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**THE ESSENCE OF AGROECOTOURISM AND ITS ROLE IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS**

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Abstract

The article discusses the essence of agroecotourism and its role in the development of rural areas. One of the most important strategic goals of state policy is to create conditions for the sustainable development of rural areas, the preservation of existing rural settlements in all the variety of existing forms of rural settlement. The development of tourism infrastructure in rural areas and, in particular, agro-tourism, can become one of the factors contributing to the diversification of the rural economy, increasing employment and incomes of the rural population; small business development, including in alternative areas of employment, and consequently, improving the quality of life in the countryside.

Keywords: agroecotourism, development, rural areas, historical and cultural heritage, quality of life.

Introduction

Agro-ecotourism is a trip made for the purpose of environmental education and education of tourists. However, modernity requires that a different, broader meaning be invested in the concept of agro-ecotourism, not limited to the goals of environmental education. The emphasis on ecological upbringing and education creates a temptation to classify all trips with natural history as agro-ecotourism. For this reason, visiting nature museums is almost always equated with a form of eco-tourism. But the main goal of the agritourist is not education in nature, but the consumption of environmental resources, including informational ones. Ecological resources are the properties of the natural balance of the components of the natural environment (animals, vegetation, soil, climate, relief, etc.), which was formed without the active influence of human activity. The main value of ecological resources is naturalness. It is she who attracts tourists from cities where people constantly feel the negative impact of polluted air and water, noise and social conflicts. By consuming ecological resources, vacationers receive a health-improving and educational effect [2].

Agritourism is precisely that new field of activity and research, where the interaction of directions of both economic and non-economic nature, both global and national levels, is traced, in particular, the provision of domestic and international tourism services, the development of the regional economy and agricultural production, the solution of global environmental and social problems, preservation of cultural heritage and national traditions. Separate aspects of these areas, if we consider each of them as independent; have been studied enough in domestic and foreign science [5].



Rural tourism is a sector of the tourism industry that uses the natural, cultural, historical, social and other resources of the countryside to create a comprehensive tourism product. It includes all types of recreational activities in rural areas: pilgrimage, hunting, fishing, etc. A prerequisite for this type of tourism is the accommodation of tourists in rural areas [2].

In the Republic of Belarus, agro-tourism and ecological tourism are the most widespread of all types of rural tourism. Agro-ecotourism is understood as the temporary stay of citizens of the Republic of Belarus, foreign citizens and stateless persons in the countryside of the Republic of Belarus for the purpose of recreation, health improvement, and familiarization with the natural potential of the republic, national cultural traditions without engaging in labor, entrepreneurial or other activities. The main goals of agro-ecotourism are recreation, health improvement, the opportunity to familiarize tourists with the natural potential of the republic, national cultural traditions. The object of agro-ecotourism is a rural estate - a house in the countryside on a landscaped area with isolated furnished rooms and a kitchen. Being a kind of agro-tourist farm, the agroestate is a mini-hotel in the countryside [3].

The development of agro-ecotourism as a promising direction of the country's economy presupposes as necessary conditions:

- The availability of free or conditionally free housing stock in rural areas;
- a sufficiently high level of comfort and good condition of this housing stock; systemic state support for agritourism farms: making a political decision to support rural tourism as a service sector;
- organizational support: the creation of special structures that provide systematic assistance and organize this sector of the tourism industry, as well as the introduction of information technology, which allows creating a large-scale agritourism market in a virtual form;
- regulatory and legal (adoption of relevant laws and state programs), information and advertising and information support for the promotion of aggregate national and regional agritourism products;
- financial support (a system of concessional lending to agricultural tourism farms) [4].

Compliance with these requirements will make agro-ecotourism a promising strategic direction for the development of rural areas, one of the types of productive non-agricultural business that is beneficial for both rural residents and local authorities, since the developed tourist infrastructure has a beneficial effect on the economic and social life of the territories, allows you to increase tax revenues to the local budget.

An important condition for the organization of agritourism activities is the development of accommodation facilities in rural areas. This implies either the presence in rural areas of free or conditionally free housing stock: houses, estates, cottages that were not originally created as hotels, but suitable for their conversion into tourist accommodation facilities, or the construction of special agro-tourism facilities - tourist accommodation facilities that perform the function of rural hotels [1].

