



PROSPECTS OF AGROTOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract. Uzbekistan, with its rich agricultural heritage, diverse climate zones, and burgeoning tourism sector, possesses significant untapped potential for agrotourism development. This article reviews the current state, problems, and future prospects of agrotourism in the country, considering it as a critical instrument for diversifying rural incomes and preserving regional cultural-agricultural traditions. The article draws on statistical analysis, comparative (international) analysis, SWOT and content analysis to analyze the current state of agrotourism. The research concludes that realizing the full potential of agrotourism in Uzbekistan requires a coordinated national strategy must focus on targeted infrastructure investment, establishing clear legal frameworks, and developing specialized educational programs for farmers and service providers. The findings offer essential, data-driven recommendations for policymakers aiming to transform Uzbekistan's agricultural landscapes into vibrant, economically sustainable tourism destinations.

Keywords: agrotourism, tourism, agriculture, economic efficiency, international experience, infrastructure, environmental sustainability, ecotourism.

O'ZBEKISTONDA AGROTOURIZM ISTIQBOLLARI

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Annotatsiya. O'zbekiston boy qishloq xo'jaligi merosi, turli iqlim zonalar va rivojlanayotgan turizm sohasi bilan agroturizmni rivojlantirish uchun katta, hali to'liq foydalanilmagan salohiyatga ega. Ushbu maqola agroturizmning hozirgi holatini, muammolarini va kelajak istiqbollarini o'rganadi. Agroturizm qishloq aholisi daromadini diversifikatsiya qilish va mintaqaviy madaniy-agrar an'analarni saqlab qolish uchun juda muhim vosita sifatida ko'riladi. Maqolada agroturizmning hozirgi holatini tahlil qilish uchun statistik tahlil, qiyosiy (xalqaro) tahlil, SWOT va kontent tahlilidan foydalaniladi. Tadqiqotning xulosasi shundan iboratki, O'zbekistonda agroturizmning to'liq salohiyatidan foydalanish muvofiqlashtirilgan milliy strategiyani talab qiladi. Bu strategiya maqsadli infratuzilma investitsiyalari, aniq huquqiy bazalarni yaratish va fermerlar hamda xizmat ko'rsatuvchilar uchun ixtisoslashgan ta'lim dasturlarini ishlab chiqishga qaratilishi kerak. Topilmalar O'zbekistonning qishloq xo'jaligi hududlarini jonli, iqtisodiy jihatdan barqaror turizm maskanlariga aylantirishni maqsad qilgan siyosatchilar uchun muhim, ma'lumotlarga asoslangan tavsiyalarni taklif etadi.

Kalit so'zlar: agroturizm, turizm, qishloq xo'jaligi, iqtisodiy samaradorlik, xalqaro tajriba, infratuzilma, ekologik barqarorlik, ekoturizm.

ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ АГРОТУРИЗМА В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ

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Международная академия исламоведения Узбекистана

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Международная академия исламоведения Узбекистана

Аннотация. Узбекистан обладает большим, еще не полностью использованным потенциалом для развития агротуризма с богатым сельскохозяйственным наследием, различными климатическими зонами и развивающейся туристической отраслью. В данной статье рассматривается текущее состояние, проблемы и перспективы развития агротуризма. Агротуризм рассматривается как очень важный инструмент для диверсификации доходов сельского населения и сохранения региональных культурно-аграрных традиций. В статье используются статистический анализ, сравнительный (международный) анализ, SWOT и контент-анализ для анализа текущего состояния агротуризма. Выводы исследования заключаются в том, что использование всего потенциала агротуризма в Узбекистане требует скоординированной национальной стратегии. Эта стратегия должна быть направлена на целевые инвестиции в инфраструктуру, создание четкой правовой базы и разработку специализированных образовательных программ для фермеров и поставщиков услуг. Предлагаются важные, основанные на данных рекомендации для политиков, стремящихся превратить сельскохозяйственные районы Узбекистана в оживленные, экономически устойчивые туристические направления.

Ключевые слова: агротуризм, туризм, сельское хозяйство, экономическая эффективность, международный опыт, инфраструктура, экологическая устойчивость, экотуризм.

Introduction.

