you use your language in your signs and promotional materials?			
Is your entry welcoming?			
Are their other amenities you can offer such as food or accommodations?			
Is it comfortable for guests? (i.e. seating, shade, temperature, light, restrooms)			
Can the space maintain several activities at a time (tour, talks, demonstrations)?			
Can your space support a large gathering of people? (e.g. powwows, farmers markets, festivals, demonstrations and talks)			
Is your attraction inclusive to all guests? (e.g. age, gender, ability, race, etc.)			
Are your activities attractive to locals? (e.g. Elders, youth, large families)			
Can other vendors, businesses and partners share the space?			
Do you have a plan to maintain the space? (e.g. garbage, landscaping, paths)			
Does your attraction/event have well managed parking?			
Are their nearby Native-owned amenities such as food or accommodations you could partner with?			
Will local resources be sustainable if the focal point is opened to the public?			
Do you have any foreseeable concerns/risks/difficulties related to aesthetics? <div></div> <div></div>			
Do you have quality vendor(s)? (internal and external to your community)			
Are your vendors familiar with and respectful of your culture and heritage?			
Do vendors provide well developed materials with goods? (pamphlets, menus, etc.)			
Does your group of vendors offer multiple price scales and quality levels?			
Do you have a way to evaluate the effectiveness of your vendors?			
Do you have any foreseeable concerns/risk/difficulties related to vendors? <div></div> <div></div>			



### Activity Three: Know Your Guest

The following activity provides a space to begin to reflect on your main clientele and identify their needs. Fill in the table below with consideration to your farm, ranch or agricultural venture.

Main Clientele					
Description of visitor (e.g., women’s clubs, 40-50 years old, middle income travelers, outdoor adventure seekers, etc.)	What do you offer them?	How would you promote products to those individuals? Where do they get their information?	Who or what organizations would help you promote your product?	Contact List (individual at organization)	Contact Info (phone/email)

### Activity Three: Know Your Guest Con’t.

The following activity provides a space to begin to reflect on your main clientele and identify their needs. Fill in the table below with consideration to your farm, ranch or agricultural venture.

Visitor Origins				
Distance visitors travel to your enterprise	% of clientele	How would they arrive at your destination? (e.g. cruise ship, en route to Glacier National Park, a packaged tour through your enterprise, part of a Route 66 tour, an excursion during Gathering of Nations)	What type of guest usually visits?	What state/country are they arriving from?
Up to 100 miles				
100 miles +				
Out of State				
International				
Estimated total individual visitors/year: _____		Estimated total groups hosted/year: _____		
Does your region attract international visitors? Identify specific countries or regions.				

**Food For Thought:** Your local state tourism agency can usually provide research on the state’s top domestic and international markets. For a better understanding of current visitors to your state and potential customers, try googling your State and top international visitor markets. Here’s an example of a page from the State of Montana: <https://www.marketmt.com/Portals/129/shared/docs/pdf/brandResearch.pdf>



## // Icy Strait Point Case Study

### // Module 3 – Case Study Worksheets



## Icy Strait Point Case Study

From fresh-caught seafood and traditional Tlingit meals to excitement and adventure exploring the surrounding tropical rainforest and beach, Icy Strait Point has been a tourist destination that honors and celebrates Alaska Native culture while offering unparalleled access to adventure and nature. Located in Alaska's largest Native Tlingit village of Hoonah, Icy Strait Point is Alaska Native owned-and-operated by the Huna Totem Corporation ([www.hunatotem.com](http://www.hunatotem.com)).

Icy Strait Point facilities include a restored 1912 Alaska salmon cannery 35 miles west of Juneau, and opened to the public in 2004. Hoonah is located on Chichagof Island, the fifth largest island in the United States, and is home to the largest brown bear population in the world—approximately three bears per square mile. It encompasses 6.6 square miles of land and 2.1 square miles of water. Chichagof Island is located within the Tongass National Forest, the largest National Forest in the US, and classified as a temperate rainforest with over 100 inches of rain annually.

“Hoonah” became the official spelling in 1901, with establishment of the Hoonah branch of the United States Post Office. However, the Village corporation spells it “Huna.” Xunaa means “protected from the North Wind” in the Tlingit language. At the 2010 census, the population was 7,604, down from 860 at the 2000 census. In the summer, the population increases with the influx of workers to staff the fishing, boating, hiking, hunting and tourism industries found throughout the area.

### Sharing Community and Culture

Icy Strait Point's clientele are cruise ship passengers who visit as shore excursions. Guest may also arrive aboard Icy Strait Point's catamaran that sails from

Juneau, a two-hour journey during which guest may spot whales and other wildlife. During a normal season, Icy Strait Point sees an average of 150,000 visitors from cruise ships.

As a major employer for the town of Hoonah, Icy Strait Point is actively engaged with the community. Representatives meet once a month with the Hoonah economic development group, and actively receive business proposals from shareholders for partnership, as well as suggestions from the community. The overall operation of Icy Strait Point has been developed to incorporate the Tlingit culture and community of the residents of Hoonah. Art and culture are included in all parts of the program at Icy Strait Point, including the Icy Strait Point ZipRider, one of the longest ziplines in North America. All guides and presenters share Tlingit stories and history. As part of training, guides receive two days of cultural training, including Tlingit protocols and introductions, the history of the community, and important aspects for Alaska Natives including the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Prior to incorporating local stories into programming, Icy Strait Point met with local elders and clan leaders to learn what they were willing to share. Even though many of the stories are published and in the public domain, it was out of respect to seek permission. Elders were very supportive of the efforts to share history and culture. They observed the telling of stories and made corrections to improve accuracy. This protocol has helped gain the support of the local community. Icy Strait Point also works closely with the Hoonah Heritage Foundation to help with cultural perpetuation. The Huna Totem Corporation, who is the sole owner, funded the initial build-out of Icy Strait Point. Prior to breaking ground, the corporation got presale commitments from numerous cruise ships for their first few seasons.



## A Memorial Experience

Icy Strait Point offers more than 20 experiential adventure tours, accessible nature trails, a museum, nature trails, restaurants, 100-percent Alaskan-owned retail shops, and beachfront for combing and exploring. Eagles soar overhead and whales are regularly seen from the shore.

Icy Strait Point offers three major categories of activities for guests: Adventure, nature viewing and cuisine. Adventures include ATV excursions into the Tongass National Forest, the almost-mile long ZipRider zipline system, Tree Top Adventure Park and Ropes Course, Timber Tiger Adventure Course and Chichagof Island Jeep Expedition tours. Nature viewing involves whale watching aboard a luxury boat, guided wilderness hikes, Icy Strait kayaking, the Coastal Exploration by Zodiac tour, whale and seal cruises, and the Spasski River Valley Wildlife and Bear Search. For its culinary offerings, In Alaska's Wildest Kitchen treats visitors to stories from former commercial fisher, Dodie Lunda, and a demonstration of how to create iconic dishes such as salmon burgers and grilled local fish out of Alaskan staples. The second program is more in depth and experiential. The Tlingit Kitchen: A Taste of Southeast Alaska shows visitors how to fillet a salmon, how to harvest various traditional foods such as berries and sea asparagus, and the opportunity to sample the unique foods harvested by locals. The tour travels outside the grounds of Icy Strait Point to visit surrounding beaches and forests, as well as the personal smoker of the guide, Johanna Dybdahl. In addition to connecting to the visitor's senses, these programs help connect the visitor to the local culture and people in a way that only food can do. The goal of these two programs is to provide interesting culinary options for guests. In the case of The Tlingit Kitchen, the goal is to teach guests about the subsistence lifestyle of the local Tlingit people. In Alaska's Wildest Kitchen has been available since the beginning of the tourism program at Icy Strait Point in 2004 and one of the most popular tourist selections. The Tlingit Kitchen:

A Taste of Southeast Alaska was added in response to a request from the cruise ships and was first available in 2016. It is primarily booked by higher-end cruises.

## A Taste of Local Flavor

Icy Strait Point culinary tourism also features three restaurants serving fresh seafood: The Duck Point Smokehouse, the Cookhouse and the Crab Station. Duck Point Smokehouse Restaurant is Icy Strait Point's signature restaurant that overlooks the beaches of Icy Strait. The Smokehouse smokes salmon on site at the restaurant and uses local ingredients in house-made specialties such as brick-oven pizzas, salmon dip, seafood stew and grilled halibut teriyaki sandwiches. Their signature dish, the Icy Strait Point Surf and Turf, features house-made crab tater-tots and Alaskan Blue Sliders. The Cookhouse Restaurant Sliders are a local favorite, featuring Alaska sockeye salmon cakes with flavorful herbs, topped with Alaska house tartar sauce, bacon, lettuce and tomatoes on brioche buns. For a non-seafood Alaska specialty, the Alaska Blue Burgers made with reindeer meat and mixed with caramelized onions, blue cheese and merlot steak sauce before grilling are enjoyed. Other favorites include salmon chowder, reindeer chili and fries. The Crab Station Restaurant serves Alaska's best king, snow and Dungeness crab. When in season, the fresh Dungeness crab is caught in local waters and kept alive until cooked. Seating is available on the dock or guests can stroll around the corner to join friends at the open seating Cookhouse Restaurant. Visitors can buy Icy Strait Point cans of salmon from the gift shop, along with other souvenirs.

## Meeting the Needs of Clients

The two culinary programs were designed entirely by the staff members. Some of the key challenges to these two programs include the prep work to make happen. Cruise lines make allocations for the programs they want offered, but if it doesn't sell then the program needs to

be cancelled. Because of the quantity of fresh local food required for each program, this can be a big loss. The Tlingit Kitchen: A Taste of Southeast Alaska especially cannot be done every day based upon the amount of prep work required. Additionally, it is hard to predict what food will be available for foraging. For example, an unseasonably cool spring can result in reduced berry harvests. Another variable is the high and low tide for foraging on the beach.

Since the primary audience is cruise passengers most of the marketing is done directly with cruise lines. The process begins with sending companies tour proposals and images. It is important to make sure the programs are accurately presented. Icy Strait Point does a small amount of marketing on their own the website at [icystraitpoint.com](http://icystraitpoint.com). Sales people make sales calls during the off-season to all the cruise lines both minor and major. A key strategy is to focus on addressing the needs presented by the companies. For example, it was pointed out that it would be more attractive if they built a dock for cruise ships to dock, versus having to tender passengers back and forth via boats. Now, after building a dock, Icy Strait Point has seen a 20-percent increase in visitation.

## Moving Forward While Honoring the Past

Icy Strait Point fills an average of 120 positions on site over the summer. Approximately 85-percent of the staff are year-round residents of Hoonah. The cooking classes In Alaska's Wildest Kitchen and The Tlingit Kitchen: A Taste of Southeast Alaska has one lead instructor as well as employing support staff. Alaska's Wildest Kitchen has one assistant, and staff that cuts and prepares the firewood for cooking the fish. The Tlingit Kitchen: A Taste of Southeast Alaska employs a driver to bring in the fresh fish for the program.

## Sharing Icy Strait Point's Success

In offering advice to other indigenous communities that might want to embark on a project similar to Ice Strait Point, Jennifer Black, Director of Excursions suggests, "be flexible. "Watch the product and tweak it if it is not working," she says. "Get feedback directly from guests to make sure you are meeting their needs."

Additionally, Black suggests watching costs—specifically food costs—that can be quite volatile in Alaska.

Two key areas that has helped Icy Strait Point be successful is their ability to get their key market, cruise lines, onboard early in their planning and development. As a result, when they were operational, they had customers lined up and ready to go for that season. The tourism experience authentically taps into local history and culture to provide an immersive experience for the visitor. Through planning and authenticity, Icy Strait satisfies tourism demand to this remote, beautiful and culturally rich part of the United States while providing jobs to Alaska Natives proud to share their skills and culture. For more information, visit [www.icystraitpoint.com](http://www.icystraitpoint.com).





Below are valuable agritourism marketing tips that may be useful within your own agritourism venture.

### Tips for Marketing Your Tribal Agritourism Enterprise<sup>2,3</sup>

- Share your mission statement with guests. Guests may be more likely to support your venture if they know their purchases will benefit the community and future generations.
- Keep guests and visitors satisfied with excellent customer service. Returning guests will help you advertise by word of mouth.
- Develop a contact list of customers and partners that you contact regularly with updates, events and opportunities.
- Remember that agritourism is a part of the hospitality industry. Get feedback from visitors about what they enjoyed and what improvements could be made.
- Offer quality experiences and services that guests are willing to pay adequate money for.
- Focus on the details (i.e. how your employees answer the phone, respond to emails, on-site cleanliness, on-site greeters, signage, etc.).
- Identify and join groups and organizations that will help market your organization to a broader visitor market.
- Identify and participate at event-based marketing opportunities.
- Utilize social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn to broadcast upcoming events and opportunities or potentials for partnering, volunteering and sponsorships. Each platform has a different type of user that you can cost effectively tailor marketing strategies to.
- Install directional signs that help visitors find your business. Call your local authorities about getting signs placed on county and state roadways.
- Hire a graphic designer to help you create a cohesive brand identity, quality distribution materials and a user friendly website.

