

**Agro tourism as a potent economical element for the betterment of Kakunadura
Government Farm stay.**

(A study which has modeled on the Changsha Spring Farming Project-China)

Wijerathna H.M.R. P¹ Hettiarachchi K.H²

Harbin University of Commerce-China

rpwijerathna@gmail.com

Agro tourism can be introduced as a potent economical element that has been extensively used in underdeveloping countries for the increment of the national income. Spring Farming project in Changsha county is a major cooperative zone which is playing its significant role. According to the organizers of the project, the farm has focused on four themes: parent-child experience, vacation, leisure and science education. “Boye Organic Farm”, “Dijin Farm”, “Qixian Ecological Farm”, etc., are the successful farm stays that have built up a great deal of tourist attraction. Sri Lanka which has fertile soil suitable for farming, is an ideal environment for farm tourism but is still not properly managed. Therefore, the objective of this research was, to identify how Sri Lanka’s fertile land can be used for agricultural tourism and as a tool for strengthening the national economy. Under the qualitative methodology, grounded theory and SWOT analysis method were used for data collection. The Kakunadura Government farm stay is located in the Kakunadura area of Matara district which is over 45 acres. The farm, which is a large size accommodation for up to 30 tourists at once, features a forest, several ponds, and a beautiful environment with a lake called Ellekanda. As animals, cows, buffaloes, goats, sheep, pig, chicken and quail and as crops, coconut, pineapple and banana are already prominent in this place. In addition, Ellakanda Aranya Senasanaya is located close to this area. These are the strengths identified in the use of this farm stay as a tool to strengthen Sri Lanka’s economy. Lack of employees and capital, lack of proper guidance were the main weaknesses which could be identified by doing this study. The companies already have established dairy and meat marketing systems, as well as boating services and fishing in and around the ponds and lake can be implemented. Similarly, as opportunities, the study confirms the establishing potential of a number of activities in the area to affect tourist’s satisfaction. Overall, the farm has been identified as one of the strongest sites for promoting agro-tourism in Sri Lanka and has the potential to boost national income.

Key Words: - Agro-tourism, farm stay, tourism, Sri Lanka

Introduction.

Tourism, which already carries the bulk of world's economy, is rooted in many countries based on characteristics unique to that country. majority use climate changes, environmental conditions and archaeological value as these basic characteristics. Among the, Sri Lanka has many kinds of values. The tourism industry in Sri Lanka is primarily used today based on historical sites, beautiful environment and mild climate. But when it comes to the use of tourism in the world, tourism seems to have developed in many dimensions. Accordingly, many countries have made good use of their fertile soil factor for tourism which is known by the name of Agro Tourism. Agro tourism can be introduce as a potent economical element that has been extensively using in under developing countries for the increment of the national income. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, it has fertile soil, a favorable climate and many other resources to promote agricultural tourism. But this concept has not yet been identified as one of the most important factors for Sri Lankan tourism. Therefore, the objective of this research was, to identify how Sri Lanka's fertile land can be used for agricultural tourism and as a tool for strengthening the national economy. Kakunadura Government Farm stay in Kakunaura has been used as the study area while China's Changsha Spring Farming project has been used as a model project.

Methodology.

The methodology, which has based on this research was qualitative methodology. Under the qualitative methodology, grounded theory and SWOT analysis method were used for data collection. After a filed study, the area was identified correctly and the analytical methodology identified the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in the area to improve tourism.

Analysis.

Changsha Spring Farming project

China, which has come a long way in technological advancement, is now in a state of ecological weakness and is now carrying out various environmental activities aimed at managing its lost environment. Changsha Spring Farming project is such an activity. In Changsha county, 11 Agro-entrepreneurs have formed a development association for Agriculture, Tourism, Culture and Innovation. The concept was abbreviated under the team of spring farming.

Boye Organic Farm.

The concept of the farm is very important for students who want to learn about organic chemistry and for those who want to experience it. “the Journey to experience organic agriculture” put forward by Boye Organic farm, is a great experience for any kind of tourists who is interested on agriculture.

Dijin Farm.

