



ISSN 2349-638X

REVIEWED INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

**AAYUSHI
INTERNATIONAL
INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH JOURNAL
(AIIRJ)**

MONTHLY PUBLISH JOURNAL

VOL-II

ISSUE-XI

NOV.

2015

Address

- Vikram Nagar, Boudhi Chouk, Latur.
- Tq. Latur, Dis. Latur 413512
- (+91) 9922455749, (+91) 9158387437

Email

- editor@aiirjournal.com
- aiirjpramod@gmail.com

Website

- www.aiirjournal.com

CHIEF EDITOR – PRAMOD PRAKASHRAO TANDALE

AGRO-TOURISM: SCOPE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FARMERS IN KOLHAPUR DISTRICT (MS)

Shri. Shashikant S. Patil

Assistant Professor,
MahavirMahavidyalaya, Kolhapur

Dr.Arun A. Patil

Head,Department of Geography
Mahavir Mahavidyalaya, Kolhapur

Introduction

In today's busy, fast stressful life the need to get away from it all has become an essential part of life. As a result the number of people opting out for travelling to far away tourist destinations is on the rise. People have a varied purpose during their trips like visiting religious places, historical monuments, sightseeing on new locations, entertainment, etc. Thus tourism has become an important industry, contributing to income source for the local population and adding to the per capita income and GDP in general.

Farmers in village are engaged in farming activity throughout the year. Their income from farm depends on good monsoon, good harvest and good marketing. It is experienced that the income from agriculture farming is only once or twice in the year, but the expenses are on weekly basis, it is very difficult for the farmer to sustain throughout the year, since the income is not sufficient. To make farming sustainable and feasible there was a urgent need of some experiment in addition to the traditional farming.

Agro-tourism is an innovative agricultural activity related to tourism and agriculture both. It has a great capacity to create additional source of income and employment opportunities to the farmers. Maharashtra is one of the major tourist centers in the India and there is large scope and great potential to development of agro-tourism.

Objectives

1. To examine the importance of agro-tourism development in Kolhapur District.
2. To define a suitable framework for the of agro- tourism centers in the view of marginal and small farmers.