2. <https://farmsreach.com/welcome/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AgriTourismWorkbook.pdf>  
3. [https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/ieed/pdf/Marketing\\_Strategies\\_for\\_Native\\_American\\_Artists\\_and\\_Artisans\\_0.pdf](https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/ieed/pdf/Marketing_Strategies_for_Native_American_Artists_and_Artisans_0.pdf)

# Module 3 – Case Study Worksheets

## Module Overview

Module Three covers how to appeal to agritourism guests through experiences and products. The Icy Strait Point case study demonstrates how attracting guests through a strategic marketing plan is crucial to a successful agritourism venture. The activities below are designed to help you identify ways to make the most out of your raw agricultural goods and start a marketing plan.

## Objectives

This module will explore the following:

- Expanding the value of your agricultural products
- Identifying characteristics of your main clientele
- Marketing and promoting your venture effectively

## Case Study Summary

The Icy Strait Point agritourism venture created a culturally rich enterprise that aligns closely with Tlingit heritage and attracts visitors from around the world via cruise lines. They purposefully infused culturally significant art and imagery throughout their facilities, activities and marketing efforts. Icy Strait Point authentically shares the gift of local history and culture to create immersive experiences that meet the needs of adventurers, nature lovers, foodies and many other types of guests. The Tlingit have achieved success by identifying their audience, creating a tailored marketing strategy and considering the needs of their niche audience in the development of projects.

## Reflection Question

The following question is related to the case study and will help you think more deeply about your own agriculture venture.

### Highlights from the case study

- Use of cultural art and imagery in marketing to promote pride, visibility and education
- Employed storytellers and cultural tour guides
- Honored tradition of bringing people together through communal food gatherings
- Diversified activities and services to meet the needs of guests
- Identified main clientele target marketing and development strategies
- Utilized surrounding biodiversity, local history and Tlingit culture to attract guests

Q: Considering the Icy Strait Point model, how can you incorporate your heritage and culture into the products, goods, services and experiences you offer?

Reflection: \_\_\_\_\_

## Digging Deeper

### Attracting guests and sharing your gifts

Visitors are often attracted by the overall experience and atmosphere that a farm, ranch or agricultural destination has to offer. In the competitive experience-based economy, it's important to make sure your business provides clients with enriching experiences. As you transition your agriculture products to an agritourism product by intertwining agricultural products with experiences, you begin to customize your product for your guests. By differentiating your venture from others in the market you are able to charge premium prices.

### Diversifying ventures

Creating multiple enterprises increases financial



adaptability in the face of uncertain economic and environmental changes. The Tlingit have done this well with their culinary offerings. Enterprise diversification helps offset limitations from available farm land in Alaska. Multiple ventures also provide additional points of sale for your products and opportunities to utilize raw

products to their fullest potential. The larger and more diverse your enterprise is, the bigger the workforce it will need. Each enterprise needs to have a sufficient amount of qualified employees to function properly. This creates a robust localized job market (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Benefits of Establishing Multiple Agritourism Ventures

1. Additional point of sales for goods	4. Increased opportunities to share culture
2. Financial security within agricultural enterprises	5. New revenue sources
3. Greater local job opportunities	

Goods, services and experiences

Raw agricultural products themselves generate income but there are many possible goods, services and experiences those products can be turned into through value-added thinking. Successful agritourism enterprises are forward-thinking and innovative. They creatively pair goods, develop useful services and create memorable experiences.

The Tlingit Kitchen: A Taste of Southeast Alaska, Alaska’s Wildest Kitchen and the personal smoker of guide Johanna Dybdhal are excellent examples. Though these are agritourism experiences, the thread of hospitality and feeding guests is of great importance to the

Tlingit. This is a modern experience, developed through centuries of experience. Additionally, the adventure and nature-related tour options provide unique experiences for guests at Icy Strait Point and highlight the importance Native foods and traditional food gathering.

Table 1 lists examples of how products and services were used to support other ventures. What types of experiences could your agritourism program offer? Consider other types of agritourism ventures. Does your agritourism venture overlap with adventure tourism or culinary tourism? Or perhaps both, similar to Icy Strait Point. The tourism industry is rapidly growing and innovation is constantly occurring, creating an abundance of possibilities.

Table 1: Ventures and value-added thinking

Raw product/service	>>>>	Added-value
Alaskan wilderness	>>>>	Used as grounds for ATVing and ziplining
Locally caught Dungeness Crab	>>>>	Served at upscale cuisine dining experience at the Crab Station Restaurant
Salmon graphic	>>>>	Placed on souvenirs in gift shop
Harvesting seashore wild edibles	>>>>	Paired with fine dining meals
Smoke house	>>>>	Used as demonstration prop





Marketing for your niche

The types of goods, services and experiences you offer will affect the types of individuals you attract. Agritourism ventures often offer multiple goods and services that appeal to multiple types of guests (Table 2). Visitors rarely fit into a single category and have diverse interests and expectations from their vacation when visiting farms, ranches and other agricultural destinations. Groups traveling together will often have varying personalities and would like to have different experiences while visiting your business. There are many types of guests including families, vacationers,

adventurers, voluntourists, food lovers, education seekers and everything in between (Table 2). It is advantageous to find ways to diversify your venture’s offerings within your niche. Below is a table of varying types of guests frequenting the agritourism ventures featured throughout this learning module. These are only a few examples of activities and services in the agritourism industry. What types of experiences could your agritourism venture offer? Also, contact your state tourism offices to find out where visitors are coming from to help identify your visitor base.



Table 2: Activities and Services Offered to Guests	
Type of guest	Activities & services
<b>Adventurers</b> Seeking exciting activities that allow them to be active and see different sides of your agritourism business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Adventure courses</li><li>ATV excursions</li><li>Canoeing/Kayaking</li><li>Ice fishing</li><li>Jeep expedition tours</li><li>Spasski River Valley Wildlife and Bear Search</li><li>Zipline systems</li></ul>
<b>Education Seekers</b> Looking for experiences that enrich their understanding of agriculture, history and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cultural centers</li><li>Heritage talks</li><li>Museums</li><li>Traditional food harvest demonstrations</li></ul>
<b>Families and Youth</b> Interested in events and activities that are fun for the whole family, allow them to spend time together and create meaningful memories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Campfires/fire pits</li><li>Farmers markets</li><li>Hands-on art projects</li><li>Harvest/food festivals</li><li>Petting zoos</li><li>Rodeo demonstrations</li><li>Storytelling</li></ul>
<b>Food Lovers</b> Interested in food based experiences that further their culinary skills, expose them to new flavors and unique agricultural practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Celebrity chefs/chef demonstrations</li><li>Chef-led cooking courses</li><li>Culinary classes</li><li>Restaurants</li><li>Vineyard tours</li><li>Harvest experiences</li></ul>
<b>Vacationers</b> Looking for relaxing and sometimes luxurious getaways where they can enjoy rural life in a comfortable setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Casinos</li><li>Golf courses</li><li>Local cultural activities, pow wows, artisan course, etc.</li><li>Natural spa services</li><li>Resort accommodations</li></ul>
<b>Voluntourists</b> Seeking hands on experiences and activities that allow them to feel involved in your agritourism venture and learn valuable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Corn processing</li><li>Creating signs</li><li>Seed collecting</li><li>Giving talks and tours</li><li>Working as event staff</li><li>Working on a farm or ranch</li></ul>



Strategic Authenticity

One way to differentiate your enterprise from others is to create a compelling, authentic story to share with your guests about your products. Consider what your original mission is, how your venture started and why. Could you turn this narrative into a story and experience that patrons are willing to purchase?

For example, Icy Strait Point’s main guests are cruise passengers so they have developed a variety of culturally rich activities that appeal to visitors of all ages. They created an authentic Alaskan/Tlingit

experience by utilizing the abundant nature and local history around them and beautifully conveyed it through marketing.

Your location and the demographics of your guests will determine which tools will be most beneficial in reaching your audience.

Table 3 provides examples of marketing tools to assist in effectively promoting your enterprise and sharing your agricultural products with guests.

Table 3: Types of Marketing and Mediums				
Traditional marketing	Online marketing	Relationship marketing	Other	AIANTA
Creates a unique marketing impression, but can become costly.	Cost effective strategy that requires consistent engagement and frequent updates.	Requires long-term commitment that addresses every stage of the customer cycle.	Various strategies are constantly emerging and may best reach your niche	AIANTA provides a number of marketing opportunities to promote your tourism destinations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Newspaper articles</li><li>• Brochures/catalogs/ fliers</li><li>• Infographics</li><li>• Case studies</li><li>• Radio</li><li>• Signs</li><li>• Hosting customer events</li><li>• Billboards</li><li>• Kiosks</li><li>• Visitors center</li><li>• Notices in public places and visitor spaces</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Webinars</li><li>• Emails/e-newsletters</li><li>• Blog posts</li><li>• Videos</li><li>• Social media posts</li><li>• Banner/ad marketing</li><li>• Review sites (yelp, amazon)</li><li>• Press releases to online news sites</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hotel concierges</li><li>• Visitors bureaus</li><li>• Welcome centers</li><li>• Tour operations</li><li>• Travel agents</li><li>• Travel trade shows</li><li>• Consumer surveys</li><li>• Testimonials and reviews</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Phone apps</li><li>• Push text notifications</li><li>• Guerilla strategies (e.g. flash mob, public art)</li><li>• Affiliate marketing</li><li>• Viral marketing</li><li>• Database marketing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add AIANTA to your press release/newsletter distribution</li><li>• Sign up for a free listing at Nativeamerica.trave</li><li>• Join AIANTA at travel trade shows</li><li>• Ask for social media post</li><li>• Attend and network at American Indian Tourism Conference and other live events</li></ul>

**Food For Thought:** Your tools should match your purpose. Choose marketing strategies that align with the mission, narrative and image your venture wants to portray.

1. <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/three-types-marketing-activities-people-use-day-30746.html>

Activity One: Marketing and Promotion Assessment

Answer the questions below to assess your marketing strategy.

Marketing Strategy Assessment			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Do you have a marketing plan?			
Do you have a marketing budget?			
Are there demonstrations or events you can hold offsite to build public relations?			
Are there Native marketers and graphics designers that can enhance your efforts?			
Can the local environment, harvested produce or other goods from your enterprise be used in your signage?			
Have you created any promotional articles or videos?			
What do you want visitors to know about your tribe -- history, governance, sovereignty?			
Have you listed your agritourism product and/or event on NativeAmerica.travel?			
Are you ready to speak about your enterprise at an event, via webinar or during a media interview?			
Are there any views, natural elements or outdoor spaces you can highlight in your outreach?			
Are your promotional tactics inclusive? (i.e. age, gender, ability, race, etc.)			
Is your event also promoted to local families in your Native language, or with local word choice to ensure inclusion and local participation?			
Can other vendors, businesses and partners share the space?			
What words, stories and phrases in your language most accurately describe your agritourism venture and could be incorporated into marketing? What makes your enterprise unique from other destinations?			
Do you have any foreseeable concerns/risks/difficulties related to marketing and promotion?			
Which marketing mediums will you use? (Refer to Table 3).			



## // Santa Ana Pueblo Agritourism Case Study

### // Module 4 – Case Study Worksheets



## Santa Ana Pueblo Agritourism Case Study

Agriculture may not be the first thing to come to mind when visiting Santa Ana Pueblo in New Mexico, a landscape of sun-swept mesas and sage-studded desert. But agriculture and the knowledge of how to coax abundant crops from this seemingly harsh land is part of the foundation of Santa Ana Pueblo's history and culture. And today, this agricultural spirit is infused into Santa Ana Pueblo's tourism enterprises and shared with the world through agritourism.

Visitors from around the world savor Santa Ana Pueblo blue and yellow corn in the Pueblo's fine-dining Corn Maiden and Prairie Star restaurants. Indigenous plants and trees are sold at the Santa Ana Garden Center. And, most recently, guests can enjoy Gruet wine made with grapes grown at Santa Ana Pueblo Vineyard.

By once again using their land for agriculture, Santa Ana Pueblo benefits economically and creates jobs while honoring its history and culture, and sharing that with the greater world.

### Santa Ana Pueblo

Located near the town of Bernalillo, this 79,000-acre nation of fewer than 700 members has occupied this land since the 1500s. Before then, their history says they migrated from the Four Corners region, through the Galisteo Basin near Santa Fe before building their adobe village Tamaya—Place of the People—at the base of a mesa some 27 miles northwest of current-day Albuquerque. This village—called Tamaya—still stands, and is the cultural and spiritual heart of the Pueblo. Most members maintain a traditional family home here and worship at its Spanish mission, Saint Anne Catholic Church. It's earthen plaza is packed hard through

centuries of ceremonial dancing that continues today. These dances, such as the Butterfly and Deer dances, are prayers for bountiful harvests and successful hunting. They honor their ancestors and welcome the seasons. Nature's rhythm and order are of the utmost importance to the Tamayame, as the people of Tamaya call themselves in their Keresan language.

### Changing Times

This rhythm became disrupted in the time of great societal change after World War II. Many tribal members found work off the Pueblo, and the Tribe's vast agricultural acreage was eventually leased out to non-tribal entities. Tribal members prospered with new opportunities, but some of the old ways of communal farming fell by the wayside, though many families still maintained individual farming acres.

"I remember riding in the back of our pick up and helping my family in our fields, listening to stories and eating big meals afterwards," says Santa Ana Pueblo Governor Lawrence Montoya. "These are good memories that I want our kids to have today, too."

