

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN ANIMAL FARMS WHICH PRACTICE AGROTOURISM

ALBU SIMONA¹, MIREA AMELIA¹, MARIN SORIN¹, VĂDUVA LOREDANA¹,
PETROMAN CORNELIA*¹

¹*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Agricultural Management*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: c_petroman@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Visiting animal farms, by peoples of any age category, falls in the category of farm education, the action being an alternative to mass tourism. The development of farm activities, with educational activities for children and young people of school age, should propose concrete objectives, for understanding how to obtain farm products, their way of processing, their nutritional value, making them curious to experience life in rural area, to be able to convey to future generations, aspects of food production. Educational tourism at the animal farm has to propose the development in all age groups, but especially to children and young people, learning the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for raising and exploiting animals, developing culinary programs for improving the diets, introducing organic products in schools, to take measures to protect areas near the farms and human communities.*

Keywords: *farms, educational tourism, agrotourism*

INTRODUCTION

The growing importance of tourism in general and of farm tourism, with educational character, has increased the concerns for the most accurate knowledge of this phenomenon, by intensifying the efforts of the specialists from the field, regarding the scientific rigorous definition of the content of tourism activities, the delimitation of its scope and interferences with other areas of the economy [1,3,7]. There are at least three motivations, for any urban age category that influences the choice of tourism practiced in the rural area: unprofessional or professional farm, small and medium, village and space. The farm is a symbol for the age groups living in the city, it is the farmer's house, the one who knows the secrets of nature, is the place where different species of domestic animals are exploited, with which the city inhabitant has lost contact, is the place where can be consumed fresh and sure animal products [2,4,9].

The village also occupies an important place in the imagination of all age groups that develop their activity in the urban environment, it signifies the human dimension, social privacy and local animation. The rural area represents the integration of farm and rural life into the service of rural tourism, being the symbol of freedom, breath, pure water, greenery, flowers and colors, inviting to the pastoral landscapes, but also to physical activities to the farm. Rural tourism is an activity that takes place in a non-urban populated area, and if it is carried out on the animal farm and has as purpose the education of visitors, can be defined as educational tourism on the farm [5,8]. Rural tourism includes agrotourism, which is an alternative activity, bringing additional income for farmers, is seen as a form of educational tourism, less attractive than the adventure tourism, but well-managed can be a strategy worth taking into consideration for economic recovery of areas of rural areas [6,10].

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Because rural tourism includes, agrotourism, as an alternative activity at the farm, being seen as an educational form of tourism, through the ingredients offered: appreciation of culture and rural activities, assisting or participating to farm activities, learning how to prepare a farm product, highlighting life, art, culture and rural heritage, we have proposed,

within this scientific approach, some farm activities to be implemented through education, appreciation of local values of animal farms and cultural identity of great importance, because the act of visiting a farm means enriching the knowledge about business, pleasure, education, and active involvement in specific farm activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Assisting or participating at farm activities is the essence of country life, the appreciation of culture and of the activities of obtaining and processing livestock farms, are activities of an educational nature, occasioned by spending of a period of time at the farm. Children and young people who, through school curriculum, spend a period of time at the animal farm, meaning a form of tourism, educational tourism, must understand:

- How to produce raw materials in the farm, milk, meat, eggs;
- The process method of raw materials, obtaining meat products, cheese;
- The distribution method of farm products during the agricultural year;
- To contribute to the perpetuation of craftsmanship, the obtaining of cheese, bellows cheese, smoked curd;
- To experiment the traditional obtaining way of some farm products;
- To value healthy food.

For adults who live in the urban area and visit the farm alone or with children of school age, they need to know:

- farm products;
 - the farmer's lifestyle;
 - aspects of life in rural areas;
 - to contribute to family health by recommending the consumption of products obtained in the farm;
 - to contribute to preserving the rural environment by purchasing organic food;
- In case of schoolteachers accompanying school-age children visiting the farm:
- acquainting the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for animal husbandry, production processing, product capitalization;
 - developing culinary programs for improving children's diets;
 - encouraging associations to protect the environment;
 - introducing organic products into school units.

In order to provide a quality service, and education of the visitors regarding farm activities, it is advisable to develop a farmer's guide with the purpose:

- to educate farmers to enter into contracts with educational establishments as model farms;
- to prepare the farmers to convey knowledge;
- to convey practical ideas;
- to promote activities specific to age category;
- to be able to offer for sale products emblem of farm;
- to promote the farm as an economic entity.