3 To identify the problems of the agro-tourism and make suggestions to establishment and operations of agro-tourism.

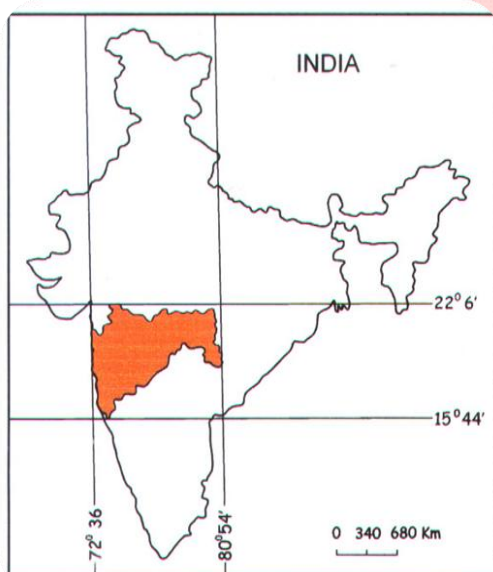
Study Area

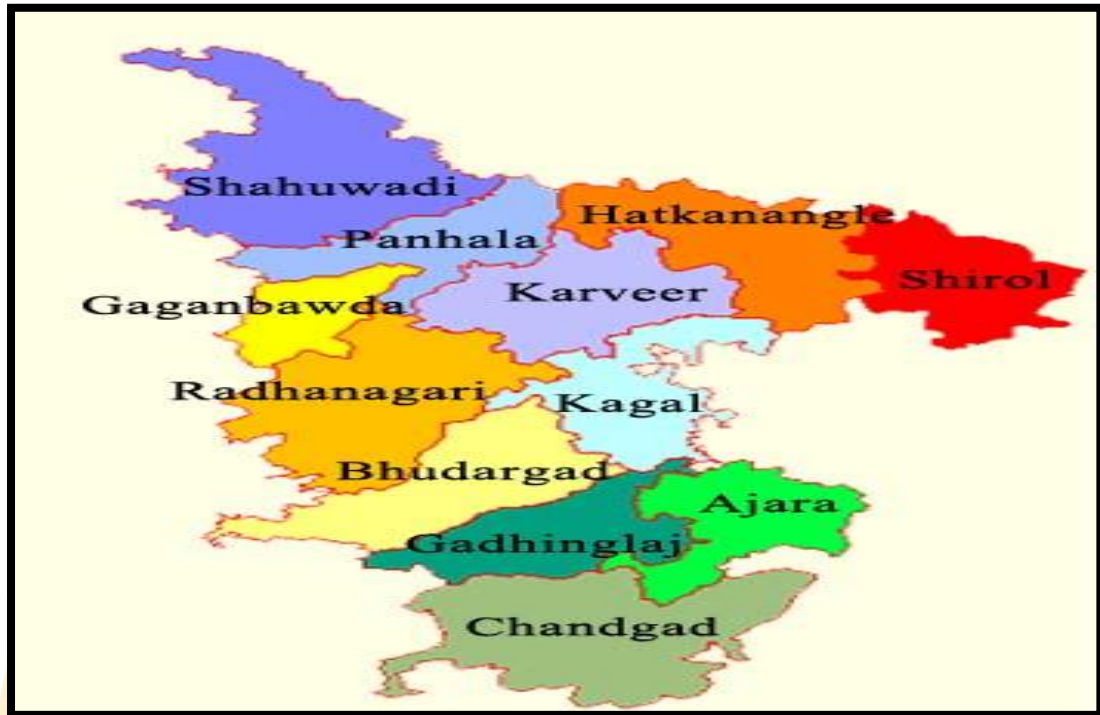
Location of Kolhapur is $16^{\circ} 42'$ North $74^{\circ} 15'$ East, The district is surrounded by the steep ridges of Sahyadri to the west, the Warana River to the North, part of River Krishna to the east and Belgaum from Karnataka to the South. The area of Kolhapur district is 7746 sq. km. and it is 2-5% of the the state area. The river banks of Bhogavati, Kumbhi, Kasari, Panchaganga, Tulshi, Dhamani, Warana, Dudhaganga, Hirnyakeshi, Ghatprabha contain fertile soil. The mountainous region in the west is made up of red laterite and hard black rock. The district also has deposits of bauxite and basalt rock.

Kolhapur is nationally and internationally well known for its ancient temples, religious importance and sacredness. It is also known as Dakshin Kashi (South Kashi) and it is one of the three important holy paces (Shaktipeeth). Tirupati Balaji is the richest temple in south India with a huge tourist inflow. Most of the tourists visit Goddess Mahalaxmi in Kolhapur after their visit to the Tirupati temple. Similarly the number of tourists who visit temples at Jyotiba, Nursinhawadi, Vashi, Adamapur and 23 more such places is very high.

Tourists from Goa, Karnataka, Andhra visit Kolhapur in large numbers and also tourists from other parts of Maharashtra. Transport is available through air, railways, state transport and other buses. The cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Gondia, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Tirupati, Bangalore are well connected by rail. People from other parts can make use of these stations for their travel to Kolhapur.

LOCATION MAP OF KOLHAPUR DISTRICT





Data & Methodology

Present study is based on secondary sources of data. Data is obtained from Socio –Economic Abstract of Kolhapur district (2012), Kolhapur district tourism Plan (2012) and Kolhapur gadget. Statistical tools like percentage, average etc. have been used in the study. Data is processed & represented by the different graphs.

Scope Of Agri – Tourism In Kolhapur District

Agri-Tourism has great scope in the present context for the following reasons:

1. An inexpensive gateway –

The cost of food, accommodation, recreation and travel is least in Agri-Tourism. This widens the tourist base. Present concept of travel and tourism is limited to urban and rich class which constitutes only a small portion of the population. This widens the tourist base

2. Curiosity about the farming industry and life style –

The urban population having roots in villages always have had the curiosity to learn about sources of food, plants, animals, raw materials like wood, handicrafts, languages, culture, tradition, dresses and rural lifestyle. Agri-Tourism which revolves around farmers, villages and agriculture has the capacity to satisfy the curiosity of this segment of population.

3. Strong demand for wholesome family oriented recreational activities -

Villages provide recreational opportunities to all age groups i.e. children young, middle and old age, male, female, in total to the whole family at a cheaper cost. Rural games, festivals, food, dress and the nature provides variety of entertainment to the entire family.

4. Health consciousness of urban population and finding solace with nature friendly means-

Modern lifestyle has made life stressful. Hence, people are in constant search of pro-nature means to make life more peaceful. Ayurveda which is a pro-nature medical approach has roots in villages. Indigenous medical knowledge of villagers is respected. Organic foods are in greater demand in urban areas and foreign countries. In total, health conscious urban population is looking towards pronature villages for solutions.

