

# TOWN OF ESSEX AGRITOURISM WORKSHOP:

## EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT & RULES AND REGULATIONS - KEY TAKEAWAYS

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Presented by the Town of Essex and Culinary Tourism Alliance

### GREAT AGRITOURISM EXPERIENCES

#### Elements of Great Experiences

- Establishes a personal connection
- Promotes your unique selling proposition – What sets you apart?
- Is time-bound
- Can be purchased
- Supports learning
- Is more than a service or product you provide regularly

#### Examples of great agritourism experiences

**Hands on Harvest Tours, Covert Farms:** Rated #1 of 53 things to do in Oliver, Okanagan Valley, with a 5-star rating from 213 reviews. Their winery tours are also listed as a Canadian Signature Experience with Destination Canada.

- Private hands-on harvest tour
- Private estate tasting
- Private picnics
- Kid's tour & tastings

#### Links:

- <https://www.covertfarms.ca/visit/>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YO74OlsQdo&feature=emb\\_logo&ab\\_channel=GurusExploreTV](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YO74OlsQdo&feature=emb_logo&ab_channel=GurusExploreTV)

**Tree to Table, Ottercreek Woodworks:** Experience does not take place at a farm. Won both Culinary Experience of the Year for the entire province AND tourism experience of the year in Ontario's Southwest.

#### Links:

- [https://www.tourismoxford.ca/things\\_to\\_do/culinary\\_and\\_farms/cheese\\_trail/cheese\\_trail\\_experiences/from\\_tree\\_to\\_table\\_a\\_build\\_your\\_own\\_board\\_experience.aspx](https://www.tourismoxford.ca/things_to_do/culinary_and_farms/cheese_trail/cheese_trail_experiences/from_tree_to_table_a_build_your_own_board_experience.aspx)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hggtrpOinF8&t=44s&ab\\_channel=TourismOxford](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hggtrpOinF8&t=44s&ab_channel=TourismOxford)



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### PEOPLES, PLACES, PROCESSES, PRODUCTS

At the foundation of great tourism experiences, especially agritourism experiences are four (4) Ps: **Peoples, Places, Processes, and Products**

#### Peoples

- The visitor journey, which includes all those connections with your and other businesses in the destination, is highly conditioned and influenced by the people they meet and interact with along the way. Great agritourism businesses know this, and they work to ensure that visitor interactions with the peoples, the characters, the storytellers behind the business are not only high frequency but also high quality.

#### Places

- Destinations are both “a” place and made up of many places. Agritourism provides visitors with the opportunity to experience places that they never have or don't often get to experience because of where they live or what they engage in daily. Some examples include, agricultural landscapes, farmyards, fields, homes, out buildings, roadside stands, fairs, markets, and the list goes on, are all places that excite and delight visitors.

#### Processes

- Visitors are becoming more interested, able, and willing to learn and participate in both recreational, educational, and work activities while they are travelling for pleasure. While making processes a key component of your agritourism experiences is a non-question, spend time thinking about unique and innovative ways for visitors to be exposed to the processes in your business.

#### Products

- Products are what entice visitors to your business, what they want to hear about from your peoples, be exposed to in your spaces, participate in through your processes, and ultimately consume or purchase from you. Even if you're running a farm tour that relates to a product that can't be purchased, there are many opportunities to collaborate with other growers, producers, and artisans, to ensure that products are a feature of your agritourism experience.

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### MULTISENSORIAL COMPONENTS

It is important to first engage and then stimulate the 5 senses to create a fuller awareness of surroundings and a memorable agritourism experience - **sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste**, and agritourism experiences naturally lend themselves to ticking off all these boxes.