In the 1980s the tribal council decided to reclaim the Pueblo's history of communal agriculture for the benefit of its people, and established Santa Ana Pueblo Agricultural Enterprises in 1986. The Tribe ended leasing its land and was now farming for itself, creating revenue and jobs for the Tribe by growing and selling alfalfa and Sudan grass. That same year, Santa Ana Pueblo began planting blue and yellow corn, traditional crops of great importance to New Mexico's 19 Pueblo Tribes. A mill was built, and Santa Ana Pueblo could now grind and sell corn meal and flour. Also in 1986, the Tribe opened its fine-dining Prairie Star Restaurant



in a historic ranch house with 18-inch-thick adobe walls, and soon began using corn it grew in menu items.

“Santa Ana has always been an agriculturally based community, and Santa Ana Pueblo’s location has always been a blessing,” says Joseph Bronk, Director of Santa Ana Agricultural Enterprises. Bronk came to work for the department soon after its creation in 1986 and became its director in 2000. “Santa Ana has been able to keep its traditional village and lands protected from the outside world while at the same time taking advantage of its location to make it easy for people to visit our commercial facilities today. The Pueblo has been very good about what it shares and what it keeps for itself, and keeping the two worlds separate.”

## Location, Location, Location

And these two worlds benefit one another, Bronk says. Modern tourism enterprises fund the tribal government and create jobs at the Pueblo. This in turn allows its members to continue Santa Ana Pueblo’s traditions. And it’s this culture that in-part drives tourism to Santa Ana Pueblo.

“Our department has about 30 full-time employees,” he says. “And we hire around 50 seasonal employees as well throughout the year.”

About 20 miles separates Santa Ana Pueblo’s traditional Tamaya village, also called the Old Village, and its businesses center to the east. The Old Village nestles against a mesa surrounded by beautiful and rugged desert etched with canyons, and is the only man-made structures for miles. The Old Village is believed to have been founded in the early 1500s near the Jemez River. Families still maintain traditional adobe homes here that have been passed down through generations. The Old Village is somewhat remote, and escaped the scrutiny of Coronado and his Conquistadores during their 1540 entry into what is now New Mexico, delaying contact with the Spanish and possible depletion of winter stores. Today, its only access road is easily gated when the Tribe wishes for privacy.

Conversely, Santa Ana Pueblo’s business district to the east on U.S. 550 stays busy around the clock. The Santa Ana Star Casino lights the night sky with a neon glow, inviting residents of the nearby Albuquerque-bedroom communities of Bernalillo and Rio Rancho to try their luck or enjoy a game of bowling. Located close to I-25, this portion of Santa Ana Pueblo allows easy access to visitors arriving at Albuquerque’s airport or local traffic from Albuquerque and Santa Fe to the north. Guests from around the world enjoy staying at Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort and Spa, playing golf at the Twin Warriors Golf Club championship golf course, and enjoy fine-dining at the Corn Maiden and Prairie Star restaurants. Locals enjoy all of this as well, and shop for desert-hardy plants and trees at the Santa Ana Garden Center.

## Funding

Santa Ana Pueblo embarked on its agricultural projects before it had established its casino, which opened in 1993 after negotiations with the State of New Mexico, and was the first casino to open in the state. Funding for Santa Ana Pueblo’s first enterprises were acquired through an Administration for Native Americans grant (ANA) through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These federal ANA grants fund social economic development projects for Native American tribes ([www.acf.hhs.gov/ana](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ana)).

“These grants are a lot of work, and extremely competitive,” Bronk says. “They want to make sure you have a well-thought out plan, and they want a lot of details. They want to know your project has a good chance of success, so there’s a lot of work to produce to sell your idea. But if you’re selected for it they’ll fund your operation and even pay salaries for the first three years. We’re talking a lot of dollars. It’s a great thing, but it takes a lot of work to prepare and file your report.”

ANA grants fund successful applicants for one, two or three years, after which they are expected to be self-sufficient. A panel reviews all applications and decides upon grant recipients based on scores assigned to each portion on the grant proposal. Training and technical assistance can be provided through the ANA grants as well.

Santa Ana Pueblo’s most recent ANA grant allowed it to plant its vineyard in 2014, establish infrastructure and irrigation, and hire seasonal workers. Today, the 30-acre vineyard in cooperation with Albuquerque-based Gruet winery produces 140 tons of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier grapes at 5,200 feet, making the Pinot Noir some of the highest-grown such grapes in the world.

“New Mexico, and especially this area, was the first grape-growing region in what is now the U.S.,” Bronk says. “Franciscan friars traveling with the Spanish planted grapes here to make sacramental wine in 1629.”

Bronk also emphasises the importance of water and water rights for Santa Ana Pueblo’s future.

“Through state and federal contracts, Santa Ana and other Tribes along the Rio Grande are able to use as much water as we need,” Bronk says. “But water is a limited and valuable resource, especially in the desert. We understand that if we don’t use it, we may lose it. So it’s important for us to respect the water and establish a track record of usage for Santa Ana Pueblo so that in the future a state engineer can’t say ‘Well, we’re going to cap you at what you’re currently using,’ and limit future projects and growth.”

## Agricultural Divisions

Thanks to hard work by the Santa Ana Pueblo Agricultural Enterprises and successful ANA grant applications, the department oversees five enterprises:

- Santa Ana Farm was the Pueblo’s first business,

established in 1986. This 130-acre farm primarily grows alfalfa and Sudan grass (a hybrid of sorghum and drummondii) that is sold to ranchers as livestock feed. The farm’s equipment and staff are also available to tribal members who need farming help such as plowing their family fields. All Tribal members may take advantage of this service. “In this way the commercial operation also keeps the traditional family farming alive at Santa Ana,” Bronk says.

- Santa Ana Blue Corn and Mill, also established in 1986, grows yellow and blue corn—a nutritious crop that has long been revered throughout the Southwest. The Pueblo’s mill processes the corn for both wholesale and retail products. The blue corn is used in the Tribe’s Corn Maiden restaurant at Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort and Spa and in the resort’s gift shop, and also the Prairie Star restaurant (<http://mynewmexicogolf.com/prairiestar/>). Santa Ana Pueblo corn products are also sold directly to the public at its Cooking Post retail and online outlet ([www.cookingpost.com](http://www.cookingpost.com)). Santa Ana Pueblo blue corn is also sold to La Montanita Co-op, an Albuquerque-based natural grocer that also supplies a number of restaurants, and Skarsgard Farms, a home food delivery business that serves the greater Albuquerque area. “We have an horno oven and can roast corn traditionally,” Bronk says. “This is important for tribal members. Our atolé is very popular here at the Pueblo.” Local brewery Kaktus Brewing Co. is using Santa Ana Pueblo’s blue corn to brew a blue corn beer that is sold at the Tribe’s resort.

- Santa Ana Nursery grows native Southwest plants and trees, and sells wholesale to entities such as the U.S. Government. “We sell indigenous plants for big projects, such as river restoration work,” Bronk says. “We just sold 5,000 butterfly weeds (*Asclepias tuberosa*) to the U.S. Government for a project. It’s a type



of milkweed for monarch butterflies.” Santa Ana Pueblo also has its own Natural Resources Department that purchases plants and trees from the nursery for projects such as bosque restoration along the Rio Grande. This natural, wooded area is available to the general public via trails at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort. Signage along the trail details plants’ importance to Santa Ana Pueblo, and contributes to the guest experience at the Tribe’s luxury resort.

- The Santa Ana Garden Center grows and sells plants and trees to the general public ([www.santaana.org/garden.htm](http://www.santaana.org/garden.htm)). This forward-facing retail business has landscaped walking paths with signed plants and trees so that customers can identify what they like. Everything sold at the garden center falls within Zone 6, this region’s growing zone. Located behind the Pueblo’s Warrior Fuel gas station, the garden center is easily accessible off of U.S. 550 near the town of Bernalillo. “The Garden Center is really a business for the locals here,” Bronk says. “It makes us a part of the greater community here, and it brings people from Albuquerque who might otherwise come out this way and see the other businesses we have, even if it’s just getting gas at Warrior Fuel. It’s a unique nursery with a great reputation, so people make the trip. And hopefully when they’re here, they’ll check out our other businesses.”
- Santa Ana’s newest agritourism enterprise is its Santa Ana Pueblo/Gruet Vineyard. The Tribe owns and manages the 30-acre vineyard, and sells the grapes to Albuquerque-based Gruet Winery that is known internationally for its Méthod Champenoise sparkling and other wines. Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier grapes are grown here, picked and sent to Gruet’s winery that is just a few miles south of the vineyard in Albuquerque. Gruet wines are offered at the Tribe’s Prairie Star restaurant

near its Santa Ana Golf Club and at the Corn Maiden restaurant within its luxury Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort, a joint venture with Hyatt Hotels that opened in 2000.

Without divulging figures, Bronk says that most of the enterprises are financially profitable now. The alfalfa farming may only break even some years, but that enterprise benefits the Tribe in other ways, such as aiding Tribal members with their farming. “Sometimes the value of an agricultural business isn’t always in money,” Bronk says. “In our case it keeps agriculture healthy and alive here, and that’s what our main objective was in the beginning. To help the people of Santa Ana Pueblo continue to farm.”

## Agritourism

From the outset of its business enterprises, Santa Ana Pueblo wanted to be diversified, Bronk says, and that meant sharing the agricultural enterprise with other Tribal enterprises. The Prairie Star restaurant opened in 1986, the same year as the blue corn mill, and still uses Santa Ana blue corn in several of its dishes. The former ranch-house-turned-restaurant is a long-time Albuquerque-area favorite, known for its extensive wine collection and sunset views of the Sandia Mountains. Its dinner menu by Chef Myles Lucero features favorites using Santa Ana corn products such as Tamaya Cornmeal Crusted Calamari, and Roasted Sweet Corn Ravioli using a Tamaya yellow cornmeal dough with smoked bacon, fresh basil, garlic cream sauce and basil oil. Additionally, it serves Gruet wine and sparkling wine made with grapes grown at Santa Ana Pueblo Vineyards. Within the resort itself, the Corn Maiden Restaurant is true to its name by serving Santa Ana corn in its Corn Maiden Salad (tomato, cucumber, jicama, avocado, corn black beans, chile lime vinaigrette) and in the Sweet Corn Bisque. Cornbread crumble is served with the Butter Lettuce Wedge salad, and sun-dried sweet corn is a key ingredient in the Crispy Green Chile Strips (New Mexico Hatch green chile, sun-dried sweet corn, cilantro lime crema). Santa

Ana corn also complements entrees including the Airline Chicken (lavender honey, sweet corn jus, bacon, green peas, pea tendrils, freeze-dried corn) and Stuffed Poblano (Carolina Gold rice, Soyrizo, mushrooms, micro cilantro, sun-dried corn and cumin broth). Gruet is served at the Corn Maiden as well.

Patrick Mohn, executive chef at the resort’s Corn Maiden and Santa Ana Cafe, says he and his team strive to incorporate traditional ingredients into the cuisine they make.

“A lot of the Pueblo cultures would gather tumbleweeds in the spring when they are tender as a microgreen, so we’re starting to do that,” he says. “It’s rewarding because I would never have thought to do that, and our diners love it. We talk to Pueblo members and see if there are ingredients we should know about and work into the menu. Food traditions are a part of the story we need to tell.”

Mohn says other traditional ingredients come from gardens and orchards found around the property, and that beehives produce up to 60 pounds of honey annually.

“You have to look to the past to move forward sometimes,” he says. “It speaks to your soul and keeps that whole spirit of cooking for the right reasons in front of you.”

Throughout the Corn Maiden and the resort, pottery by Santa Ana Pueblo artists is displayed, and landscape paintings and black-and-white photography speak to the Tribe’s connection to the land. Large, colorful murals depict traditional life at the Old Village, with people harvesting corn and returning from hunting outings. Santa Ana Pueblo stories are depicted, too, including that of the Twin Warriors who protected the village. Twin Warriors Golf Club is named for these mythic heros as well. Kiva-style fireplaces add ambiance inside and on the patio looking out to the Pueblo’s restored cottonwood bosque (woods) paralleling the Rio Grande, and the Sandia Mountains glow pink at sunset beyond. At

the resort, a cultural center details the history of Santa Ana Pueblo for guests, and includes traditional farming artifacts such as hand-made tools as well as interviews with Tribal elders.

“People come to Tamaya (resort) to appreciate the culture of Santa Ana Pueblo, says Chrisie Smith, marketing director at Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort. “Santa Ana Pueblo makes this resort special, and when Hyatt entered into this partnership with the Pueblo it was always to honor and exemplify what makes Santa Ana so special.”

Smith explains that Tribal elders are invited to teach pottery classes to guests, and Tribal members lead nature walks in the bosque, give horno bread-baking demonstrations, play flute music and share secular dances with guests. Beehives of 80,000 bees produce honey used in the restaurants and contribute to the agritourism mission here. A horse rescue and horseback riding through Pueblo land adds to the upscale and secluded ambiance of the resort, where the peaceful landscape is a major draw for resort guests.

“I don’t know if Hyatt ever used the term ‘agritourism’ when we started this partnership with the Tribe, but it was always known agriculture would play an important role in everything here, from our food to our decor,” Smith says. “You can’t represent Santa Ana Pueblo without agriculture, and that’s part of what makes this such a peaceful and nurturing experience.”

