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## AN EVOLUTIONARY FRAMEWORK OF ITALY AGRITOURISM DEVELOPMENT: ACTUAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF THE AGRITOURISM GROWTH IN UZBEKISTAN

**Abstract:** Agritourism is a new tourism product introduced in Uzbekistan based on agricultural attraction. There is a great opportunity for fostering the agritourism, while many local farmers and entrepreneurs are not still interested moving forward because of the shortages in the establishment of legal frameworks and policies as well as making farmers aware of alternative sources of income is not promoted. However, today, many European countries have developed very successfully not only in the agriculture sector but also in agritourism. Modernization of the agricultural sector in Italy, Germany, France, Greece, Great Britain and other countries of the region revealed the demand for agritourism. The evolution of agritourism in Italy could be an excellent role model for many countries and this may be a useful framework for Uzbekistan. The purpose of this paper is to analysis the path of the development of agritourism in Italy and its implementation of the successful development practice in Uzbekistan.

**Key words:** agritourism, Uzbekistan, Italy.

**Language:** English

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### Introduction

Agritourism is one of the most unique opportunities to combine aspects of the tourism and farming industries to provide tourists, farmers and communities with a number of financial, educational and social benefits. Agritourism provides farmers with an ability to generate additional revenue and an opportunity for customers to sell directly. By increasing the number of visitors to an area and the

length of their stay, it enhances the tourism industry. Agritourism also offers communities the potential to increase their local tax bases and new opportunities for employment. In addition, agritourism provides the public with learning opportunities, helps conserve agricultural land, and allows states to expand businesses. Though farming can build new potential revenue streams, it also creates new legal challenges for farmers and landowners.

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Today, a dramatic alteration of tourist's demands local food and experiences on farms has led to rapid increases in "agritourism" around the world. There is, therefore, a necessity to develop agritourism to provide rural communities with additional sources of income in Uzbekistan. While many countries have already founded their development of agritourism and adopted policies, strategies for the last 30 years, this has just started to progress in Uzbekistan. However, at present time, the main problem hinders the development of agritourism in Uzbekistan and whole Uzbekistan which the absence of legal mechanisms regulating agritourism activity, this is a crucial factor, according to the Italian experience: for the development of this sector, a specific law on agritourism should have to be adopted. Agritourism is still seen as more complex type of tourism by local farmers and entrepreneurs. Due to the fact that they do not have enough information and knowledge what to do and how to develop agritourism in their farms. The development of agritourism in rural areas of Uzbekistan is primarily targeted to the sustainability of farming activities and to ameliorate the viability of the rural areas, improving the quality of education, the medical and social services, reducing unemployment, and investing in rural infrastructure (Rustamov, 2007). Most importantly it is a good opportunity to develop tourism and improve local people's lifestyles without using expensive infrastructure and providing tourists the most comfortable living conditions.

As a tourism offer, agritourism appeared in Europe around the 1960s. The popularity of rural and mountainous areas, in particular, (Lane, B, 1994) What is rural tourism? *J. Sustain. Tour.* 1994, 2, 7–21.) as a possibility to spend a second holiday has increased in most countries (Ghere, s, M.,2003) *Agroturism, de la Tradiție la Oferta Comercială; Editura Risoprint: Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 2003*). The growing intensity and dimension of this sector require the establishment of legal frameworks and policies to regulate it. These frameworks serve to enable the application of incentives or subsidies to the providers (Thomas Streifeneder 2016). There is a diverse approach for establishing legal provisions in some countries. In Italy agritourism was officially recognized in 1985, when the Italian parliament and senate adopted the National Legal Framework for Agritourism (Law no. 730/1985; Italian Government, 1985). Entrepreneurial diversification of a farm was the basic concept of agritourism. This was later amended by the laws No. 228 (2001) and No. 96 (2006) "Regulations of Agritourism" (Italian Government, 2001 & 2006), when the concept of agritourism was privatized and extended to agricultural firms, which resulted in an increase of commercial agritourism. In Spain, for example, agritourism is not regulated at the national level, for by means of a national framework regulation, but at a regional level. This is because the regional