5. Desire for peace and tranquility –

Modern life is a product of diversified thinking and diversified activities. Every individual attempts to work more, in different directions to earn more money to enjoy modern comforts. Hence, peace is always out of his system. Tourism is a means for searching peaceful location. Peace and tranquility are inbuilt in Agri-Tourism as it is away from urban areas and close to nature.

6. Interest in natural environment –

Busy urban population is leaning towards nature. Because, natural environment is always away from busy life. Birds, animals, crops, mountains, water bodies, villages provide totally different atmosphere to urban population in which they can forget their busy urban life.

7. Disillusionment with overcrowded resorts and cities –

In resorts and cities, overcrowded peace seekers disturb each other's peace. Hence, peace is beyond cities and resorts. Even though efforts are made to create village atmosphere in the sub urban areas through resorts, farm houses, it looks like a distant replica of the original.

8. Nostalgia for their roots on the farm –

Cities are growing at the cost of villages. Villagers are migrating to cities in search of jobs and to seek the comforts of modern life. Hence, yesterday's villagers are today's

urbanites. Deep in the heart of urbanites lies the love and respect for their ancestors and villages. Hence, visit to villages satisfies their desire. This is also expressed through the hatred of urbanites to flat culture and love for farmhouses located in the outskirts of cities. Any opportunity to visit villages and spend time with family is dream of any urbanite. But, minimum decent facilities are always problem. Agri-Tourism attempts to overcome this problem.

9. Rural recreation –

Villages provide variety of recreation to urbanites through festivals and handicrafts. Farmer's lifestyle, dress, languages, culture/traditions which always add value to the entertainment. Agricultural environment around farmers and the entire production process could create curiosity among urban taught. Places of agricultural importance like highest crop yielding farm, highest animal yielding farm, processing units, farms where innovations tried add attraction to the tourists. Agricultural products like farm gate fresh market, processed foods, organic food could lure the urban tourists. As result of this agri – atmosphere in the villages, there is scope to develop Agri – Tourism products like agri-shopping, culinary tourism, pick and own your tree / plot, bed and breakfast, pick and pay, bullock cart riding, camel riding, boating, fishing, herbal walk, rural games and health (ayurvedic) tourism.

10. Educational value of Agri-Tourism –

Agri-Tourism could create awareness about rural life and knowledge about agriculture science among urban school children. It provides a best alternative for school picnics which are urban based. It provides opportunity for hands on experience for urban college students in agriculture. It is a means for providing training to future farmers. It would be effectively used as educational and training tool to train agriculture and line department officers. This provides unique opportunity for education through recreation where learning is fun effective and easy. Seeing is believing, doing is learning.

Basic Principles Of Agri – Tourism

Agri - Tourism should ensure the following three basic principles.

1. Have something for visitors to see –Animals, birds, farms and nature are few things which Agri-Tourism could offer to the tourist. Apart from these, culture, dress, festivals and rural games could create enough interest among visitors in Agri-Tourism.

2. Have Something For Visitors To Do – Participating in agricultural operations, swimming, bullock cart riding, camel riding, buffalo riding, cooking and participating in the rural games are few activities to quote in which tourists can take part and enjoy.

3. Have Something For Visitors To Buy – Rural crafts, dress materials, farm gate fresh agriculture products, processed foods are the few items which tourist can buy as memento for remembrance.

Three Important Factors Contributing To The Success Of Agri-Tourism

1. Farmer –

In majority of the cases, farmers are less educated, less exposed and innocent. For a farmer, any outsider is a guest and is treated wholeheartedly without any commercial motive. Treating guests is pleasure for the villagers than pain. The farmer entertains the guest while entertaining himself in the process. He is not like an exploitative natured businessman which itself facilitate a clean tourism atmosphere.

2. Village –

Villages, located far from the city lack urban facilities, but are blessed with natural resources. Investments are made by nature in the form of water bodies, fields, forest, mountains, deserts and islands. The community structure is more homogenous and treating guests is part of the culture rather than a professional activity leading to natural environment required for such form of tourism.

3. Agriculture –

Rich resources in agriculture namely land, water and plants are unique from place to place bringing diversity and creating curiosity. Each field is unique which adds to the attraction of tourists. The way of cultivation and the products are great attraction to the urban population. Indigenous knowledge of rural people is a wealth, which adds to the novelty and the curiosity of urban population. Combination of farmer, village and agriculture creates a wonderful situation which provides unlimited satisfaction to the tourist especially from urban areas.