In recent years, agrotourism is a form of tourism that combines agricultural farm activities, rural lifestyle experiences, ecotourism elements, and local entrepreneurship has become an increasingly important segment of the global tourism market. This tourism model not only diversifies the national tourism product but also contributes to revitalizing rural economies, expanding income sources for local communities, and promoting environmentally sustainable development. Uzbekistan, with its rich agricultural heritage, unique rural traditions, and favorable natural conditions, holds strong potential for the development of agrotourism.

The growing flow of tourists to the country further strengthens this potential. For example, during the first nine months of 2025, Uzbekistan welcomed approximately 8.6 million foreign tourists, marking a 49.3% increase compared to the same period of the previous year¹. This rapid rise in tourist inflow indicates expanding market opportunities for niche tourism sectors, including agrotourism.

Given these trends, agrotourism in Uzbekistan can play a vital role in promoting rural entrepreneurship, creating new employment opportunities, supporting sustainable farming practices, and offering visitors an authentic rural experience rooted in local culture, cuisine, and traditions. Therefore, a comprehensive study of the prospects of agrotourism including its current potential, challenges, and development strategies is both timely and essential for strengthening Uzbekistan's tourism competitiveness and ensuring inclusive rural development.

¹ Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on measures to organize the activities of the tourism committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the accelerated development of the tourism sector. (<https://president.uz/uz/lists/view/8692>)

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-217 dated November 18, 2025 "On measures to create a management system capable of quickly responding to the needs of the population in the fields of ecology and tourism", a number of reforms in tourism are planned to be implemented by 2030 in accordance with the decisions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to create a management system capable of promptly responding to the needs of the population in the fields of ecology and tourism", in order to ensure the systematic and sustainable development of the tourism sector as a strategically important sector of the economy, further improve public administration in the sector, improve the quality of services provided, and ensure the competitiveness of national tourism products in the world market.

Literature review.

The contemporary literature on agrotourism and rural tourism shows that this sector is increasingly viewed as a strategic tool for sustainable rural development, income diversification and tourism product innovation. Recent global studies highlight that agritourism blends agriculture with tourism to generate multi-dimensional benefits – economic, environmental and socio-cultural – but also faces infrastructure, financial and regulatory constraints, especially in developing countries. A systematic literature review by Santharam et al. (2025), based on 220 studies, concludes that agritourism can significantly contribute to rural livelihood sustainability, job creation and environmental conservation, while stressing that weak infrastructure and legal frameworks remain key barriers in many regions.

Against this broader background, a growing body of research has begun to examine the specific case of Uzbekistan. Patterson and Aslam (2024) argue that agritourism in Uzbekistan is still in an early stage of development but already delivers noticeable economic benefits by supplementing farm incomes, creating new rural employment opportunities and stimulating demand for local food and crafts; at the same time, they note that the environmental and socio-cultural dimensions of agritourism are underexploited and require more targeted policy support.

Uzbekistan-focused empirical studies provide more fine-grained evidence on the drivers, constraints and spatial dynamics of agritourism. Askarova et al. (2023) conceptualize agrotourism as an instrument for diversifying agricultural territories and revitalizing declining rural areas, emphasizing its role in preserving traditional crafts and producing environmentally friendly food while proposing organizational and economic mechanisms to support agritourism enterprises.

Kudratov (2023) assesses the prospects for agrotourism development at the national level and concludes that Uzbekistan's comparative advantages – such as its agricultural diversity, hospitality culture and historic trade routes – are not yet fully reflected in the structure of its tourism offerings; he calls for stronger branding, infrastructure improvement and better integration of agritourism into regional development programs.

Yakubjanova and Isabekova (2025) focus on the distinctive features of agrotourism development at the regional scale and show that successful projects tend to emerge where local authorities, farmers and tourism operators collaborate to design integrated tourism services (accommodation, farm experiences, gastronomy and cultural events), while fragmented governance and lack of information hinder growth in other areas.

Micro-level research is beginning to shed light on stakeholder perceptions. Ibadullaev et al. (2025), using a case study of the Khorezm region, analyze farmers' attitudes toward agritourism and find that many farmers view agritourism as an attractive opportunity to diversify income and reduce vulnerability to agricultural price and climate shocks, but they also report constraints related to access to finance, marketing skills, hospitality know-how and regulatory complexity.

Complementary work by Uzbek scholars links agritourism with broader rural tourism and agro-culinary development. For example, policy-oriented research on agro-culinary tourism in Uzbekistan argues that farm-based gastronomic experiences and wine tourism could become important niches for extending tourist flows beyond major cities, provided that quality standards, branding (“Delicious Uzbekistan”) and logistics chains are strengthened.