One model to use is the *head, heart, hands, stomach* model which illustrates the sensorial, cognitive, and emotional parts of multisensorial experiences:

- **Head:** Providing stimulation that encourages the customer to think and reflect.
- **Heart:** Providing opportunities for critical reflection and connecting with the emotions
- **Hands:** Helping visitors to actively engage or participate in hands-on activities
- **Stomach:** Meeting needs like hunger and/or incorporating tastes of place

### PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT, AND DELIVERY

#### DESIGN

##### 1. Start with what you know

- a. Confirm if it's a new or enhanced experience
- b. Confirm capacity, personnel, and time
- c. Identify the target market(s) for your potential experience
- d. Confirm that idea based on market needs and opportunities

##### 2. Craft your concept

- a. Write down your idea, including how you will:
  - i. Respond to customer needs and how the experience addresses them
  - ii. Differentiate or enhance your experience
  - iii. Connect your 4 Ps (People, Place, Process, Product)
  - iv. Support and draw from your environment and community
- b. Identify potential partners

#### DEVELOP

##### 3. Infuse your concept with life

- a. Identify and inventory your experience's sensorial opportunities
- b. Confirm the sensorial and storytelling elements along the experience

##### 4. Give your concept structure

- a. Confirm experience journey:
  - i. Time required and activities related
  - ii. Equipment and resources needed
- b. Confirm and co-create with stakeholders (e.g., staff, suppliers, customers, DMO, etc.)
- c. Set your price and sales channels
- d. Define measures of success and monitoring mechanisms



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### DELIVER

#### 5. Prepare & Pilot

- a. Train your team and partners
- b. Connect your experience to destination narratives, USPs, and product
- c. Pilot the experience with local contacts and allies

#### 6. Action

- a. Promote (and sell) your experience to guests
- b. Deliver your experience
- c. Keep your customers engaged

#### 7. Learn and adapt

- a. Evaluate based on your measures of success and customer feedback
- b. Adapt, adjust, and enhance your experience based on evaluation learnings

## RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR AGRITOURISM DEVELOPMENT

### On-farm Diversified Uses

- OFDU Official Plan policies and Zoning regulations adopted in 2015
- A **use** that is **secondary and subordinate** to the **principle agricultural use** of the property and is **limited in area**
- Permitted mainly in agricultural areas and residential districts which allow agricultural operations

### Permitted uses:

- Retail or wholesale store
- Take-out food outlets
- Workshops or other home industries
- Uses that produce value added agricultural products from on farm production
- Agri-tourism uses that promote the enjoyment, education or activities associated with the farm operation

### Prohibited Activities:

- Motor vehicle repair garage or collision shop
- Automobile sales lot or gas bar
- Heavy repair shop
- General or motor salvage operation or transfer centre
- Major or minor commercial centre

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### Relevant Rules and Regulations:

- OFDU are permitted in a dwelling
  - Limited to 25% of Gross Floor Area (GFA)
- OFDU are permitted in an outbuilding
  - Limited to 90 square metres (968 square feet)
- OFDU needs to be carried on exclusively by the persons participating directly in the operation of the farm or residing on the farm and maximum of two (2) other persons not directly participating in the operation of the farm or residing on the farm
- No external storage of goods, materials or equipment
- No generation of perceptible noise, odour, fumes or dust beyond the boundaries of the lot
- **Always contact Planning or Building before establishing an OFDU**

### Looking to the future:

- Zoning Bylaw Amendment to define Agri-tourism uses
- Removing or amending square footage limitations for OFDU's in outbuildings
- Permitting Outdoor Markets in agricultural districts

### Planning Division Contact

[essexplanning@essex.ca](mailto:essexplanning@essex.ca)

519.322.7974

### FREE RESOURCES

#### Experience Development

- **Elevating Canadian Experiences “Multisensory Experience Development” Webinar, TIAC**  
<https://ecehub.tiac-aitc.ca/en/webinar/multisensory-experience-development/>
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Experience Development Toolkit**  
[https://www.gov.nl.ca/tcar/files/creat\\_exp\\_toolkit-1.pdf](https://www.gov.nl.ca/tcar/files/creat_exp_toolkit-1.pdf)
- **Tourism Queensland Experience Development Modules:**  
<https://teq.queensland.com/industry-resources/how-to-guides/experience-development>
  - **Toolkit:**  
<https://cdn2-teq.queensland.com/~media/b1000264adc34a3b3bdea74d4656b5de7.ashx?vs=1&d=20170921T080825>



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- **Destination Canada, Canadian Signature Experience Program:**  
<https://cdn2teq.queensland.com/~media/b1000264adc34ab3bdea74d4656b5de7.asx?vs=1&d=20170921T080825>

### Town of Essex Rules and Regulations

- **Town of Essex Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw:**  
<https://www.essex.ca/en/build/zoning.aspx>
- **Guidelines and Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas:**  
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/permitteduses.htm>