

# Fact Sheet

## U-Pick Agritourism Operations



### U-PICK OPERATIONS



U-Pick operations can create an increased revenue stream, reduce harvest labor, allow for diversification of the farm, and increase public visibility. Customers are looking for an experience. Examples include:

- Berries
- Tree Fruit
- Vegetables
- Flowers
- Christmas Trees

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### PERMITTING AND COMPLIANCE

Ensure that your operation complies with all relevant regulations and obtains necessary permits. These could include:

- Zoning
- Parking
- Signage & Handwashing
- Parking & Accessibility
- Safety & Employee Training

### FARM LAYOUT

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- Consider the flow of customers, including arrival, parking, check in, entering & leaving the u-pick area, check out, and exiting the farm.
- Is the farm accessible to all customers and if not, how can you accommodate everyone?
- Where are the restrooms and wash station located?



### SUCCESSFUL ATTRIBUTES



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- Adequate Parking
- Directional Signage
- Open Weekends and Summer Holidays
- Accommodate Children
- Courteous and Knowledgeable Employees
- Lots of Shade (or tents to provide shade)
- Clean Restrooms
- Up to Date Pricing Clearly Posted
- Containers for Picking
- Wide Rows, Clean Rows, and Weed Free Fields

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### PAYMENT AND ONLINE TICKETING

Payment: Make sure to accept various forms of payment including credit card and cash. Online Ticketing: One option to help alleviate customer flow is to institute online ticketing. This allows for the operation to determine staffing and reduces wait time for customers.



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## MARKETING

- Develop a robust marketing strategy to attract visitors. Utilize online platforms, social media, and local partnerships to promote your agritourism offerings and create a strong online presence.
- Consider joining buy local directories and tourism listings to widen your reach.
- Make sure to cover the four P's of marketing
  - Product: Is the product unique and plentiful?
  - Price: Will the cost cover your inputs and pay the owner?
  - Promotion: How are you going to promote your operation? Website, Social Media, etc.
  - Place: Is the farm in a location that people can easily find or do you need to consider signage to help customers find the farm?



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## FOOD SAFETY AND PET POLICY

- Food safety is very important for a farm. This leads to the importance of having places for customers to wash hands.
- It is encouraged to keep pets out of the farm fields to reduce food safety risk.
- If your farm has a pet policy in place, it is important to share the policy on your website, social media, and signage around the farm.



## INSURANCE & LIABILITY

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- Check with your insurance company to make sure your operation is covered.
- NYS Safety and Agriculture Tourism Act: Make sure to have adequate signage based on this law to help reduce liability.



## CROP PLANNING, SUCCESSION PLANTING, AND SEASON EXTENSION

Crop planning, succession planting, and season extension can help extend your u-pick season. If you are a u-pick strawberry farm and want a longer u-pick season - consider planting some additional crops such as sunflowers, flowers, pumpkins, etc. This will extend your agritourism experience on the farm by a few months, which will lead to additional on farm sales.

## Additional Resources:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension Agritourism: <https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-cooperative-extension/work-teams/agritourism>
- NY Safety in Agricultural Tourism Act: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/news/state-agriculture-commissioner-releases-guidance-safety-agricultural-tourism-act>
- National Young Farmers Coalition: [Farm Stands and U-Pick Operations - Food Safety Guidance](#)