autonomous communities have the competences for managing tourism (Hernández-Maestro, 2010: 28f). As for Poland, "there is no single, consistent rule that regulates the conditions for the establishment, organization and operation of an agritourism farm in Poland" (Kubal and Mika, 2012: 5). Despite that agritourism has successfully developed in these countries and it has been being considered "engine" of the agricultural industry of many countries. In Italy, for instance, over the past ten years, the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) has registered an over 60% increase in farms offering agritourism, totaling 23,406 agritourism farms and this led to generate around €1.36 billion income (ISTAT, 2017). Recent statistics on agritourism revealed that the global market size of agritourism is expected to reach \$10.16 billion by 2024 (Agritourism Can Drive Socio-Economic Development In The Caribbean forbes.com).

The findings are the result of both quantitative and qualitative analysis. To carry out the quantitative analysis the first step has been to detect the rural areas in Uzbekistan. In this way we have selected three different indicators in order to include social, economic and ecological dimensions of rurality. The qualitative analysis was conducted through 120 semi-structured interviews (entrepreneurs and local and international tourists) and three focus groups in different rural areas of Uzbekistan.

### Research objective

- study the potential of farms for being agritourism as tourist attractions in Uzbekistan;
- making a suggestion development and promotion guidelines for farmers to start agritourism in Uzbekistan.

### Research questions

Based on the intersection of quantitative and qualitative information date, the key research questions are as follows.

- Why is agritourism vital in Uzbekistan?
- Is there any legal basis for agritourism activity for local farmers, entrepreneurs, and investments?
  - Are there any facilities for agritourism development in rural areas of Uzbekistan?
  - Do the farmers wish to start with agritourism activities?

The purpose of this paper is that making a suggestion to fostering agritourism in Uzbekistan based on utilizing Italy's experience. More specifically, the paper discusses how these policies and business decisions are being implemented in Italy and the possibilities of implementing them in Uzbekistan.

### Literature review

Theoretical and practical aspects of Uzbekistan rural tourism, and its other economic indicators were analyzed by the number of uzbek scientists and

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researchers in Uzbekistan, such as R.Hayitboyev (2015), and E.Togaymuradov (2016). However, the issue of efficient use of agritourism development opportunities in Uzbekistan as the main part of rural tourism has not been thoroughly studied yet. Agritourism is based on the landscape, tradition and family-based farming from which may emerge a complete competitive tourism product. For example, Matyakubov&Defrancesco (2018) evaluated the potential role of agritourism activities, their contribution to the sustainable rural development in Uzbekistan, considering the tourism potential of rural areas. However, Matyakubov (2017) provided analysed the content of rural tourism, development experience of agritourim some European countries and possibilities and ways of development of rural tourism in Uzbekistan. Also Matyakubov (2018) elaborated on the meaning and concept of rural tourism, and also the analysis of current condition of tourism sector of Khorezm region.

This, therefore is very important to learn agritourism development experiences of Italy and using from these in Uzbekistan including leading agritourism regions such as Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, Tashkent and Samarkand.

It is widely believed that there are many ways to define agritourism and it was found that the concept of agritourism is not addressed properly in Uzbekistan. In the literature, there are several terms such as agritourism, farm tourism, farm based tourism, and rural tourism that are often used instead with agritourism (Barbieri and Mshenga, 2016; Roberts and Hall, 2015; Wall, 2016). Literature reveals multiple definitions for agritourism based on range of characteristics. However, there is not a generally accepted one definition. Barbieri and Mshenga (2008) defined agritourism as any activity developed on farm with the intent of attracting guests. Maruti (2009) defined agritourism as an innovative agricultural activity related to tourism and agriculture both in which has capacity to create additional source of income and employment opportunities to the farmers and local communities. From the viewpoint of the utilization of Italy experiences, which are crucial for the diversification of agritourism. Agritourism in Italy has enjoyed steady growth and, this presents a successful model of the development of agritourism. In this context, the evaluation of diversified agritourism activity in Italy can provide important information on the future evolution of agritourism, not only in Italy, but also in other parts of the world (Yasuo Ohe and Adriano Ciani (2011): Evaluation of agritourism activity in Italy: facility based or local culture based?). Evaluating conceptually and empirically the diversification of agritourism in Italy and clarifies how facility-based or local culture resource-based activity determines the price level of agritourism services by incorporating the concept of cultural capital (Throsby, 2017). Filippo Randelli