For Santa Ana Pueblo, agritourism has benefited the Nation for more than 30 years, and has inspired other New Mexico Tribes to pursue agricultural projects as New Mexico’s Tribes protect water rights and reclaim their agricultural traditions. And Santa Ana Pueblo isn’t done exploring other agritourism projects.

“We’d love to move to the next step of having resort guests visit the vineyard for a tour and wine tasting,” Bronk says. “And we’re speaking with several entities about the possibility of growing hemp here.”



Bronk acknowledges such a venture could be controversial, but believes it could be done properly.

“It’s something we would want to be very careful with, but it’s a rapidly growing and profitable industry. I remember how controversial the casino was. But as with everything we’ve done, if we respect and take care of the land, it’ll take care of us.”

Agritourism Advice from Santa Ana Pueblo

- Understand the agricultural history of your community. What was traditionally grown that can still be grown and marketed to a general audience? If a Tribe isn’t located on its traditional land, can those crops be introduced again? At the same time, what new and profitable crops would work well?
- Understand and protect Tribal water rights. How much water is available for an agritourism project? Can a good well be sunk? Would using this water help secure Tribal water rights, and can this be used to convince Tribal governments to the importance of pursuing agricultural projects?
- Understand funding and look for grants. It can be a lot of confusing work upfront, but securing grants can be key to making the project a reality and hiring qualified people to keep it successful. Look for free training and classes in grant writing, or take advantage of grant writers the Tribe is already using for other projects. Let others know you’re looking for grants for agritourism projects so that they can tell you if they come across opportunities. Just because the Tribal Government approves an agritourism plan, it doesn’t always mean it will receive Tribal funding.
- Identify customers beforehand. What kind of existing market is there already? Can Tribally grown products enhance customer experience at existing Tribal restaurants, or be sold through gift shops and other outlets?
- Be realistic with your location and traffic. If your community is remote, would enough customers make the day trip to fund the project? Would a special event such as a pumpkin patch in October be a driver? Could an agritourism program be added to an existing customer traffic driver such as a hotel or casino?
- How can agricultural products be sold online? Can regulations be met to safely sell and ship food products online?
- As soon as possible, consider diversifying enterprises so that if there’s a bad harvest or other unforeseen problems it won’t ruin the enterprise.
- How can other Tribal Enterprises be involved? Look for existing assets to partner with. Are there storefronts or equipment the Tribe already owns that can be used for a new project? Consider how an agritourism project could benefit existing enterprises, and use these points when seeking approval.
- Create an experience for customers. What of cultural significance is being offered to the visiting public beyond agricultural products that furthers the general public appreciation for the Tribe’s history and culture?
- Create a strong communication network with the Tribal Council and Elders to create an agreement on what cultural elements will be shared with the general public.
- Reach out to Tribal artisans and performers and invite them to share their skills, talents and stories with visitors. How is agriculture part of traditional stories and art? Budget for a stipend for artists, and invite them to offer their art for sale as well. Help Tribal members understand and take pride in agritourism projects.

# Module 4 – Case Study Worksheets

## Module Overview

Module four demonstrates that agritourism enterprises can have far reaching benefits for tribal communities. The Santa Ana Pueblo case study provides examples of how agritourism enterprises have shared different types of wealth with their tribal and non-native partners. The director of the Santa Ana Agricultural Enterprises, Joseph Bronk, explains that their services serve a larger function than just generating income for the enterprise. They elevate the community by sharing assets, supporting other tribal agriculture ventures, securing prosperous futures, and promoting independence through personal farming. The activities in this section are designed to identify ways that farm and ranch assets may be used to enrich the community.

## Objectives

This module will explore the following:

- Recognizing ways to establish greater interconnectivity for your venture
- Identifying funding opportunities

## Case Study Summary

Santa Ana Pueblo has achieved success by remaining true to their initial vision of reconnecting their people with the land. Through agriculture, Santa Ana Pueblo established income that flows through their community. The tribe was first supported by an Administration for Native Americans (ANA) grant that allowed them to build a thriving enterprise. The enterprise has enjoyed success from many avenues and reinvests back into the community. The Santa Ana Pueblo Tribal Agriculture Enterprises understand the interconnectivity within all aspects of their community and have applied this way of knowing to build a successful venture.

### Highlights from the case study

- Kept sight of initial goals
- Secured ANA grant funding
- Developed five economically vibrant and interconnected enterprises
- Shared cultural, agricultural and communal wealth with neighbors

## Reflection Question

The following question is related to the case study and will help you think more deeply about your agriculture venture.

Q: Keeping the Santa Ana Pueblo case study in mind, how do you foresee your venture contributing back to your community?

Reflection: \_\_\_\_\_

## Digging Deeper

*Making connections between cultural, agricultural and social wealth*

The Santa Ana Pueblo recognizes the interconnectivity of all their ventures. (Table 1 and Table 2). The people serve the land and the land takes care of them. Involving other aspects of the tribal community in the agricultural ventures is an important aspect of ensuring that the community is both taken care of and actively pursuing cultural, communal and material wealth.



Table 1: Communal Benefit from Santa Ana Pueblo Agritourism Ventures		
Venture	Purpose	Community Wealth
Santa Ana Blue Corn and Mill	Processes products on site, sells wholesale and retail products, supplies restaurant	Instills cultural determination and pride
Santa Ana Nursery	Sells native Southwest plants at wholesale prices for large projects	Restores land by supporting healthy native plant habitats
Santa Ana Farm	130 acre plot of Alfalfa and Sudan grass	Supports local tribal farmers through equipment sharing
Santa Ana Vineyard	30 acres of high quality grapes that produce internationally known wines	Provides material wealth, supporting other ventures
Santa Ana Garden Center	Sells drought tolerant plants and trees to the general public	Promotes use of sustainable landscaping materials

Table 2: Examples of Other Ventures		
Raw product		Good, service or experience
Raw Corn product	>>>>	Created traditional corn husking/processing volunteer program
Processed White Corn	>>>>	Supplied fresh ingredients to restaurants
Farm equipment	>>>>	Loaned to neighboring tribal farmers
Cornmeal by-product	>>>>	Used in handmade soap as exfoliant
Olive pulp by-product	>>>>	Fed to tribe's cattle and livestock
Fed to tribe's cattle and livestock	>>>>	Rented out to local farmers



## Activity One: Sustainable Agriculture.

The following questions are designed to assist you in beginning to assess sustainable agricultural practices.

Sustainable Agriculture	
Where does your water come from? Who controls the source?	
How much water will you need in the future?	
Are there predictions of shortages or pollution for your water supply?	
Can your agritourism venture be used to reclaim land or secure water rights?	
In what ways can you restore and preserve resources through sustainable practices?	
Does using this water inspire other tribal governments to pursue agricultural projects?	
How else will your agriculture enterprise benefit the natural resources?	

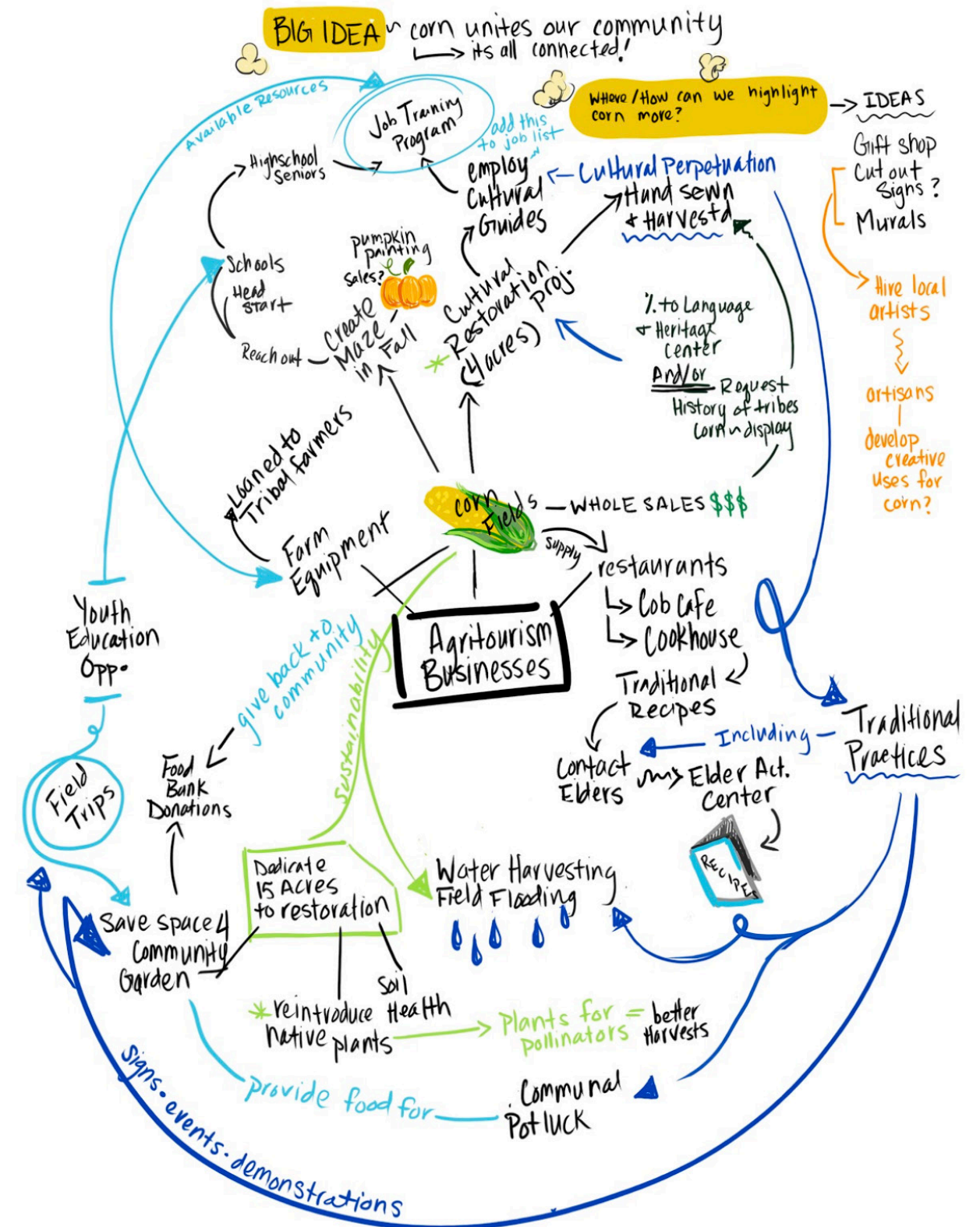


## Activity Two: The Flow of Traditions and Knowledge

Restorative practices revitalize nature's gifts so that new opportunities can arise. This is the basis of traditional agricultural practices, a result of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) put into best practice and what has been recently termed as regenerative agriculture. Hand sewing, weeding, stone grinding and using historic irrigation canals are just a few examples of traditional agricultural practices.

Instructions: Create a mind map in the space below exploring the connections among traditional practices, values and your enterprise. Continue to add connectors and spaces to explore ideas. Feel free to use icons, drawings and other creative ways of brainstorming.

Now, Identify three tangible ways that you will incorporate values/tradition into your venture.



EXAMPLE MAP: General tribal agritourism mind mapping exercise.



# Activity Three: Creating a Funding Calendar

Funding for your agriculture enterprise or added arts and cultural activities may come from many different sources. It is important to identify grants, loans and programs that you and your enterprise may align with for support. The table below, by no means an exhaustive list, is designed to help you with your research process.

Table 1: Sources of Agritourism Funding <sup>1</sup>	
Databases/ Resources	AIANTA's Funding Opportunities Newsletter https://www.ainta.org/news-and-media/funding-opportunities-newsletter/ AIANTA Resource Library - Funding for Cultural Tourism https://www.ainta.org/resource-library/funding-for-cultural-tourism/
Donations	Corporate gifts Crowdfunding Fundraising Non-profits
Grants	Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) Administration for Native Americans (ANA) American Agri-Women (AAW) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) New Entry Sustainable Farming Project - Tufts University Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Simply Organic Giving Fund Tribal Foundations and Charitable Giving Programs United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) Value Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG)  Check grant options in your state and region: Chamber of Commerce County/city website Non-profit organizations State Tourism Agency State Economic Development Agencies
Loans	Government (federal, state and local) Small Business Administration (SBA) United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) Native Community Development Financial Institutions (e.g. Akiptan CDFI)

1. <https://www.ainta.org/agritourism-resource-page/>  
2. <https://nativeamericanagriculturefund.org/annual-report/>  
3. <https://www.indianag.org/>



If you are a tribal enterprise or non-profit organization, you may be eligible for grant funding or low-cost federal loans. Grants are highly competitive and often have strict deadlines. Using a database can help you keep track of important information and help you manage applications easier. People successfully track grants using free software such as Google Sheets or Microsoft Office programs such as Excel or Access, while others use products like Salesforce. There are many other paid softwares that specifically track grant and funding opportunities such as Fluxx and Zengine.

**Instructions:** Use this chart as a starting point for you to develop a funding calendar to assist you in keeping track of grant opportunities, deadlines and the status or your proposals.