Issues Needing Attention For The Promotion Of Agri-Tourism**1. Publicity –**

It is difficult to provide publicity to a remote Agri-tourism unit. Hence, either collectively such Agri-tourism operators can provide publicity or organizations like ITDC, State tourism development corporations, NGOs, press and tour operators can take up this responsibility. Information technology can play very important role in promotion of Agri-tourism. An interactive website containing all details about Agri-tourism locations and a toll free 24 hours help line can provide necessary information to Agri-tourists.

2. Transport –

Reaching the remote Agri-tourism units is the greatest challenge due to lack of approach roads and poor transportation facilities in rural areas. Tele connectivity is must which is yet to reach villages. Government should play important role in creating these facilities namely roads, transport and telecommunication to rural areas especially where Agri-tourism units are established on priority basis. These efforts could be effective with private participation in partnership mode.

3. Accommodation –

Safe and clean accommodation is must in Agri-tourism. Urban and foreign tourists look for these minimum facilities. Orienting Agri tour operators on one hand and providing incentive to such efforts on other hand is necessary. Regular clean water supply and neat toilets are important. At the same time, it is necessary to limit modern facilities in which Agri-tourist is not interested.

4. Networking –

Networking public and private stakeholders at national and state level to assist the Agri-tourism operator at remote place is necessary. This network can get policy support, infrastructure and publicity to Agri-tourism units.

5. Capacity building of farmers –

Farmer need to be oriented on maintenance of facilities, hospitality and public relation which he is not aware 6. Safety of tourists – Agri-tourism units are located in remote areas which lacks roads, medical facilities, telecommunication and sometimes threat from theft

and wild animals. Hence, support of local population is must besides facilities for emergency medical care.

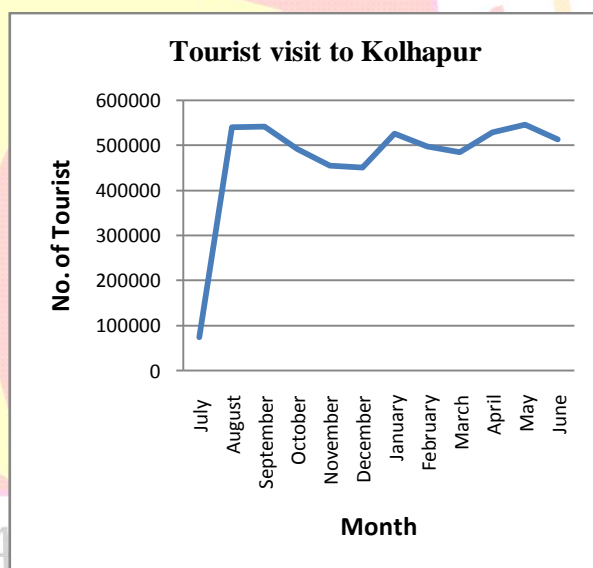
7. Public - Private partnership –

Agripreneurs, farmers’ organizations, cooperatives, NGOs and agribusiness companies can take up these ventures with the help of farmers and government agencies tour operators. Transporters and hospitality industry would also benefit in the process.

Agro-tourism Potential in Kolhapur district :

I) Number of tourist visit to Kolhapur District

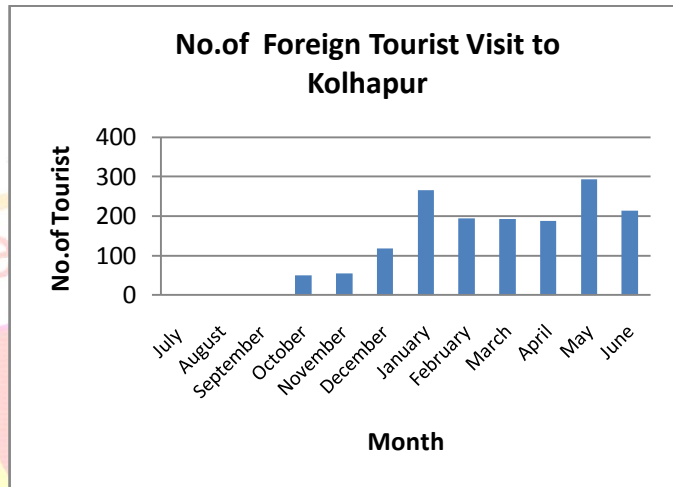
Sr.No.	Month	Total No.Of Visitors	
		Maharashtra	Kolhapur
1	July	38811520	74938
2	August	6576499	539092
3	September	6410321	541171
4	October	9615689	490634
5	November	9523251	455063
6	December	10260569	449689
7	January	12388527	524964
8	February	11630198	496677
9	March	11206380	484011
10	April	10808651	528198
11	May	11364167	544987
12	June	11110911	512566
	Total	149706683	5641990