(2014) analyzed in the case of Tuscany (Italy) that the multifunctional agricultural sector encouraging the development of alternative sources of income in rural areas whilst safeguarding the environment. For instance, multifunctionality concerns themes such as the joint production of commodity and non-commodity outputs, public goods and externalities resulting from agricultural activities.

### Agriculture sector of Uzbekistan

Agriculture is an important sector of Uzbekistan, accounting for approximately 28 percent of GDP and employing about 27 percent of the labor force (3.6 million people). Exports of agricultural products contributed approximately 10 percent to Uzbekistan's external earnings in 2019 (State committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on statistics stat.uz). Cotton and grain are the country's principal crops. The government of Uzbekistan is today, paying more attention to increase agricultural productivity through the adoption of new technologies, and to further develop processing and packaging capabilities to add value to domestic and export products.

Agriculture is one of the national economy's prior and important industries. Uzbekistan is one of the most favorable regions for the cultivation of both various agricultural and industrial crops. Agriculture is a leading sector by number and proportion of all those in the economy who are employed. The sector provides the requisite food to the population, and raw to other economic divisions. Most of the sown fields, and most under commercial crops, are irrigated lands with a strong state irrigation system. The collective farms of the Soviet-type have been restructured to common stock and other non-state agricultural organizations. The non-state sector's share of the total quantity of agricultural gross product has increased. The growing of cotton is a leading agricultural field. Uzbekistan, as the world's northernmost cotton producer, achieves annual bumper harvests of raw cotton. With wheat and barley growing, the grain production also grows in the dry land areas. The corn is grown on the irrigated land. The areas under grain crops are also on the rise. It should be emphasized that Uzbekistan has been effective in securing grain self-sufficiency.

The countryside advanced farms cultivate mouthwateringly delicious apples, pears, quinces, grapes, sweet cherries, cherries, prunes, apricot, as well as subtropical crops such as pomegranate, persimmon, and in the southernmost regions-the sugar cane. Fruit and vegetables grown in Uzbekistan are regarded as the best in the Orient on the sugar content and other characteristics. The grape represents a good source for the viticulture industry. The country's wine-makers produce over 30 varieties of wines annually, as well as different styles of cognac and champagne.

Melons and watermelons grown in the country are mouthwateringly delicious due to the proven good

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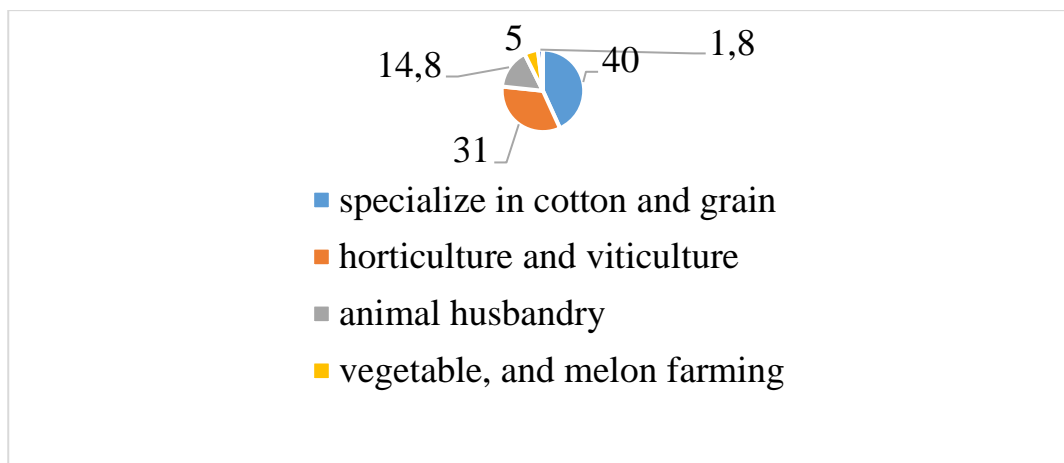
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growing practice, as well as long sunny days observed nationally during summer. In Uzbekistan's agriculture the animal husbandry plays no less important role. In particular sheep breeding is an important sector with its historic astrakhan fur making traditions. The given sphere is mainly based in the provinces of Bukhara, Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, Samarkand and Jizzakh, as well as the Karakalpakstan Republic.

