

Let's Walk and Talk: Using Walking Interviews to Explore Agritourism Operations

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Introduction

- In-person interactions between farmers and researchers create a greater sense of trust and collaboration in the agriculture community (Kinuthia, 2023)
- To promote trust and establish connection amongst agricultural communications researchers and agriculturalists, researchers can conduct walking interviews (Furness et al., 2022)

How it Works

- Walking interviews, a qualitative research method, are used to add more value and understanding of the lived experiences at each operation (Bartlett, 2023)
- Incorporates five major themes: shifts in power dynamics, making things known and knowable, revealing barriers in the environment, embodied knowledge of place, and being one (Bartlett, 2023)
- Allows open dialogue and builds a stronger sense of trust between the researcher and interviewee to promote participation and place-based approaches (Bartlett, 2023)

Results/Implications

- 15 walking interviews to analyze the educational components and communication strategies of an operation
- Each operation ranged in size and scale in terms of acres owned (3-2,000 acres) and on-site farm events and activities (farm tours, farm stand/store, workshops, and classes).
- Time Commitment on the participant's behalf, many operations are preparing for the busiest season of agriculture so recruitment of operations was a challenge for the researcher.

Future Plans/Advice for Others

- Walking interviews could be used to analyze the consumer's relationship with agricultural lands alongside other theoretical frameworks, including place attachment, place-based education, and sense of place with consumers.
- Clearly describe the expectation of a walking interview with each interviewee prior to arriving to an operation.

Cost/Resources Needed

- Time and mileage were the main costs of implementing the walking interviews
- 15 walking interviews took about 40 hours including driving and \$500 worth of miles to travel to each operation

What is Agritourism?

Agritourism is defined as a commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or agricultural business (AgriTourism, 2023)

For more information,
scan for full abstract and
references



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