“the journey to a mushroom theme park” advanced by Dijin Farm is an another type of experience for tourists. Changsha Dijin Farm is the first mushroom theme fun farm in China. Visitors, who comes to this places, can learn about the whole process of mushroom planting, from breeding to picking. They’ll have fun picking mushrooms in the open air and enjoy the Mushroom Feast, which is nutritious and delicious.

Qi Xin Ecological Farm

“The trip of planting grape trees and experiencing wine making” advance by Qi Xin Ecological Farm has expanded the short-term spring outing into a one-year practice course offering lessons in grape cutting, scaffolding, pruning, sprouting, insect control and topdressing. Visitors can also take a small grape seedling home and then wait for it to start climbing over their windowsill or courtyard.

Hunan Academy

"the journey of tea research" organized by the Tea Research Institute in the Hunan Academy of Agricultural Science. This journey gives a chance to get an experience the culture and harvesting methods of tea. Guests can study about tea-processing history as well as Chinese tea etiquette. Strolling around the tea plantation they feel the integration of nature and agricultural science research and development.

All four of these tourism have been used in one place to meet the needs of the tourism industry and to manage the domestic income of China in a very manageable manner.

Kakunadura Government Farm Stay

The government Farm stay in Kakunadura, Matara, covers a wide area of about 45 acres. Bordering Ellakanda forest on the one side with the Ellakanda lake on the other is an area of exquisite ecological condition. The area, which is rich in fertile soil, already grows crops such as coconut, pineapple and banana, and cattle, sheep and pigs are managing as livestock.

SWOT analysis.

Strengths.

- A suitable environment for animal husbandry.

Cattle, Buffaloes, Goats, Sheep, Pigs and Chickens are already spotted in this place. Therefore, visitors to the farm can feed the animals and observe their behavior directly.

- A suitable fertile soil for planting crops.

Crops such as coconut, pineapple and banana can be introduced as the current crop of the farm.

- Tourist accommodation

The farm has room that can accommodate up to 30 visitors at a time. And there is a kitchen where tourists can cook their own meals.

- Allakanda Aaranya Senansanaya

The Ellakanda Senansanaya can be described as a valuable cultural heritage located to this farm. One of the great strength of this place is that a traveler who wants to experience the Sri Lankan culture while on the farm can enjoy it.

- Ellakanda Forest

The Ellakanda forest adjoining the farm adds another value to this farm. It is a native of indigenous plants and provides the necessary water and air for the farm.

- Ellakanda Lake.

Ellakanda lake is one of the best resources in this area and is a good ecosystem that can cater to a wide range of tourism needs.

- The Farm shop

There is already a shop at Ellakanda Government farm stay to sell agro products such as vegetables, dairy, fish and eggs.

- Two natural ponds

Weakness.

- Lack of staff

At the beginning, there were about 60 employees at the site, and today there are only about 33 employees.

- Lack of skilled workers

Another problem is the lack of knowledge of Agro tourism, even though there are agricultural workers.

- Obstacles of public Communication networks.
- Lack of capital

Opportunities.

- Launching of recreational services such as boat services in the lake and two ponds.

Such services can enhance visitor satisfaction and enhance other aquatic activities such as fishing on the spot.

- Application of new crops.

There is fertile soil in which to grow all kinds of vegetables, so that tourists can get clean vegetables right away. This is another opportunity that this place has.

- Introduction of a travel package system

Between the waking hours of the morning and the evening, it is possible to introduce a travel package system that enables the traveler to acquire knowledge and experience on the entire farm process.

- Along with farm animals it is possible to establish tourism activities in the forest of Ellakanda.
- The market can be expanded so that travelers can get clean vegetables, fruits and meat.

Threats.

- Environmental problems associated with Ellakanda lake and forest.
- Diseases of animals.

Conclusions and suggestions.

In this study it was proved that the Kakunadura government farm stay has the potential to be developed as an agro-tourism zone to meet the tourism needs. By training the employees and

educating them on agro tourism, this place can be easily maintaining and the solution to the problem of shortage of workers can be solved. The site can be developed by planting a variety of plants, flowers, animals and fruits suitable for this environment and by introducing various activities such as boat tours and fishing activities to satisfy the tourists. The study also found that there is a potential for strengthening Sri Lanka's national income through agricultural tourism through improving the farm tourism.