To improve the country's food security, the Government of Uzbekistan has emphasized wheat production and supported poultry and animal farming

over the past few years. Moreover, the profitability of fresh fruit and vegetables has increased in recent years and local farmers have aggressive plans for developing export markets for these products. For instance, over 16 million tons of fruit and vegetables were produced by local farmers in 2019 (State committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on statistics stat.uz). And also, Uzbekistan is currently one of largest exporter of fruits and vegetables as well as Uzbekistan holds the second place on export of apricot and fifth place on cherry.

**Diagram 1.1.1. Types of farms in Uzbekistan (thousand units) 2019**

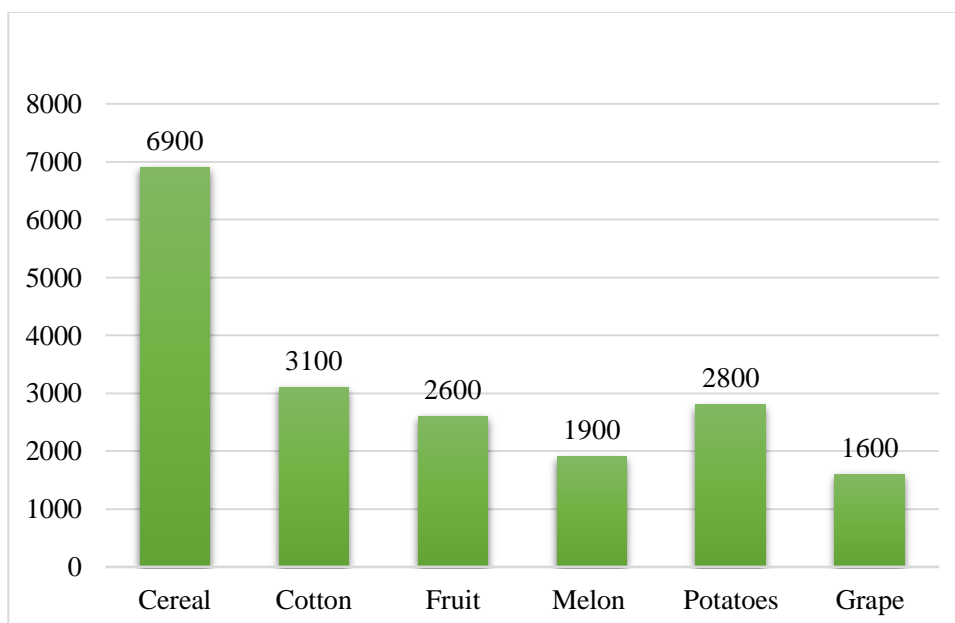


As of January 1, 2020, the number of farms amounted to 92.6 thousand units. Of the total number of farms in the direction of cotton and grain growing, they make up 40.0 thousand units, horticulture and viticulture-31.0 thousand units, animal husbandry -

14.8 thousand units, vegetable, and melon farming-5.0 thousand units, and other areas-1.8 thousand units.

30% of farmers located in hillsides and mountain areas where have a great opportunity for visitors to introduce the unique natural landscape, local traditions, cultural heritage, and local culinary.