The time that visitors willing to gain knowledge, spend on the farm, can be used by all age groups for both recreational and educational purposes through two educational tools: direct experience and direct observation. The best way, in the learning process, is to experiment directly, through human senses (see, smell, hear, taste and touch). One of the modern techniques, which allow children and young people to develop their understanding and memory, is represented by the process of interaction through four senses (smell, hearing, taste, and touch), with elements they usually do not have access in urban areas. In this case, children and young people are asked to "guess" which are the things, with which they came into contact. In the context of a visit to the farm even the simplest aspects of life

and work on the farm, milking animals, calf feeding, feeding pony, ride with the carriage, making cheese represent a valuable experience.

In order to achieve personal growth, through direct experience, it is recommended that the groups of visitors are not too large, for each person to have the opportunity to actively run their planned activities. Involvement of children through direct experience does not just mean doing a full-fledged activity, such as milking sheep by children, they do not have the capacity to carry out such activity, but they can assist and even give a helping hand, by bringing the turn of sheep. Before the educational visit, a preparatory stage is useful, for acquiring the general notions of the elements and activities they will come into contact with. In this respect can be used various teaching materials, especially photographic materials, for the recognition of animal species, production, processing of raw material, nutritional value of products, importance of consumption for human health. During a dairy cow farm, can be directly an exercise of direct observation on the main forage plants - more precisely an identification exercise - with the aid of teaching materials presenting foraging plants: asking the identification of forage plants in the field with the help of teaching materials received at the entrance in the farm. In this case, the different parts of the plant - root, stem, leaf, flower, fruit, etc. may be identified-depending on the season and then identifying the plants in nature.

Planning a farm visit is the first step that needs to be considered by the person in charge with the visit management. Joined by this first stage, an important role is played by: management of the activities to be carried out on the farm; visitors safety management, regarding the avoidance of epizootic diseases and zoonoses.

The planning of the visit will take account by the season in which it will take place, since the activities in which the visitors will be involved are specific to each season in part. In order to provide a quality service to the visitor, the farmer must take into consideration the following aspects: to inform whether among visitors with special needs; to know the specific interests of visitors and focus on them; to be informed about the maximum number of those that will visit the agrozootechnical farm, in order to provide products for tasting; to know the age and the education level of potential visitors; to present the list of prices of the products and services offered; to establish together with organizers the duration of the practical activity and the number of participants.

Along with the planning of educational activities, the farmer has to take into account the following aspects related to the management of the activities:

- to ensure the possibility for all participants to be engaged in different activities;
- to ensure the safety of the participants to the activities involving the contact with the animals;
- to be flexible in planning activities, leaving more time for some desired activities, interacting with young animals, lambs, piglets, foals, calves.

Implementation of educational activities in livestock farms consists in identifying the farms of animals with vocation, followed by the analysis of educational activities. In order to accommodate those persons interested in visiting the farm, the farmer will have to provide facilities for the elderly as well as those with special needs, which will facilitate the access to the services and activities carried out. Another extremely important aspect is represented by the provision of a healthy and environmentally friendly diet, coming from the farm's own sources. For these reasons, within the livestock farm development plan the farmer must focus on promoting and developing the identity of the region in which he operates. In order to achieve this goal, he must contribute to preserving and perpetuating holidays and other events specific to rural areas, promoting local cultural heritage, producing and distributing traditional local products. Another important aspect for

promoting rural identity is the preservation of the traditional farm's specificity, preserving the shelters, the shelter for the storage of the fodder, the traditional breeds.

The implementation of educational activities in the animal farm requires a constant innovation process that can take place through: introduction of new pastoral-rural activities; diversification of activities according to the age of farm visitors; determining the visitor of any age to repeat the experience in the future; determining visitors to care for their favorite animal for as long as possible.