Opportunities						Status Details					Notes
Foundation/ Agency	Due Date	Range of Award (\$)	Hyper Link	Agency Primary Contact	Contact #	Status (High/ Low)	If currently ineligible, why?	Application Submitted	Awarded (Yes, No, Pending)	Amount Awarded	Notes

**Food For Thought:** To secure grants look at what resources are needed to identify opportunities and to develop competitive grants. That may include hiring a qualified grant writer, completing grant writing training and/or reaching out to others in the agritourism industry for opportunities.



## // Oneida Nation Big Apple Fest Agritourism Case Study

### // Module 5 – Case Study Worksheets



## Oneida Nation Big Apple Fest Agritourism Case Study

When the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin purchased a 30-acre apple orchard in 1994, it was done so as a continuing effort to reunite the Tribe with lands within its original boundaries. But the 2,400 apple trees on the property would serve an even greater purpose by contributing to the Oneida Nation's food sovereignty. Fresh, healthy apples would be readily available to Oneida's more than 18,000 members, and today an additional 10 acres and 1,500 more trees produce more than 20 varieties of apples. The land also supports strawberries, raspberries, sweet corn and other crops for the Tribe. Simply called the Apple Orchard, the land now sees Oneida school children visit to learn about the importance of agriculture, and a combination of natural methods are used whenever possible to ensure bountiful harvests. The Oneida Apple Orchard is part of the Oneida Community Integrated Food Systems that produces traditional food for Oneida Nation members, and to create agricultural jobs for the Tribe.

Beyond land recovery, food sovereignty and job creation, the Apple Orchard plays a role in sharing the culture of the Oneida Nation with the greater world. The orchard is open for pick-your-own apples, a favorite fall activity in the area. And on the third Saturday every September, the Oneida Apple Fest invites the general public to celebrate the harvest and learn about the Oneida Nation and the Tribes role in the local economy and agriculture. Visitors enjoy touring an Oneida Longhouse and log home, horse and wagon rides, live music, a petting zoo, barrel racing demonstrations, apple cider, a Best Apple Pie contest and the Oneida Farmers Market and, of course, pick-your-own apples. The event begins at 10 a.m., and at 11 a.m. a bald eagle is released to the respectful delight of the crowd.

Apples had been a staple crop of the Oneida Nation pre-Revolutionary times. However, Oneida orchards were destroyed by British sympathizers in retribution for the Oneida Nation's support of the Colonists during the American Revolution. By reclaiming apple orchards and using them to educate the general public about their history, culture and modern enterprises, the Oneida Nation is literally using agritourism and its Big Apple Fest to honor the Tribes deep roots.

### A Brief History of the Oneida Nation

The Oneida Nation is located in northeast Wisconsin, about 11-miles west of Green Bay via WI 54. There are 17,147 enrolled citizens with approximately 3,100 living on or near the reservation. Because it is a "checkerboard" reservation, Oneida is a mix of urban, suburban and rural lands. Oneida has developed land for economic and housing needs, and has also taken steps to preserve and restore wetlands and forests. Originally part of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Oneyote'a:ka:—People of the Standing Stone (Oneida) — lived in what is now central New York State.

Oneida historically was a matriarchal society with three clans: Turtle, Bear and Wolf. Clans and kinship were passed down through the mother's side of the family. Women were in charge of agriculture and choosing chiefs. Traditional crops were the Three Sisters: corn, beans and squash. The Oneida supported the Colonists against the British during the American Revolutionary War. However, in 1823, after the war, Oneidas were pressured by land speculators to move to what was known as the Michigan Territory. Many



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of the Oneida carried on their livelihood of farming on the 65,400-acre reservation. The Dawes Act of 1887 divided the reservation into individual allotments for Oneida citizens. Eventually, a majority of the acreage was sold or lost to unpaid taxes. In 1934, the federal government reversed the allotment policy under the Indian Reorganization Act. The Oneida wrote a new constitution and reorganized their tribal government in 1936, and purchased 1,270 acres of land the following year. In 1976, Oneida citizens Sandra Ninham and Alma Webster started holding bingo games to help pay for the utilities at the new Oneida Civic Center. Eventually, as Indian gaming expanded, Oneida was able to use gaming funds to purchase more lands within the borders of its 65,400-acre reservation including an apple orchard and the Cultural Heritage grounds.

Today, the Oneida people work to preserve their language and culture through the Oneida Nation School System, Oneida Language House, and by using cultural iconography in Tribal signs and media. The Oneida Nation governmental system is comprised of more than 2,800 employees and has over 200 funded business units. Accomplishments include two large gaming facilities, hotels, bingo and a golf course. The Oneida have also established a health center, nursing home, elder center, police department, judicial court, two libraries, and Big Bear Media Center.

## Thinking Big Works

In 2009, the Cultural Heritage Department decided to create several annual historical-themed events to promote culture and history. The Oneida Nation wanted to create an experience to educate the general public that the Oneida people came from the New York territory (“The Big Apple”) and that Oneida apple orchards were burned down after the Revolutionary War in retribution for standing with the Colonists. The event would also nurture relationships between Oneida and non-Oneidas. Big Apple Fest emerged to meet these needs.

## Overcoming Obstacles

One of the barriers the Cultural Heritage Department faced was funding. The Oneida General Manager reviewed the event proposal and supported the effort with \$5,000—enough money to pilot the event. During the planning process, organizers realized that location was also a barrier. The Cultural Heritage facility, located on Highway 54 at the edge of Green Bay, is 1.5 miles away from the Apple Orchard. Shuttle buses would be needed carry attendees back and forth. For the inaugural event, Cultural Heritage hoped to attract at least 500 attendees. The 2009 event included farm animals, a horse-drawn wagon, a log restoration project, old-time fishing, kids’ games, and an apple pie contest. Heritage Hill, a local living history attraction, donated time-period clothing from the late 1800s to early 1900s. Funds were used for signage—to purchase plywood and cut out big wooden apples, golf carts, portable toilets, and pay other outside vendors. Donations of soda and water came from Coca-Cola. Departments collaborated to share resources. Tents were borrowed from the Housing Department, trash and recycling bins and picnic tables were loaned from the Conservation Department, tables and chairs were also borrowed from the Oneida Nation Department of Public Works. Library staff pitched in to create games and crafts for kids. Paid and unpaid promotions of the event included ads in the tribal newspaper, posters to tribal departments and a press release to local media. Flyers were sent to a few elementary schools in the area to invite students to Education Days, scheduled the Friday before Big Apple Fest. Kids came out in five school buses. Over 1,000 people showed up for the first annual event—exceeding expectations. Average product sales for a weekend at the apple orchard were approximately \$2,300. Big Apple Fest earned the same amount in a single day.



## Building Annual Momentum

In its second year of 2010, Big Apple Fest expenses grew by \$1,000 due to the purchase of reusable signage. The logo is family-friendly with bright red and shades of green. The Iroquois sky domes add an Oneida touch to the design. Icons display key characteristics of the event. Maps help the audience explore the grounds. Promotional materials increased to 3,600 flyers to local Green Bay and Oneida schools, and 400 printed event cards. As a promotional tactic, caramel apples were sent to local news stations a week prior to the event. A portion of funding was used to purchase t-shirts for volunteers and workers during the event to make staff readily identifiable to visitors. Because the need for security grew, three security guards were hired to support traffic control and included first responder preparations. This would be the last year of Education Days due to time constraints of staff.

The 2010 Big Apple Fest saw an attendance of more than 1,500 people. In 2011, the Big Apple

Fest was brought under the Oneida Tourism Department and an infusion of funding was provided expand the event. The Oneida Tourism Department received room tax dollars as a base for their overall departmental funding, and the total operational budget grew to \$10,000. Rhea the Trick Horse became the new main attraction and the logistics of the event doubled with a professional tent company, two horse-drawn wagons, the Oneida Farmer’s Market addition, and increased horse and wagon demonstrations. The signage was expanded as well. More security and workers for traffic control and demonstrations were required. Shuttles were added with service to the apple orchard from the Cultural Heritage grounds. Promotional materials included 5,000 school flyers to elementary schools. In the third year (2011) of the event the attendance was close to 3,000 people. More than 50 pies were entered in the pie contest.

## Noteworthy Challenges

As the Big Apple Fest grew in popularity, parking



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space became an issue and cars were parking on the highway, creating potential safety issues. Guests were dismayed by long lines at seven food vendors, and the Apple Orchard ran out of bags for apples. The pie contest judges were overwhelmed from tasting 50 pies. In 2012 attendance increased to over 4,000 people. To mitigate these growing pains, a second parking area was created on the Cultural Heritage grounds. Rhea the Trick Horse and Koko the One Trick Mule increased performances to keep families constantly entertained.

Promotional materials included 6,100 flyers to schools. Oneida apples were featured on Living with Amy, the Fox 11 website. Eight-second pump ads were played at two of the most popular One Stop gas stations, and ads were placed in the Green Bay Press Gazette and on WFRV (CBS) station. The addition of the Jazmine and Lexus King, who offered barrel racing demonstrations and rope tricks, brought a new level of excitement and showmanship to the event. Apple sales at the orchard set a new record of \$7,700 for one day for the 2014 event. Attendance continued to grow in 2015, surpassing 6,000 attendees, and saw more than 8,000 attendees in 2016. The average \$3,000 per weekend in Apple Orchard sales jumped to over \$15,000, a 36-percent increase since 2014. This does not include the overall gross sales generated at the Apple Orchard over the entire apple-picking season that lasts through early December.

Moving Forward as a Community

Since its 2009 beginnings, Big Apple Fest has averaged an 87-percent annual increase in attendance and collected more than \$70,000 in sales. Families of all sizes commonly travel to the event from within a 45-mile radius. An all-ages crowd includes grandparents, parents, and children, and attendees are Native and non-Native. With ever increasing attendance at Big Apple Fest, increased

funds are required. Event organizers credit the festival’s success to working together and staying true to our vision.

Tips for Starting an Event

Oneida Nation Big Apple Fest planners and organizers credit teamwork and staying true to the event’s mission of family friendly outreach to the event’s longevity and popularity. They offer these tips for creating similar agritourism events:

1. Pick the right date. Consider the weather during that time of year, and look for conflicts with other events and holidays.
2. Start Planning Nine Months to a Year in Advance. Decide on event themes and activities, and begin securing vendors as soon as possible.
3. Develop a Unique Concept. Big Apple Fest was selected based on its association with Oneida’s history in New York. Bring together different aspects of your community to create something intriguing. Share your culture to make your event unique, fun and educational.
4. Set Realistic Volunteer and Attendance Goals. Recruit volunteers in your family and friends. Volunteers can help you promote by word-of-mouth and decrease the time it takes to set up and take down. Consider approaching school groups and community groups such as Boy or Girl Scout troops to help and possibly earn credit.
5. Brainstorm to Borrow. Big Apple Fest sourced tents, a generator, bingo, hay bales, straw, corn stalks, goats, horses, garbage bins and picnic tables. Many of the resources came from internal Oneida tribal departments and Non-profits with no associated rental fees.
6. Develop a Budget. List all the costs associated with your event. Costs may include on-site restrooms, trash and recycling, tables and chairs, sound



- systems, live music, golf carts for transportation, location fee and permits, entertainment and other supplies. Consider a small contingency fund. You might offset costs by charging a small amount for parking or admission.
7. Include Advertising in Your Budget. Promotional materials can range from posters and postcards to social media, radio and TV ads. For Big Apple Fest, school fliers were the most effective way to bring in families from our surrounding community.
  8. Secure Sponsorships. Tribal sponsors and enterprises can help pay for your event. Contact local companies who align with your concept, and reach out to your local Convention and Visitors Bureau. Search for local tourism grants or other tribal grants.
  9. Develop a Traffic Plan. Visualize the type of experience you want your guests to have from the moment they arrive at your event. How will

- they know where to go? Have enough space for parking, and make sure parking areas are well signed or volunteers can help direct traffic.
10. Prioritize Safety and Security. Make sure you have enough trained staff or volunteers standing by for a health emergency. Include first aid kits and supplies for emergencies. Licensed EMTs are good to have on site, and make sure that emergency vehicles can quickly reach the event if necessary. Make sure there is plenty of shade and water available (can be sold inexpensively) for guests.
  11. Develop a Brand. Create a cohesive look and feel for your event. Good, professional-looking design will generate excitement and communicate to people what they can expect.





# Module 5 – Case Study Worksheets

## Module Overview

Module Five provides information on planning an event and building an itinerary for your agritourism enterprise. The Big Apple Fest is highlighted in the Oneida Nation case study as an example of a seasonal harvest festival. At the festival, the Oneida share culture, history and food in a way that strengthens relationships and demonstrates cultural pride.

## Objectives

This module will explore the following:

- Apply native traditions to your hospitality efforts
- Plan a well-thought out event and create an engaging itinerary
- Identify challenges and risks for your event

## Case Study Summary

The Oneida Nation has successfully hosted the Big Apple Fest for over a decade. Their collaboration and innovation have created a seasonal attraction that draws in individuals of all ages and brings vibrancy to the area. By partnering with tribal organizations, local nonprofits and government entities, the Big Apple Fest has nurtured relationships and strengthened the overall social fabric of the community.

## Reflection Question

The following question is related to the case study and will help you think more deeply about your agriculture venture.

Q: Thinking back to the momentum the Big Apple Fest built, how do you envision the future of your venture?