**Table 1.1.1. Main Agricultural production of Uzbekistan 2019 (thousand tonnes)**





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The following regions: Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, Tashkent and Samarkand are very important part of Uzbekistan in terms of agricultural and industrial sector output and there is a good place to start agritourism business due to the beautiful natural landscape on hillsides and mountain range.

### Why is agritourism vital for Uzbekistan?

Today, overall population of Uzbekistan is about 34 million and approximately 35 % of total population live in urban areas, while rural population accounts for 65 %. The agricultural sector provides over 8 million people with jobs in the Uzbekistan. Maintaining rural people with agriculture and livestock is not attractive because of low wages and low productivity. That is why government officials are willing to implement a new type of business for rurality such as agritourism. This is because to promote sustainable rural and farming development, and attracting young people to work in agricultural work. Currently, in fact, sustainable rural development and additional income for farmers and local communities are the main purposes behind the development of agritourism in Uzbekistan. A wide range of benefits has been described as a possible agricultural output. The potential benefits of the growth of agritourism apply to farmers, local communities and tourism managers. Ultimately, the local community and government perceive agritourism as opportunities for business diversification in the agricultural sector (Williams et al., 2016).

From the agricultural industry's point of view, agritourism can lead to introducing the new tool for expanding farm operations in Uzbekistan such as:

- raising awareness of local agricultural products;
- using farm-based products in an innovative manner;
- enhancing farm income;
- developing new business niches;
- the awareness of the value of maintaining agricultural land use; channeling increased farm income directly to family members;
- preserving and improving recreational facilities;
- enhancing farm living and working areas;
- providing opportunities for management skills and entrepreneurial spirit;
- growing long-term sustainability in rural areas.

Apart from that, there are also several main indisputable facts to advocate for developing agritourism in Uzbekistan.

Firstly, today, youth migration from rural areas to nearby cities is becoming increasingly common problems not only in other countries in the world but also in Uzbekistan. Agritourism could be the best way to maintain local young people with more sustainable

and profitable farming activities in order to discourage people from migration to cities.

Secondly, in fact, the growing number of youth moving to urban areas may lead to losing local history, traditions, lifestyle, unique farming experiences, and local culinary heritage and so on. That is why agritourism can be vital due to the fact that it helps to preserve local culture and traditions from generation to generation.

Last but not least, there is a growing necessity of new types of tourism to attract more tourists in Uzbekistan. Currently, the main tourists visit Uzbekistan to see only historical and cultural sites because many tour operators offer just itineraries on historical cities. Yet, today tourists' demand is altering so fast, they want to be involved with more interesting and entertaining tours. In fact, agritourism can give such excitement because of a lot of entertainment tourist activities. The farm provides tourists with the opportunity to make your stay unique and original. Visitors can able to discover nature, plan mountain excursions, walk along scenic cycle paths, relax with wellness treatments or enjoy regional food as a couple, with your friends or with your parents. In addition, this could be a good opportunity to increase tourism attractiveness of Uzbekistan. As a result, the number of tourists is likely to grow dramatically as well as rising the duration of visitors stay in Uzbekistan from 8 days to 12 days and their average expenses from 709 USD to 900 USD. Also, this is an opportunity for local farmers and rural people to save and share their unique experiences in farming and the existence of unique natural landscapes in these rural areas in Uzbekistan.

### METHODOLOGY

This research used a case study approach to achieve the study objectives. The questionnaire was administered online because of its multiple advantages especially related to time (e.g., data entry) and cost efficiency (Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002). The questionnaire was collected from local farmers. Online survey (using 13 openended questions) was conducted with local farmers. The survey questions were designed to allow participants to describe the current agritourism development in Uzbekistan .

Participants were asked to provide their opinions and perceptions of the existing tourism industry in agritourism development.