Source- Socio-economic abstract of Kolhapur District 2012

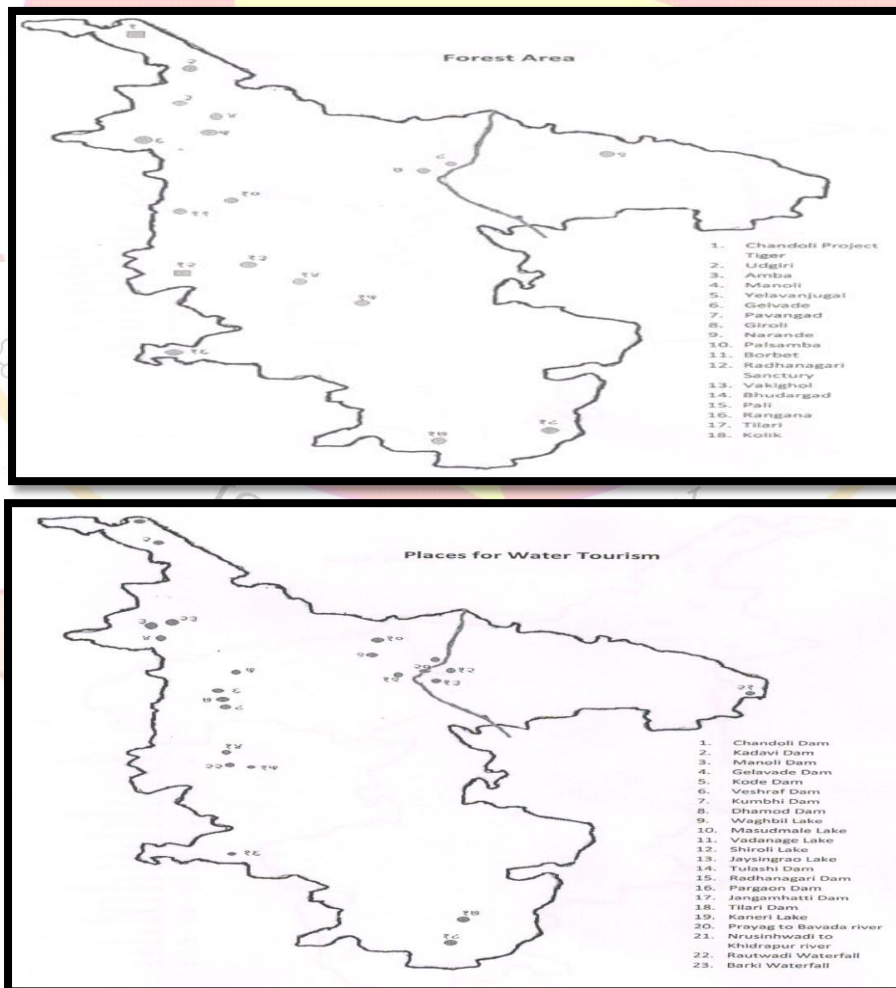
II) Number of Foreign tourist visit to Kolhapur

Sr.No.	Month	No.Of Tourist
1	July	0
2	August	0
3	September	0
4	October	50
5	November	56
6	December	118
7	January	266
8	February	195
9	March	194
10	April	188
11	May	295
12	June	214
13	Total	1576



Source- Socio-economic abstract of Kolahapur District 2012

III) Places have potential for development of Agro tourism centers



Source: Kolhapur District Tourism Plan

1) Medicinal Plant's Park – Ajara

Ajara Taluka is rich with biodiversity. Many medicinal plants are found in this talukas. Flowers, fruits, stem, root of plants are used as medicines in the form of churna, aark, gander, etc. Such experiments are initiated in Ajara taluka. Hence Ajara Taluka can be provided with necessary facilities and can be given proper publicity from tourism point of view. Nursery of medicinal plants, processing unit, selling counters, information centre and therapy centre can be developed there.

2) Agro-mall – Chandgad

Though Ajara and Chandgad are the two important talukas in Kolhapur district, they have remained unattended. Number of varieties of rice, cashew nuts, vegetables, potato, cereal, etc are the major crops in the area. Along with these crops mango, jackfruit, Eugenia jambolana (Jambhul), medicinal plants are also produced in this area. These two talukas are on the boarder of Karnataka and Goa states which will be an advantage for agro tourism. All the information of Importance of different farm produce, their processing can be made available in the form of Agro tourism.