Reflection: \_\_\_\_\_

## Highlights from the case study

- Informed public about historical events
- Considered logistics for event and location
- Built annual momentum
- Adapted to and overcame challenges

## Digging Deeper

### *Hospitality*

Hospitality is a large part of the tourism industry and aligning your traditional values will help create a memorable and welcoming experience for your guests.

### *Customer service*

Consider your staff's overall appearance and demeanor. Do your employees have a tidy and welcoming appearance? You might want them to wear a uniform, certain style of clothing and name tags. Providing shirts for employees and volunteers that advertise the event while allowing guests to easily discern who is a staff member is a good way to enhance appearance, create a feeling of unity and the gift gives recognition to your supporters.

Discuss how you want staff to greet and interact with guests (Figure 1). Are their specific traditional phrases you want people to use and share with others? Different activities may require a certain set of decorum from staff. The example below incorporates a warm welcome, Oneida (Onyota'a:ká:) language and gently reminds guests of the rules.



Figure 1: Example Greeting Script for Cultural Center Staff

“Hello! Shekólih! The people of the Longhouse and Oneida Nation welcome you. Feel free to look around and enjoy the exhibits. We do ask that there is no photography. And please approach any staff member in the blue shirt for questions or help.”

Decide how visitors will better understand what they are experiencing so it will be as meaningful and memorable as possible. Who will teach them? Will they be introduced to specific dancers, medicinal experts, artists or other representatives? This may be a staff’s job or could be conveyed through signage depending on the goals of your venture.

Cultural and ceremonial protocols

Other considerations are cultural and ceremonial protocols for non-native guests who will likely not be well versed in your specific cultural practices. Are there guidelines they will need to follow such as respecting sacred regalia (i.e. no touching without permission) or reserving the front row at events for Elders? Are there certain times when photography is not allowed or when age/gender norms should be followed? Are there places, spaces and events that should not be open to the public? Create a means to share your protocols with all of your guests prior to arriving and at the event, with regular reminders built into the programming.

Event & itinerary planning

A well thought out agritourism event will be:<sup>1</sup>

- Respectful and representative of your lifeways and customs
- Marketed and promoted effectively
- Focused on ensuring that guests (and your community) are comfortable, safe and satisfied
- Properly managed
- Beneficial to the community and neighbors
- Organized and planned

In addition to the items listed above, you want guests to stay at your enterprise for as long as possible so they enjoy more experiences, make more memories, build relationships and spend more money. If possible, provide accommodations and all the amenities they need. If you don’t have accommodations, make agreements with local hotels and bed and breakfasts to promote each other. Determining transportation needs will depend on how your guests arrive to your event. Provide a mowed field or marked gravel lot for parking or direct guests to turnouts along roadways. Make sure that parking signs and traffic controllers are available to direct traffic and establish organized parking patterns.

**Food For Thought:** Consider how long you will be engaging with visitors. If it is a full day or multiple day event, the itinerary or schedule should include at least three meals and three events throughout the day and then transition guests back to their accommodations.

Along with itinerary documentation, it is important to document data from your events to track trends and milestones, understand visitor demographics and experiences, collect lessons learned and report to your community and partners. Table 1 is a simple example of this. It shows the first four years of growth for the Big Apple Fest. The event experienced increased success each year in terms of funding and attendance. Their humble beginnings demonstrate how an event designed to share the rich culture and history of the Oneida has resulted in increased attendance and sales each year and strengthened relationships between Oneida Nation and non-native communities.

1. <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/448/448-501/448-501.html>

Table 1: Big Apple Fest Growth Milestones

	Year 1	Year 2		Year 3		Year 4	
Funding	\$5,000	\$6,000	20%+	\$10,000	66.6%+	No data	No data
Outreach	Ads in native wspapers Flyers sent to Flyers sent to Oneida school	3,600 flyers and 400 printed cards distributed		5,000 flyers sent to elementary schools		6,100 flyers to schools Fox News 11 website article Ads played at gas station pumps	
Entertainment	Farm animals, a horse- drawn wagon, a log restoration project, old-time fishing, kids’ games and an apple pie contest	Largely remained the same as 2009 event Education Days ended due to time constraint		Added: Rhea the Trick Horse, two horse-drawn wagons and Oneida Farmers Market		Rhea the Trick Horse and Koko the One Trick Mule increased performances	
Attendance	1,000	1,500	50%+	3,000	100% +	4,000	33.3% +
Other	Distance of event from parking was a challenge	Purchased shirts for volunteers, security guards hired		Reusable signage expanded, more security hired		Second parking area added	

Challenges and hazards

Despite the Big Apple Fests’ successes, there were many challenges, such as parking and exponential attendance growth, that organizers had to address. Their planning and active problem solving contributed to their successes the following years. When planning your own event it is important to identify current challenges and anticipate ones that may come along. Address potential concerns before they become actual issues that dampen profits and stifle your event’s success.

Consult with an insurance agent to discuss any potential hazards or liabilities you may face when inviting guests to your farm, ranch or homelands. Ensure the safety of your visitors by addressing trip hazards like cables or wires, handicap accessibility and needs of Elders. Also be sure to create safety

protocols if guests are entering a working zone and could potentially get hurt. On-site transportation such as golf carts, wagon rides, shuttles or other modes of transportation may be necessary depending on the size of your event.

Check with local or community authorities about logistics like parking, occupancy limits and fire code. If your guests are parking off your property, make sure to check with your local transportation department and appropriate property owners.



# Activity One: Planning for Your Event

The following questions are designed to assist you in beginning to build an event plan.

Name of Event:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Goal profit:

Briefly describe your event:

Don't forget to

Create a timeline

Develop a marketing plan to reach potential visitors and your local community

Get necessary approvals from your tribe and local officials

Have all tour/event scripts approved by a Cultural Committee

Reach out to existing and potential partners

Conduct a risk assessment

Consult with your insurance agent before hosting guests

Message

What is the theme of the event? How does it relate to your culture/heritage?

What does the audience need to know?

Objectives

What do you hope to achieve with this event? Consider your mission statement and how this event contributes to that mission.

Activities & entertainment

What activities will there be?

Will there be multiple locations for guests to visit at your enterprise?

Will there be performers or hired entertainment?

Will there be tours? If so, are there tour plans and strategies?

What services/activities can visitors expect to enjoy?

Are there animals involved?

Partners and staff

Who are the coordinator contacts?

How many staff/volunteers will be needed? How will staff/volunteers be recruited and trained?

Have greetings and scripts been created for staff to use with guests?

How will other tribal divisions and departments be incorporated into the event?

Will other tribes, partners, neighbors and sponsors be involved?

Will vendors be included? Has there been a code of conduct developed for vendors?

Visitors and guests

How many individuals do you plan on attending? For how long?

What services/amenities will guests need at the event? (e.g. restrooms, water stations, sleeping accommodations)

What type of special accommodations will they need? (e.g. wheelchairs, Elder and handicapped parking)

What other ways can guests' experiences at the event be enhanced?

What else will encourage guests to engage?

Budget

These are a few common items to budget for:

Venue:

Supplies:

Food/Vendors:

Entertainment:

Staff:

Insurance:

Permit/license fees:

Other:

Does your budget include resources for volunteers and potential partnerships with Elders, youth and tribal programs?

Data and Evaluation

What system(s) do you need to support registration and check-in processes?

Do you need an information booth with a map of the area and schedule?

How will you manage vendor booth registrations and check-in processes?

How will you collect data about attendance?

How will you collect data about attendees?

Where will you store and analyze data?

Do you want an app for attendee event management? If so, which one and who will manage it?

Other considerations

Does your signage direct guests to your enterprise? Is it effective once on-site?

How can you incorporate your cultural, community and indigenous lifeways into the event?

How will you protect those lifeways that are not open to the public?

Are there cultural and ceremonial protocols that guests need to follow? How will they learn these?

Will you offer lodging? If so, what type?

How will you deal with inclement weather if the event is outdoors?

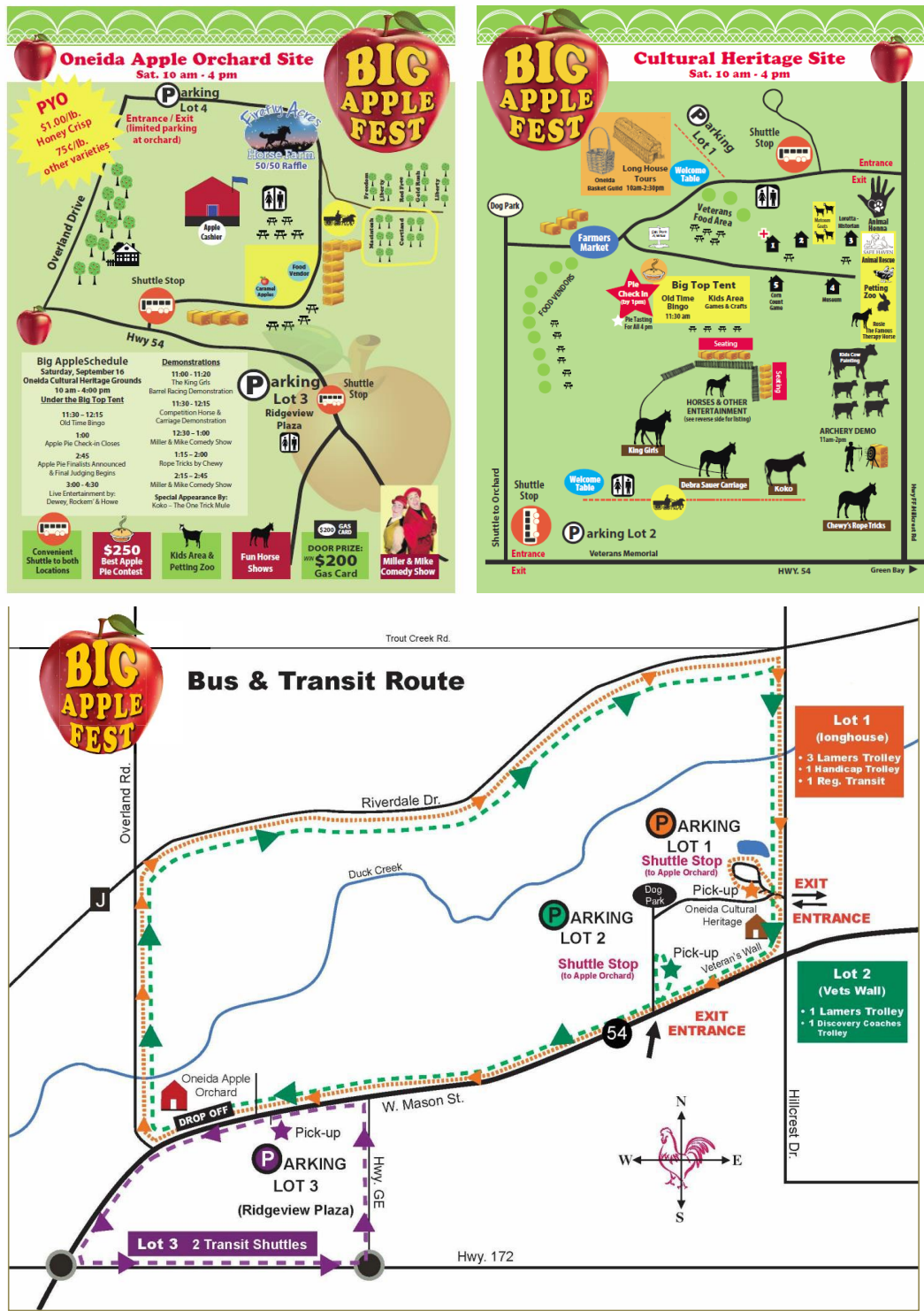
Ensure the time or place of the event does not negatively impact other events or ceremonies.

Challenges

What challenges might occur at the event or because of the event?



Example Map: Big Apple Fest maps from Explore Oneida’s agritourism case study.<sup>2</sup>



2. <https://www.ainta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Oneida-case-Study.pdf>

Activity Two: Mapping Your Event

It is helpful to create a map of your land for the event and surrounding areas. Think about guest access to events and proximity to amenities and potential hazards. Remember to highlight unique aspects of your enterprise and beautiful areas and other amenities of your homelands. Review the Big Apple Fest’s maps to get a better sense of what should be included in your map.

Instructions: Sketch out an event map to help you visualize where activities and facilities will be located.

**Things to Include**

bathrooms - cultural sites - emergency info - entertainment - events - facilities - food - monuments - parking - roads - seating - shade cover - signage - tribal buildings - vendors - vistas - water



Activity Three: Developing an Itinerary

Once a solid event plan has been created, there should be an itinerary for daily activities, demonstrations and cultural experiences.

Instructions: Develop a three-day event itinerary that complements your agritourism venture. Remember, include at least three meals and three activities throughout the day and then information on sleeping accommodations. Consider adding words that welcome and thank guests in your Native language.