This survey was conducted in a different region of Uzbekistan namely: Samarkand, Surkhandarya, Kashkadarya, and Tashkent. These regions were selected because they fit double criteria. Firstly, they represent different levels of agritourism development in terms of the percentage of farms engaged in agritourism. Secondly, Samarkand, Surkhandarya, Kashkadarya, and Tashkent are located in similar geographic, agricultural, and ecological regions, thus offering a very diverse landscape composition. These

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regions exist a suitable climate and soil for raising grains, vegetables, fruits, and livestock.

**FINDINGS**

Specific information on agritourism development in Uzbekistan was collected through the questionnaire as follows:

The survey asked farmers about the size and location of the farmland, the willingness of farmers to start farming, and the extent of their farming activities ( e.g. What kind of agritourism type you can offer). The survey also collected demographic details of all respondents (e.g., age , gender).

**Table 1. Gender, age, place they live, location of farmland and importance of agritourism, educating farmers on agritourism business, types of buildings and facilities on farm, and infrastructure facilities.**

Demographic characteristics	N	%
Gender (n=120)		
Male	115	95.8
Female	5	4.2
Age (n=120)		
18-30 years old	10	8.3
31-35 years old	17	14.2
36-45 years old	36	30
46-60 years old	56	46.7
61 years old or older	1	0.8
What region are you from (n=116)		
Andijan		
Bukhara	3	2.60%
Jizzakh	13	11.20%
Kashkadarya	18	15.50%
Navoi	4	3.40%
Namangan	7	6%
Samarkand	39	33.60%
Surkhandarya	12	10.30%
Syrdarya		
Tashkent	2	1.70%
Fergana	4	3.40%
Khorezm	11	9.50%
The Republic of Karakalpakstan	3	2.60%
Location of farmland (n=118)		
Hillside.	19	16.10%
Plain area.	21	17.80%
Mountain range.	78	66.10%
Size of farmland (hectare) (n=119)		
5-10 hectares	11	9.20%
11-50 hectares	37	30.80%
51-100 hectares	52	43.30%
101-150 hectares	16	13.30%
151 hectares and more	3	3.30%
How close your farm is to population centers (n=120)		
very close (0-500 m)	7	5.80%
close (1-2 km)	32	26.70%
long (3-4 km)	59	49.20%
very long (more than 10 km)	22	18.30%
Do you have any information about agritourism (n=120)		
Yes, I have an information	63	52.50%
No, I don't have any information	57	47.50%
Would you like to start agritourism in your farm (n=118)		
Yes	65	54.20%
No	10	8.30%
I have to think	33	27.50%
Yes, I am planning	10	8.30%
What is the importance of agrotourism for your farm (n=119)		

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Insignificant	5	4.20%
low importance	6	5%
Significance is average	47	39.50%
Important	40	33.60%
Very important	21	17.60%
Do you think it is essential educating farmers how to start agritourism (n=119)		
I do not agree	18	15.10%
I don't know	25	21%
very good, I agree	76	63.90%
The types of buildings and facilities for visitors on your farm (n=120)		
Residential building	77	64.2
Hotel	7	5.8
Kitchen	31	25.8
Playground	14	11.7
Pool	11	9.2
Horse stable	64	53.3
Livestock	0	0
Vineyard	53	44.2
fruit garden	73	60.9
Poultry farm	29	24.2
wine producing	1	0.8
kitchen (for guests to learn how to cook local dishes)	9	7.5
and others	23	19.2
What kind of agritourism type you can offer in your farm (n=120)		
petting and feeding zoos;	43	35.8
demonstration farms;	70	58.3
agricultural museums;	20	16.7
living history farms;	47	39.2
winery tours and wine tasting;	21	17.5
rural bed & breakfasts;	48	40
garden tours	71	59.2
riding horse	48	40
picking fruits	71	59.2
picking vegetables	60	50
cheese preparation and tasting	7	5.8
and others	18	15
How do you assess the road infrastructure when you reach the area where your farm is located(n=120)		
Too bad	16	13.30%
Bad	25	20.80%
Satisfactory	55	45.80%
Good	20	16.70%
Very good	4	3.30%