3) Foot hill of Masai plateau

Number of Foreign and local tourist visit to Pnahala fort. But out of that very few tourist visit to masai plateau. The tourist attract with the surrounding of Panhala and masai, which has rural setup. This area has much potential to development of agrotourism. Traditional farming,

4) Dams-

Chandoli, Kadavi, Manoli, Gelavade, Kode, Veshraf, Kumbhi, Dhamod, Tulsi, Tilari, Ratadhanagari etc. dams & their surrounding agricultural region has great potential for agrotourism. these are the famous forest places to which number of tourist visited. If we create the facilities of accommodation, Entertainment or presenting the rural life by different means, then we can attract these tourist to our farms.

5) Lake -

Waghbil, Masudmale, Shirol, Jaysingrao lake, Kaneri lake, Atigre, Ramtirth these are the famous forest places to which number of tourist visited. If we create the facilities of

accommodation , Entertainment or presenting the rural life by different means, then we can attract these tourist to our farms.

6) Forest -

Chandoli, Amba, Devrai, Manoli, Yelwanjugai, Udgiri, Pawangad Anuskura, Padsali, Padmasatti, Borbet, Manbet, Dajipur, Idarganj Patgaon Vakighoil, Devrai-pali , Samangad , Dharanmola, Pernoli Sada Kolik, Pargad, Jangamhatti Lasxmi Tekadi , Allamprabhu Narande these are the famous forest places to which number of tourist visited . If we create the facilities of accommodation , Entertainment or presenting the rural life by different means, then we can attract these tourist to our farms.

7) Waterfalls –

Barki , Rautwadi , Amboli etc.waterfalls attract urban people towards this place. If near to that places by our innovative thinking we could give something for visitors to see, something for visitors to do , something for visitors to buy in our farms we can develop agro – tourism

Iv) Promotion Of The Agro-Tourism In Kolhapur District

ATDC is now providing following facilities to the farmers of Maharashtra;

- Prepare Agri Tourism project report and business plan of the each applicant agriculture farm.
- Help facilitate the financial support from Nationalize Banks, Institutes and Government Agencies to built Agri and Rural Tourism facilities
- and infrastructure like accommodation, sanitation, approach road etc.
- Conduct Agri Tourism Business Training Program.
- Conduct seminars and conferences on agri tourism business Conduct lectures of the successful National and International Farmers in agritourism business
- Provide sales and marketing support.
- Conduct and coordinate tours from urban areas to the farms.
- Arrange National as well as International Agri Tourism Center study tours.

V) Problems Of The Agro-Tourism In Kolhapur District

The Kolhapur District has a greater potential of the development of the agro-tourism centres due to the good natural and climatic conditions. But there are some problems in the process of agro-tourism development in the state. Major challenges and problems are follows;

- Ignorance of the farmers regarding to such type of activities.
- Lack of perfect knowledge about the agro-tourism.
- Weak communication skill and lack of commercial approach of the small farmers
- Lack of capital to develop basic infrastructure for the agro-tourism
- Presence of unorganized sector in the Agri-Tourism industry.
- Ensuring hygiene and basic requirements considering urban visitors
- Lakhs of farmers have small size holding, low quality land and little or no access to credit or irrigation. Have to negotiate with consistent drought.

References:

- 1.Dev, Mahendra S. (1996), *Agricultural Policy Framework for Maharashtra: Issues and Options*, Proceeding/Project Report No. 21, July 1996, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai.
2. Pandurang Taware ,Director Sales & Marketing, Agri Tourism Development Corporation, Pune India '*Agro-Tourism: Innovative Income Generating Activity For Enterprising Farmers*'
3. *Tourism Policy of Maharashtra – 2006*
4. *Statistical Abstract of Maharashtra State* (2006-07), Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Planning Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai.

- ☐ www.agritourism.in
- ☐ www.ncagr.com
- ☐ www.ncsla.com
- ☐ www.agritourismworld.com

पाटील अरूण . अ . [३०१३] कृषी पर्यटनाने होईल रोजगाराची पेरेणी . दै . सकाळ रविवार दि . २५ जुलै २०१३ . कोल्हापुर आवृत्ती .

पाटील अरूण . अ . [३०१३] कृषी पर्यटनाला हवी एकदिशा दै . सकाळ रविवार दि . २८ जुलै २०१३ . कोल्हापुर आवृत्ती .