	Time	Activity	Educational programming <i>How can you incorporate history and culture into your itinerary?</i>
Ex:	8:00 am	Opening Prayer & Welcome	Conducted in native language and English
	8:30 am	Breakfast in the Orchard	
	10:30 am	PickYour Own Apples	Provide hand woven baskets for pickers - explain significance
	11:00 am	Vendor fair begins	Guests are free to explore
	12:00 pm	Pie eating contest/Lunch	Artisans, food vendors, performers, etc. Guests choose their own lunch food vendors
	2:00 pm	Carriage rides begin	Guided tour of agriculture facilities and cultural sites
	3:00 pm	Rhea theTrick Horse	
	4:30 pm	Vendor fair ends	Prompts guests to transition and gather in dining area
Day 1	5:00 pm	Communal dinner	Traditional foods served
	6:00 pm	Apple goods auction	
	7:30 pm	Event ends	Close with traditional dance
		Guests return to cabins	
Day 2			
Day 3			





## // The Iroquois White Corn Project

## // Module 6 – Case Study Worksheets



# The Iroquois White Corn Project

For more than 1,000 years, Seneca White Corn has fed the Haudenosaunee People both physically and spiritually. Conflict and colonization diminished this nutritious staple crop that was considered to be a gift of the Creator, but now the Seneca Nation of Indians in New York is revitalizing its appreciation as an intrinsic part of their culture and of a healthy diet. The Iroquois White Corn Project based at Ganondagan State Historic Site encourages Seneca farmers and volunteers to come together to grow and prepare this versatile grain, and in doing so Tribal members are strengthened in their connection to their culture while sharing it with the greater world.

## A People of Peace

Ganondagan State Historic Site ([Ganondagan.org](http://Ganondagan.org)) is the home of the Iroquois White Corn project, a relatively recent endeavor to benefit the health and heritage of the Seneca Nation of Indians.

In the 1700s Ganondagan was the largest village of the Seneca Nation, a member of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy of Nations (Iroquois Confederacy) that also includes the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Tuscarora nations. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy of Nations to this day is revered for its concepts of peace and democracy that influenced the founders of the United States. The formation of this peaceful league also allowed large-scale agriculture, notably beans, squash and corn—The Three Sisters—to thrive. The village of Ganondagan is where much of the Seneca White Corn for the Confederacy was grown in the 1700s. Seneca White Corn, called onëögā:n, is a nutritious crop that made up much of the region's diet.

Today the Seneca Nation of Indians includes three territories: Cattaraugus, Allegeny and Oil Springs. Ganondagan today lies outside of the Seneca Nation of Indians land and is managed by the State of New York. Still a place of deep meaning to the Seneca People, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It presents the history and culture of the Seneca People who prefer the name Haudenosaunee (Hodinöhsö:ni')—"People of the Longhouse." Within the site's 569 acres is a reconstruction of a bark longhouse in which the Haudenosaunee lived in family groups up to 60 people. Ganondagan had 150 longhouses at its peak until the village was burned during a fur-trade war with French fur trappers. Miles of hiking trails here wend through woods and traditional farmland, and the Seneca Art and Culture Center displays artifacts to modern artwork. While Ganondagan State Historic Site isn't Tribally owned, Seneca Nation of Indians Tribal members are deeply involved with its operation, direction and outreach.

## A Return to Tradition

The Iroquois White Corn Project was founded in the 1990s by Dr. John Mohawk (director of the Center for Indigenous Studies at the Center of the Americas State University of New York in Buffalo) and his wife, Dr. Yvonne Dion Buffalo, on farmland in the Cattaraugus Territory, one of three sections of the Seneca Nation of Indians reservation. Their goal was to reintroduce this healthy and culturally important crop back to fellow Tribal members. The land of the Seneca People was greatly diminished by the newly formed United States, and missionaries further impacted the Seneca People's traditional agriculture in the 1800s by



## SECTION 6

insisting that different crops be grown (such as wheat for bread), and also that men should do the farming. Traditionally, it was Seneca women who would plant, tend the cornfields and prepare the corn kernels for traditional foods. This change in diet and culture greatly impacted the way of life for the Seneca People, and Dr. Mohawk and Dr. Buffalo wanted to help reclaim their Tribe’s relationship with Seneca White Corn.

The passing of Dr. Buffalo in 2005 and Dr. Mohawk in 2006 threatened the project until G. Peter Jemison restarted the program in 2011. Jemison, a member of the Heron Clan of the Seneca Nation of Indians, had worked with Drs. Mohawk and Buffalo on the project in its beginning at SUNY. After he became the site manager of Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, Jemison decided to re-establish the Iroquois White Corn Project at this state park dedicated to Haudenosaunee culture. Ganondagan would once again be a place for growing Seneca White Corn. The project would also create a market for small Seneca farmers and serve as a point of sale for the finished product. Revenue from sales would benefit the Friends of Ganondagan, the non-profit volunteer group that supports Ganondagan State Historic Site.

“We were able to purchase additional acreage for Ganondagan that included a small farm house,” Jemison says. “I spoke with Dr. Mohawk’s family and was able to purchase the equipment he used on the Iroquois White Corn Project. We set up shop in this farm house, and we’re still there.”

The main piece of equipment used in Seneca White Corn processing is a coffee roaster. Unlike yellow corn, Seneca White Corn must be dried, roasted and dehulled (remove the kernels’ indigestible outer covering) before it is used like hominy or be ground into a flour or meal. It’s a labor-intensive process, much of which is done by hand. The Iroquois White Corn Project processes and sells about 5,000 pounds of corn product a year.

“We quickly realized that we weren’t going to get rich

doing this,” Jemison says. “In the beginning we were approached by William and Sonoma and other large companies that wanted to carry our products, but we realized that for all of the expense, labor and time of producing that much corn at the price they wanted would hurt what we had set out to do, which is to bring this back to our people.”

Jemison says the goal of the Iroquois White Corn Project is to get Seneca Nation of Indians Tribal members eating this healthy and culturally significant food again.

“It’s a very time-consuming food to grow and prepare, and also to cook,” Jemison says. “We wanted to make it easier for people to use White Corn often in their cooking. We did want to establish a market for it, but for Haudenosaunee farmers so that it would be worthwhile for them to grow it.”

The Iroquois White Corn Project at Ganondagan State Historic Site was also able to help the Seneca Nation of Indians develop its own farm, Gakwi:yo:h Farms, Jemison says.

“One of our goals was to get the Seneca Nation itself growing its corn again,” Jemison says. “We supplied them with seeds and showed them how to process it. They now provide Seneca White Corn to our Area Office for the Aging and Head Start program. We were already selling at our One Stops (Seneca Nation of Indians-owned convenience stores), and they were able to enter that market as well. That’s a great way to make it easy for Seneca People to get the corn and use it frequently. The farm is now growing a variety of fruits and vegetables for Tribal members, including organic apples in the farm.”

## A Community Coming Together

It takes a lot of effort to grow and prepare Seneca White Corn, far more so than yellow corn, Jemison



says, because it can’t be eaten until each kernel has been roasted and dehulled, a process made easier today with cooking lime that is thoroughly rinsed afterward. Seneca White Corn is higher in nutrients than many other types of corn, and low in sugars like sweet corn. White corn is also high in fiber and protein. Once dehulled, rinsed, roasted and dried, kernels can be eaten directly like hominy, added to soups, or can be milled into flour for baking. The cornmeal can also be used in soaps as an exfoliant.

Cornfields are hand-planted and hand-weeded by staff members and volunteers. With the exception of the cooking lime used in processing, no chemicals are used during production. In addition to what is grown at Ganondagan, independent Seneca farmers are encouraged to grow Seneca White Corn organically on their land as well, and sell it to the project.

Preparing the corn for eating is a labor-intensive process, but one that traditionally brought the Seneca community together. Women would sit in a circle as they worked, sharing songs and stories and thereby

strengthening and perpetuating Seneca culture.

Today, Friends of Ganondagan and volunteers from the general public work together to process the corn. Founded in 1989, Friends of Ganondagan is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization that supports Ganondagan State Historic Site. As a 501c, it can solicit donations and apply for various grants from the state, federal and private entities, including corporate, private and State of New York Regional Development grants ([regionalcouncils.ny.gov](http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov)). Grant money and donations made to the Friends of Ganondagan allowed in part the construction of a replica bark longhouse in 1998, and the \$13 million Seneca Art and Cultural Center at Ganondagan that opened in 2015. The facility houses classrooms and demonstration spaces, an art gallery, theater, multipurpose auditorium and a gift shop, and allows Ganondagan State Historic Site to be open year-round.

Anyone is welcome to volunteer to help with activities ranging from tending the fields to helping with events such as dances, guiding trail walks and working in



the gift shop. Most importantly for the Iroquois White Corn Project, volunteers are needed to husk the cobs, hull the kernels, and perform other processing and packaging tasks including roasting that takes place in a coffee roaster at Ganondagan State Historic Site. Volunteers then use stone grinders to pulverize the corn into meal or flour that is weighed and packaged for sale in local stores, farmers’ markets, at Ganondagan State Historic Site and the Seneca Iroquois National Museum in Salamanca. Iroquois White Corn Project products are also sold online at these facilities’ websites at Ganondagan.org and shop.senecamuseum.org.

“What we try to do is continue on with the story of Dr. Mohawk, to have the communities using the corn again and growing it, and getting excited about it,” says Jeanette Jemison, program director for Friends of Ganondagan and a member of the Mohawk tribe of the Iroquois Confederacy. “We encourage people to grow their own gardens and get Iroquois White Corn back on their tables for their families.”

In order to get Tribal members excited about Seneca White Corn again, Jemison says she has developed a cookbook with recipes (ganondagan.org/whitecorn/recipes), and also works with Seneca Nation community cooks. Cooking demonstrations are also held at Ganondagan State Historic Park, and the Indigenous Food event is held annually at the Seneca Art and Culture Center in October during which accomplished Native chefs “share their insights and beliefs on their deep connection to the natural world, reciprocity, and how food sovereignty is vital for a thriving culture.”

“We’re an educational organization,” Jemison says. “But Seneca White Corn is such an important part of Seneca culture that it’s a part of everything we do.”

The time spent together working kept Seneca culture strong for centuries. This labor and time can be a detriment in terms of economics, but invaluable for continuing Seneca traditions. Every October there is a

husking bee in which people gather at Ganondagan to husk the corn and tie it into strings for drying. Elders show children how to work with the corn as it has been for centuries.

## Gakwi:yo:h Farms

In partnership with the Iroquois White Corn Project at Ganondagan State Historic Site, Seneca White Corn is a major crop being grown at the Seneca Nation of Indians’ Gakwi:yo:h Farms in Collins. The Tribal farm plants 25 acres of white corn annually throughout its Cattaraugus and Allegany territories. Gakwi:yo:h Farms first sent its corn to Ganondagan State Historic Site for processing, and now is able to process its own. It is then sold at Tribally owned Seneca Nation One Stop convenience stores and the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum (www.senecamuseum.org). Gakwi:yo:h Farms also holds farmers markets in Cattaraugus and Allegany territories, bringing healthy white corn products and fresh fruit and vegetables to Seneca Nation of Indians Tribal members weekly. In addition to corn, maple syrup, potatoes, squash and other traditional foods are sold as well. Gakwi:yo:h Farms has also started a Red Angus cattle herd at its new Great Valley farm and will be able to offer Tribal members and the general public locally raised meat.

Gakwi:yo:h Farms’ stated mission is to address food security and food sovereignty for Seneca Nation of Indians communities by implementing a traditional Haudenosaunee approach to agricultural practices, and its active Facebook page serves as a community message board for keeping Seneca Nation of Indians up to date concerning where and how to obtain healthy food.

“Our goal is to produce healthy food, employ quality food processing procedures and make these foods available to our community members, from field to table,” reads Gakwi:yo:h Farms’ mission statement. “The foundation of our mission rests on the ability to positively impact our people, to contribute to a conscious shift toward healthier eating habits and to change the way we bring

food into our homes... . By honoring the value of each corn stalk, each ear of white corn and each individual kernel, we increase our understanding and appreciation for who we are, as a people.”

Through the Iroquois White Corn Project, this mission is being met at the Seneca Nation of Indians.

Visit Ganondagan State Historic Site and its Seneca Art & Culture Center at 7000 CR 41 (Boughton Hill Road), Victor, NY 14564. (585) 924-5848; Ganondagan.org.

Gakwi:yo:h Farms is located at 13594 Taylor Hollow Rd., Collins, NY 14034. (716) 532-3194; www.facebook.com/GakwiyoH Farms.

## Agritourism Tips from the Iroquois White Corn Project:

- Let it be known that volunteers are welcome. Explain in detail how volunteers can help, and what they’ll learn in the process.
- Can a not-for-profit 501c organization be established to aid in securing grants and donations for governmental projects?
- How can partnerships with non-Tribal entities such as state-funded museums be established?
- Have a dedicated point of contact for volunteers. Make sure to check and respond to emails and all other forms of communication.
- Take advantage of point of sale opportunities within your community, from cultural centers to convenience stores. Market to your community.
- Get youth involved in agriculture. What volunteer programs or family events can you create to get your community’s children involved in cooking with healthy, traditional food? How can educational demonstrations and classes be tied to agricultural production?

- How can Elders be served by Tribal agriculture, and how can Elders help in the development of agricultural projects? Interview Elders to learn about food preparation and food security when they were growing up.
- Can Tribal culture and history be taught to school groups through explanations of modern agricultural processes?
- What grants are available to pay staff and interns? Can grant money be used to purchase t-shirts and other items for volunteers?
- What local farmers markets are available at which to sell products?
- What non-edible products can be made from the by-products of agricultural production? In the Iroquois White Corn Projects case, corn is used as an exfoliant in soap.
- How can members of your community be encouraged to participate in agricultural projects? Are there funds available to purchase their products?