Nearly one-half (46.7 %) of respondents were 46-60 years old, and about one-third (30%) were 31-45 years old. The farmers from Samarkand, Kashkadarya, Jizzakh, and Surkhandarya regions accounted for the most respondents 33.60%, 15.5%, 11.2%, and 10.3% respectively. Approximately 67% respondents reported their farmland located in mountain range, and over one-half of surveyed farmers owned about 51-100 hectares. The smallest proportion (3.30%) of responding farmers owned the largest size of farmland (151 hectares and more), while the most (59) farmers reported that farmland located on 3-4 km from population centers. The most interestingly over 52% of respondents heart about agritourism, whereas only

the least number (10) of farmers planned to start agritourism business.

As for the significance of agritourism, almost 40 % of the respondents reported an average significance which were the largest amount, and also 79 from 120 surveyed farmers thought that farmers should be trained on how to start agritourism.

It is true from above survey results, the farmers have a lot of opportunities for agritourism such as residential building, hotel, kitchen, horse stable, vineyard, fruit garden, poultry farm etc. As well as they can offer various types of entertainment activities for visitors like petting and feeding zoos, demonstration farms, agricultural museums, living history farms, winery tours and wine tasting, rural bed & breakfasts, garden tours, riding horse, picking

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fruits, picking vegetables and so on. The most importantly, according to feedback of respondents, the infrastructure (road) facilities were satisfactory for the biggest (45.80%) proportion of farmers and were bad for 25% of respondents, and that of 16% reported too bad. Only 16.70% and 3.30% of respondents chose the good and very good road conditions category respectively.

### DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, there are a lot of countries where agritourism developed successfully and millions of people visit there so as to agritourism. Italy could be taken as an potential example, this country has started to develop agritourism before 40 years. They have passed a long way and overcome different barriers to development agritourism in this period. This means the conception of agritourism has existed among Italian for many years. In these periods, attitudes of people in Italy toward agritourism have been shaped and have been changed increasingly positive. In Italy, the idea is so ingrained in their culture people speak of taking an 'agritourism holiday'. This is why agritourism so developed in Italy or agritourism is not developed in Uzbekistan. What I mean by this, people should understand first the importance of agritourism in rurality and its role in the economy of Uzbekistan.

#### What the government of Italy did?

For a long time, Italy has been considered the world leader in the agricultural sector. The Fellow was particularly interested in three main criteria for his selection—a wide and creative range of products, sophisticated advertising methods and, most significantly, extensive government funding. The Italian system was developed with a specific objective in mind: "By keeping farmers on the land to avoid rural migration." (Agritourism in Italy. Pauline Porcaro). First of all, the government of Italy adopted the new policy about agritourism and introduced regulations in 1985. And then each region adopted its own regulation based on basic agritourism policy. The regional provisions has helped to identify clearly what a farm, and how the relationship between tourism and agricultural activities should be.

It should be noted that it is a very important element of according to Italy's agritourism regulations, agritourism cannot exist unless there is a pre-existing agricultural activity. In other words, the working farm must come first, not the other way around, and the complementary element of tourism cannot take precedence in terms of working hours over the pre-existing agricultural business. Basically the tourism business is the junior partner of the agricultural business. These are the prerequisites of any agritourism activity as defined by the Italian parliament. (Sonnino, R. (2015) For a 'Piece of Bread'? Interpreting Sustainable Development through Agritourism in Southern Tuscany, *Sociologia Ruralis*, 44(3), 285-300).

In addition, the most important feature of the Italian system, which underpins the successful development of agritourism, is the funding from the government to start these projects for farmers. Agritourism in Italy is fully supported by the government, given this is a country where tourism is one of its major industries. Government funding is available to farmers in order to develop either a new agritourism business or to further develop an existing agritourism business. The funds are government subsidies – 'a fondo perduto' (lost funds), meaning operators are not required to reimburse any money to the government. The main directive placed upon the agritourism operators who receive this funding is that they are committed to operating for at least ten years after receiving the funds.