Within livestock farms, an important role is played by educational activities, in which is foreseen the interaction with animals, especially horses, often attracting the sympathy of all age groups with which they interact. By interacting with them, the horses are left to be cared by chewing, brushing, cleaning the hooves or riding assisted by the instructors. By investing time in hygiene and cleaning the horse, not only is realized the dressing, but also the identification of the health problems, but also the knowledge of the necessary utensils for the activities carried out with the horses: horseshoes, harnesses, classic saddles, amazons, saddle sessions, instruments for body hygiene, brush, rim comb, cleaver tools. In case of the activities developed in the livestock farm, horses can be used for both traction and riding. In this sense, equitation deals with defining the right way to ride, self-mastery, following certain rules for a horse riding horse to be properly prepared to meet each riding style. Ridings through nature represent a highly appreciated recreational and educational activity, and for this reason it is useful to involve the farmer substantially, both financially and in time, for the care of the horses for their maintenance, training, training and use at various educational activities. The most common riding techniques are represented by two major styles: English and Western, each of these styles require specific riding equipment for horse and rider, and they have a certain way of controlling and using a riding horse. The specificity of each style of riding is defined by the original leg fitting and ladder stacking, of seat position and saddle seating, of using the gravity center, of cogwheel, of spurs and reins.

CONCLUSIONS

Visiting the livestock farm in pleasant conditions has economic effects for the farmer, who promotes his products, but also for visitors who complete their knowledge, practicing this form of educational tourism in rural areas. The activities carried out have the purpose to highlight rural lifestyle, farm products, craft processing methods, all contributing through education, to choosing a healthy eating style. The best way to learn technological processes of food production is to experience directly through human senses using modern techniques that allow children, young people and adults to develop their understanding and memory capacity, through interaction, with the elements offered by farm activities, to which usually do not have access in urban environment.

Planning farm activities represents the first step to be taken into account by the person in charge with the management of the visit, because management of visitors' activities and safety must take into account the specificities of each farm activity, so that the acquisition of knowledge, or education to be done without risks, because each person actually participates in the activity, even to the interaction with the animals.

The implementation of educational activities in livestock farms consists in identifying livestock farms with tradition in animal husbandry, traditional processing of products, followed by analyzing the activities desired to be promoted. The most promoted farm activities for educational purposes are those of participation in specific activities, milking, cheese production, culinary preparation of meat, but also animal interactions activities, pet care, but also education for working with horses for horseback riding or transport.

REFERENCES

- [1]. **ADAM KATHERINE L.**, 2004, Entertainment Farming and Agri-Tourism Business Management Guide. National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service
- [2]. **ANDRIOTIS K., VAUGHAN D.R.**, 2004, The Tourism Workforce and Policy. Exploring the Assumptions using Crete as the Case Study. In: *Current Issues in Tourism 7 (1)*: pg.66-87
- [3]. **MARIN DIANA**, 2015, Study on the economic impact of tourism and of agrotourism on local communities, Research Journal of Agricultural Sciences, vol 47, Issue 4, pg.160-163
- [4]. **MARIN DIANA, PETROMAN I., PETROMAN CORNELIA, BĂLAȘA MIHAELA, CSAHOLCZI A.**, (2015), Study on specific activities of agrotourism, Research Journal of Agricultural Sciences, vol 47, Issue 4, p.164-168, Timisoara
- [5]. **PETROMAN CORNELIA, MIREA AMELIA, LOZICI ANA, CONSTANTIN ELENA CLAUDIA, MARIN DIANA, MERCE IULIANA**, 2016, The rural Educational Tourism at the Farm. *Procedia Economics and Finance* 39, pg.83-87
- [6]. **PETROMAN I., STAN ANDREEA, PETROMAN CORNELIA, MARIN DIANA, STATIE C., DUMITRESCU A.**, 2012, Impact of tourism on rural development, *Scientific Papers Animal Science and Biotechnologies* 45 (1), pg.454-455
- [7]. **PETROMAN I., PETROMAN CORNELIA, MARIN DIANA, CIOLAC RAMONA, VĂDUVA LOREDANA, PANDUR IOANA**, 2013, Types of Cultural Tourism, *Lucrări Științifice Zootehnie și Biotehnologi* (Scientific Papers: Animal Science and Biotechnologies), ISSN 1221-5287, Editura Agroprint Timișoara, vol.46 (1), pg. 385-388
- [8]. **PETROMAN I., VARGA MELANIA, CONSTANTIN ELENA CLAUDIA, PETROMAN C., MOMIR B., TURC B.**, 2016, Agritourism: An Educational Tool for the Students, With Agro food Profile, *Procedia Economics and Finance* 39. pg.83-87
- [9]. **ROBERTS L., HALL D.** (Eds.), 2001, Rural Tourism and Recreation. Principles to Practice. Oxon – New York: CABI Publishing
- [10]. **RUSSELL BRITTANY**, 2003, Agri-Tourism Workbook. Guide to Discovering New Ways to Build a Successful Agriculture Business through Direct Farm Marketing. Agri-Business Council of Oregon