# Module 6 – Case Study Worksheets

## Module Overview

Module Six discusses how to strengthen relationships between guests, tribal partners, local partners and government entities. The Iroquois White Corn Project case study looks at the successes of the Seneca Nation of Indians in establishing and maintaining relationships in their community.

## Objectives

This module will explore the following:

- Identifying and assessing the mutual benefit of partnerships
- Strengthening partnerships within the community
- Creating opportunities for long term collaboration
- Developing a tool to get to know your guests

## Case Study Summary

The Iroquois White Corn project remained true to their original message, and by doing so reincorporated traditional agricultural practices. The benefits of the Iroquois White Corn Project have radiated into the community fostering healthy, respectful relationships between tribal organizations, local nonprofits and government entities.

## Reflection Question

The following question is related to the case study and will help you think more deeply about your agriculture venture.

Q: Considering how the Iroquois White Corn Project established relationships with many partners, who do you envision building partnerships within your community?

Reflection: \_\_\_\_\_

Highlights from the case study

- Remained true to original mission
- Employed traditional agricultural practices to reconnect with cultural history
- Partnered with volunteers to help process products
- Established broad network of partners

Digging Deeper

Nourishing relationships

Successful agritourism ventures have partnered with tribal organizations, local nonprofits and government entities as demonstrated throughout the case studies. Several benefits of cultivating relationships include:

- Improves overall organizational relationships
- Creates wider resource pool
- Provides enriching experiences for community members
- Increases exposure to other groups and audiences
- Strengthens relationships between natives and non-natives

The type of agritourism venture or event you’re planning will shape your partners. Volunteers, individual donors and small producers can benefit your agritourism venture. Artists may be able to help you create signage or host activities such as creating a corn cob doll. Consider ways to enhance your guests’ experience and your revenue stream through creative endeavors and partnerships such as cooking classes or guided tours. Partnerships can bring diversity to the products you offer and can attract a wider customer base.

Identifying or creating opportunities for other members of the community to participate may strengthen your marketing. Pair your goods with other businesses such as local restaurants, art or garden centers and lodging. Encourage guests to visit other areas of your community such as local museums and businesses, resulting in a local and regional economic multiplier effect. Through these partnerships, your business will be promoted and your products can be sold at additional outlets.

Volunteer opportunities provide community members and neighbors with enriching experiences while

supporting your agritourism enterprise. Reach out to other departments and organizations to see if they are interested in supporting your efforts. Youth groups and community based organizations can be good places to recruit help (Figure 1). The Iroquois White Corn Project has established a mutually beneficial volunteer program where participants learn traditional agriculture practices, and the venture receives a processed product at a low cost. Consider inviting volunteers to your farm, ranch or enterprise for a longer enriching volunteer stay.

Figure 1: Places to Recruit Volunteers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After school programs</li><li>• Churches</li><li>• Community centers</li><li>• Community colleges</li><li>• Extended family gatherings</li><li>• Intramural clubs</li><li>• Museums with Native American committees</li><li>• Native American programs</li><li>• Schools</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Senior citizen organizations/centers</li><li>• Social media</li><li>• Sports teams/clubs</li><li>• Tribal newsletter</li><li>• Tribal societies</li><li>• Universities</li><li>• Volunteer recruitment websites (i.e. VolunteerMatch.com, Idealist.org)</li><li>• 4-H clubs/FFA</li></ul>
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Sharing resources, equipment and knowledge with other farmers, producers and artisans is a good way to give back to the community. Partnerships with local producers and non-profits can inspire training, internship and job opportunities. It can also perpetuate continued involvement from these partners, fostering long term and mutually beneficial relationships.

**Survey tool to get to know your guests**

Surveys can be helpful tools to help you better understand your guests’ needs. The responses can also provide helpful insights on your farm, ranch or enterprise and can assist in your efforts to:

- Building relationships
- Creating new partnerships
- Evaluating impact
- Obtaining funding
- Documenting revenue sources

- Understanding trends (e.g. attendance)
- Enhancing your enterprise
- Focusing marketing and outreach efforts

Tracking data through guest surveys, revenue reports and harvest loads will help keep solid records of your enterprise’s growth and can be consulted for future planning. This will help you adapt and remain competitive in the agritourism industry. Spreadsheets and virtual databases are good tracking tools. Opportunities to ask visitors to participate in surveys may include: during ticketing, at the entry, point-of-sale, conversations with staff and volunteers, follow-up emails or text surveys, and as requirements for raffles and drawings.

Along with a survey tool, a guest book is helpful to collect people’s positive stories. It may be helpful to think of surveys and other data collection tools as ways to allow people to tell their stories.



Activity One: Identifying partners

The following list is designed to assist you in beginning to identify current and potential partners. Write down individuals who represent each organization. This is a way to build your Contact List.

Partner Type	Partner Organization	Our Partners	Hope to Partner With	Contact List (individual's name)	Contact Info (phone/email)
Tribal Partners	Casinos				
	Cultural heritage center				
	Cultural resources department				
	Economic development department				
	Fish and game				
	Head start				
	Housing and transportation department				
	Native owned businesses				
	Parks and recreation				
	Planning department				
	Radio station				
	Sister enterprises				
	Tribal college				
	Tribal Historic Preservation Office				
	Tribal school systems				
	Youth center				

Partner Type	Partner Organization	Our Partners	Hope to Partner With	Contact List (individual's name)	Contact Info (phone/email)
Local Partners	Visitor Centers				
	Museums				
	Chamber of commerce				
	Colleges/universities				
	Convention and visitors bureau				
	Cruise lines				
	News station and media outlets				
	Non-profit groups				
	Other farmers				
	Restaurants				
	School districts				
	Senior citizen organizations				
	Volunteer/ community groups				
Government Entities	National Park Service				
	State tourism offices				
	State park service				
	U.S. Department of Agriculture				
	U.S. Department of the Interior/BIA				
	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services				
Others					



## Activity Two: Assessing the Compatibility of Partnerships

This activity is designed to assist you in thinking about current and potential partner organizations and individuals that may benefit your venture. Think broadly. Having a variety of partners widens your resources pool and exposes you to a larger network that can support your venture.

Use the assessment below to evaluate your current partnerships and imagine future ones.

Compatibility of Partnerships			
	YES	NO	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Does their mission align with yours?			
Do they support your venture's goals?			
Does the partnership help expand your customer base?			
Are their product(s)/offerings compatible with yours?			
Do they “give back” to your community?			
Do they understand the needs of your venture and community?			
Do they help create a cross-cultural experience?			
Do you have a strategy for maintaining good relations?			
Would the partnership be mutually beneficial?			
Is it a good idea to continue/pursue this partnership?			

## Activity Three: Example Agritourism Visitor Survey

The following survey is an example designed to assist you in developing a survey tailored to your operations, enterprise, programs and/or events. Before you begin, consider what data is relevant. To personalize your survey add any of the following information:

- The event or program title
- A logo
- An introduction statement
- A phrase in your native language that represents “Thank You” at the end
- Use checkboxes or scales for the questions, for example:
  - “On a scale of one to five . . . ”
  - “Circle the one that most applies: Love it!, Like it!, I won’t be back!”
  - Use emojis from frowny face to very happy face

Visitor Survey Example

To help us improve our tour/program/event, please fill out our visitor survey.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your age? ☐ <18 ☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-64 ☐ 65+

Have you visited this event before?

How did you hear about us? (Be specific. I.e. If a billboard, which one? If a website, which one?)

What did you enjoy most while you were here?

Is there something you wish we had, or had more of, to make your experience more enjoyable? Please explain.

How long are you staying in our area?

Can we add you to our contact list? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please do not forget to fill our guest book. Thank you!*

### Raffle

To increase visitor participation in the survey process, consider inserting a raffle opportunity at the bottom of the survey where people include their name and contact info. When they turn in a completed survey, detach the bottom portion and include it in the drawing. Be sure to include a date when the drawing will be held.

### Follow-up

For visitors that provide an email address, follow-up in 6 months to a year with a special promotion and 2-4 questions to help further prepare for the next year.



# Conclusion

Agritourism can serve many purposes. It can enrich Tribal communities not only monetarily, but also culturally by supporting private farmers, artists, dancers, storytellers and other important disciplines that contribute to the agritourism experience for visitors. It educates both visitors and tribal members about the importance of agriculture to their community. It is a way through which Elders can teach and engage with children, and through which tribes can teach the general public that their way of life is strong, relevant and an important part of greater society today.

Every Tribal Nation is different, and its history and relationship with agriculture and its land is different. For this sampling of agritourism projects, we chose Tribal Nations from several regions: Icy Strait Point in Alaska (Tlinglit community); The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation in California; Santa Ana Pueblo in New Mexico; Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; Oneida Nation of Wisconsin; and the Seneca Nation of Indians in New York. We are grateful to them for the insights they have shared, and hope readers will be inspired to consider their own agritourism projects to benefit their communities.

These are just a few of the take-aways from these case studies that struck us at AIANTA as interesting and useful to both existing agritourism programs and new projects being considered.

## What is Agritourism?

For our definition, agritourism is any farming or ranching product and/or experience that is available for sale to the general public that promotes an understanding of culture and lifestyle. Agritourism enterprises can be big or small endeavors. These case studies, and other agritourism profiles found at NativeAmeica.travel, show

that agritourism doesn’t have to be a large or expensive undertaking to be successful.

At Icy Strait Point in Alaska, cruise line guests disembark for a day of learning about Tlinglit culture through culinary and nature activities, and the importance still of gathering food from the forests and sea for the Tlinglit. The Oneida Nation of Wisconsin grows apples, and invites the public to its land for the annual Big Apple Fest. For the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, their pecans are sold in Tribally owned stores and visitor centers. Santa Ana Pueblo in New Mexico sells its blue corn online and through its resort restaurants. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation in California invites the public to its olive oil tasting room. The Seneca Nation of Indians sells its products through a State of New York-owned cultural center. While these methods for selling products vary, they all are sales outlets to the general public, and they all promote the tribes’ history and culture through in-person events or informative text on the product packaging. The public learns about the tribal food producers, and the tribe enjoys income from sales. Just because a tribe is located far away from public traffic or doesn’t own a facility for sales doesn’t mean that it can’t participate in agritourism.

## Existing Facility Tie-In

Not every tribe may have a visitor center or public facility through which to establish agritourism programs and sell their products. Reaching out to area museums, regional visitor centers and any other facilities open to the public that is set up for sales is a way to market agricultural products without the logistics of maintaining a facility for sales to the general public. Tribes can research any outlet that mentions their tribe (local museum, chambers of commerce, city and state visitor centers) and approach them as a possible point of

sale for agricultural products. Tribes can also work with these outlets to establish, improve, correct and otherwise promote their tribe’s representation to the general public, and possibly promote their other tribal businesses as well. Tribes can also schedule meetings with the staff at these facilities to explain how the tribe would like to be presented to the general public and correct any misinformation. The sale of tribal food products (ingredients to be used at home or snacks to be enjoyed on the road) is a great way to engage the public about the tribe’s history and contributions to the region, promote further learning about the tribe and encourage visitation to Tribal attractions and businesses that may otherwise have been overlooked by the traveling public.

## Why Agritourism?

Many tribes that engaged in agritourism will agree that agriculture can be a difficult way to make a profit. Many tribes have only entered into agritourism after securing the tribe’s finances through other businesses such as gaming. So if not for profits, why engage in agritourism at all?

Big or small, agritourism projects almost always begin with good water. In the case of Santa Ana Pueblo located in the arid New Mexico, water is a limited commodity throughout the arid state, and is carefully regulated. Pueblo Nations along the Rio Grande corridor are currently allowed to use as much water as they need. However, in the future this level of water usage may become locked into current use levels. In order to preserve their water rights, tribes such as Santa Ana Pueblo use agricultural projects—including golf courses—to establish water usage levels. This is one way in which agritourism not only provides food, income and cultural outreach, but also protects Tribal assets.

Large agritourism projects can also support tribal members to engage in traditional agriculture. In the case of the Iroquois White Corn Project, Seneca White Corn is purchased from individual farmers, supporting and promoting the agricultural economy within the tribe. In this way tribal members are supported and encouraged to continue traditional agricultural practices. Agritourism supports tribal agricultural businesses that in turn support tribal members.

Agritourism is a way to remember and teach the tribe’s history and culture not only to the public, but to tribal members as well. Lawrence Montoya, Governor of Santa Ana Pueblo, says he wants Santa Ana Pueblo’s children to have a connection to its land. He says he remembers riding in the back of the family pick-up truck to help in his family’s alfalfa and blue cornfields. He remembers laughing with his family and listening to stories from his Elders while working, and eating large meals with family and friends afterward. He remembers learning about his land and developing his love and respect for it. He learned the significance and importance of the land to his People—past, present and future. While Santa Ana Pueblo now makes a significant income from gaming, Governor Montoya and other tribal members agree that it is agriculture and the family bonds it creates that makes Santa Ana Pueblo the community that it is. Properly administered agritourism can enrich its communities by instilling invaluable lessons and understanding for both tribal members and the greater world.



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## Iroquois White Corn Project

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