Meanwhile, the farmer has access to government funds to maintain and develop his property, and at the same time, farmers make money from the tourism business. During this time the farmer is self-sufficient and as a bonus is paying additional taxes to the government. And also infrastructure has been improved in rural areas which helped to provide accessibility of farms and improve rural residents living conditions.

Furthermore, the successful Italian agritourism model is based on a clear government direction and support for education in the sector. Any farmer wishing to start an agritourism business must undergo a minimum period of training, the least of which must equate to 120 hours. The Italian Government clearly recognises the equation of successful tourism with well-trained suppliers. Setting up this range of training requires an appropriate curriculum to be written, modeled especially for agritourism operators. Delivery should be organized both through face-to-face classes or online distance learning in order to suit farmers' other commitments. It is also necessary to take into account that not all farmers are computer literate and that farmers are very busy running their farms as well. Obviously computer and online marketing skills should be compulsory units in the training developed given the clear move by consumers to expect to buy tourism products and communicate in the online environment. Training includes topics such as the concept and philosophy of agritourism, hygiene and safety, communication skills (including some basic internet technology), and some marketing. There are additionally, education providers scattered within the regions who offer the various courses for operators.

It is indisputable fact from the above-mentioned ideas that the government of Italy has achieved successfully the main objectives on agritourism. Today, there are over 23,406 agritourism farms and all farms have a lot of facilities: accommodation, F&B, transportation, high-quality services, entertainment activities and various educational courses which could be a very vital factor for tourists to visit there. Around



## Impact Factor:

ISRA (India) = 6.317  
ISI (Dubai, UAE) = 1.582  
GIF (Australia) = 0.564  
JIF = 1.500

SIS (USA) = 0.912  
PIHII (Russia) = 3.939  
ESJI (KZ) = 8.771  
SJIF (Morocco) = 7.184

ICV (Poland) = 6.630  
PIF (India) = 1.940  
IBI (India) = 4.260  
OAJI (USA) = 0.350

12.7 million tourists visited Italy in order to agritourism and this led to generate around €1.36 billion income (ISTAT, 2017). Therefore, this can be considered as one of the best agritourism development model for other countries because of the implementation of the best initiatives and efforts by the Italian government for many years.

### What suggestions could be taken based on Italy's experiences?

The first consideration that should be taken into account by the government of Uzbekistan from the initial point. This is the absence of any government policy and regulations on agritourism could be the main hindrance to develop agritourism in the Uzbekistan. There are no guidelines and regulations applicable to agro-tourism as a specific sector of the tourism industry and, at the same time, an additional source of income for the rural population (non-agricultural, non-productive, alternative). Existing a huge gap between farming and agritourism in terms of regulations can deter farmers to set up agritourism businesses.

From the infrastructure point of view, this could be the largest problem in Uzbekistan because there are insufficiently established infrastructure such as poor road conditions, a shortage of accommodation facilities, poor sanitation and so on;

In fact, these facilities are very important in agritourism development and these should be provided by the government funds. Certainly, this requires more time, money and effort according to Italy's experience.

Also, it is worth noting that these drawbacks are not the only problem in the organization of agritourism:

- lack of awareness of the possibilities of developing agritourism for farmers and rural residents;
- low resource security for villagers who want to set up agritourism business;
- lack of qualified workers to coordinate farming;
- lack of state non-commercial advertising;
- lack of cooperation among all stakeholders in the development process;
- failure to have a coherent national program and financial support for agricultural development.

Careful consideration of the Italian objectives for the growth of agritourism demonstrates a clear model on which we can build our own sector. The strategic objective of agritourism development in Uzbekistan should be:

- improved utilization of both natural and built rural resources
- creating job opportunities for rural residents
- enhancement of environmental conservation and management
- constructing infrastructure facilities: road, accommodation
- promotion of 'typical' rural products
- support for rural traditions and cultural initiatives
- development of agricultural areas
- enhancement of the relationship between city and countryside.

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