Catering for tourists along with accommodation services is an important component of agritourism activities.



In addition to accommodation and meals, reception in a rural estate involves the provision of many additional services (recreation, health improvement, entertainment, excursion services, transfer services, etc.).

It should also be noted that agro-ecotourism is not only the accommodation of a tourist in a rural house, but also the functioning of the entire infrastructure of a rural region, including good transport links, places of leisure, information services, places for selling souvenirs, shops, restaurants, cafes.

That is why the functioning of agro-ecotourism is influenced by a large number of various factors that can be combined into groups.

The nature of the factors of the socio-economic group is embedded in the level of economic development of the region:

- ✓ the level of well-being and solvency of the urban population - potential tourists;
- ✓ employment and standard of living of the rural population - the host country; quantity and quality of free (conditionally free) places of accommodation for tourists;
- ✓ the number of food, entertainment and other facilities that provide services to tourists;
- ✓ development of local infrastructure [3].

The influence of factors of the economic-geographical group is based on the remoteness of rural tourism objects and places of permanent residence of potential tourists (geographical factor), as well as the ability of tourists to get to places of rest (economic factor). This group includes the following factors:

- remoteness from rural tourism objects of "suppliers" of tourists, which are traditionally megacities, as well as large industrial and regional centers;
- the development of tourism infrastructure that provides travel for tourists to the place of recreation and back.

Natural and climatic factors influence the flow of tourists and its seasonal changes. The factors of this group include:

- the intensity of use and the state of resort and recreational areas traditionally used by urban residents for unorganized recreation;
- the state of the natural environment and the ecological situation in the areas of agroecotourism;
- seasonal state of the natural environment and the possibility of satisfying tourist interest in certain objects;
- seasonal nature of individual objects of tourist interest [4].

As the next group of factors influencing agro-ecotourism, organizational factors are highlighted. Based on the name of this group of factors, it can be seen that they influence through the organization of agroecotourism and the provision of tourist services. The following may be included in this group:

- Organization of agroecotourism management system;
- information support of agroecotourism;
- regulatory and legal support for the functioning of agro-ecotourism;
- regulation and support of agroecotourism by state authorities and local governments;



- the presence of tourism organizers on the ground, their organizational and legal registration and readiness to serve tourists;
- qualification of personnel of agro-ecotourism objects;
- quality and range of offered tourist products.

Social factors also have a significant impact on rural tourism, which include:

- the state of public order in the region (criminogenic situation);
- ensuring the safety of stay for tourists in the region;
- the possibility of obtaining timely and high-quality medical care in the region [5].

Table 1.

For the state	For the countryside	For agroecotourists
Replenishment of the budget	Additional income	Active holidays in the countryside
Reducing unemployment	Creation of new jobs	Consumption of fresh food.
Rural community activation	Improvement of the village infrastructure	Direct contact with the nature.
Promotion of national cultural traditions	Activation of the rural community	Participation in the life of the rural community
The use of predominantly low-cost resources, primarily natural, socio-cultural and historical heritage	An impetus for the development of other sectors of the economy (transport, construction, trade, culture, handicrafts and trades)	Studying the culture of the region, its historical and natural heritage.
Inflow of additional investments and income	Preservation of the culture and historical heritage of the rural region	Acquisition of new skills and experience of life in the countryside
Cuts off destructive layers and is focused on creating conditions for the successful development and quantitative growth of local society	Acquisition of new knowledge, skills, advanced training of the rural population for organizing the reception of guests	Studying the cycle of production, observing pets
Development of business and cultural ties	Increasing the self-esteem of the personality of rural residents	Cultural enrichment, interest development

The significance of this type of tourism activity for the state as a whole, rural areas and tourists is manifested in many aspects, which can be traced in table 1

Thus, agroecotourism contributes to the diversification of the local economy, the formation of demand for local goods and services, the emergence of new sources of income for farmers and individuals, and the activation of the rural population in the development of a new type of activity.

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