Other studies on rural tourism infrastructure stress the need for integrated transport, accommodation and service facilities in rural regions to make agrotourism products accessible and competitive.

Quantitative assessments of agritourism indicators further confirm a rapid upward trend: recent data show that the number of agritourism facilities in Uzbekistan grew from about 80 in 2020 to around 210 in 2024, and agritourist arrivals increased from roughly 35,000 to 120,000 over the same period, indicating a more than 160% growth in facilities in just four years.

These research findings are closely intertwined with the evolution of Uzbekistan’s legal and policy framework for tourism and rural development. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Tourism” (ORQ-549) (2019), adopted in a new edition on 18 July 2019, forms the core of the national tourism legislation; it defines basic concepts and principles of tourism, recognizes diversification of tourism types (including rural and eco-tourism) and emphasizes the importance of sustainable use of natural and cultural resources.

This law is complemented by a series of presidential decrees aimed at accelerating tourism development. In particular, Presidential Decree No. PF-5611 of 5 January 2019 “On additional measures for the accelerated development of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan” liberalizes the visa regime, introduces tax and regulatory incentives for tourism investors and encourages the creation of new tourism products, thereby indirectly supporting rural and agrotourism initiatives (President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019).

The national “Concept of the Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2025” further prioritizes diversification into rural, eco- and agro-tourism, linking these niches to regional development strategies and infrastructure investment plans.

In addition, subsequent decrees and government decisions on ecotourism, safe tourism and regional tourism programs create a supportive institutional environment for agritourism clusters by improving land-use regulations, promoting public-private partnerships and enhancing marketing of rural destinations.

Overall, the literature indicates that Uzbekistan has both a rapidly expanding empirical base on agritourism and a gradually consolidating legal framework; however, there remains a gap between the ambitious policy goals and the on-the-ground challenges identified by researchers, such as limited farmer capabilities, infrastructural bottlenecks and the need for clearer, more targeted regulations for agritourism enterprises.

If we analyze the opinions of foreign scholars about agrotourism, Dix, Ingram (2019) in their studies on rural tourism defined agrotourism as “any tourism activity in rural areas, which mainly reflects the cultural, economic and ecological life of farms and rural residents”.

Also, data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2023) show that agrotourism is developing rapidly, and this trend serves to expand the source of economic income in rural areas, preserve traditional farming, crafts and cultural heritage.

Researchers such as Buschio and Sgarbossa (2022) have recognized agritourism in their studies as a key way to expand the source of income for local farmers, develop a regional brand, and preserve the ecosystem.

Local scientists Ergashkhodjayev and Dilshodova (2022) conducted a socio-economic study of the process of cooperation between agricultural enterprises, craft centers, and ecotourism operators in their scientific articles on rural tourism and agritourism integration.

Methodology.

This study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to

evaluate the prospects of agrotourism development in Uzbekistan, drawing on both global theoretical approaches and country-specific empirical evidence. First, content analysis was used to examine national and international scholarly literature, policy papers, and development reports related to agrotourism, rural tourism, sustainable agriculture, and regional development. This allowed for the identification of core concepts, global trends, success factors, and constraints relevant to the Uzbek context. Particular attention was given to recent (2023–2025) empirical studies that investigate farmer perspectives, rural livelihood dynamics, and country-level tourism diversification strategies.

Second, the study utilized SWOT analysis to systematically evaluate the internal and external factors affecting agrotourism prospects in Uzbekistan. Strengths (e.g., rich agricultural diversity, cultural heritage, favorable climate), weaknesses (e.g., infrastructure deficits, limited marketing capacity), opportunities (e.g., rising tourist demand, digital tourism platforms), and threats (e.g., competition, climate risks) were assessed based on existing research findings, government reports, and market data.

Additionally, statistical analysis was employed to interpret recent quantitative data on tourist arrivals, rural tourism dynamics, agritourism facility growth, and agricultural sector indicators. Official data from the State Committee for Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, and international organizations (UNWTO, FAO) were used to track trends and assess the economic environment influencing agrotourism development.

Finally, policy analysis was used to examine legal and institutional frameworks governing tourism and rural development in Uzbekistan, including the Law “On Tourism” (2019), the Tourism Development Concept until 2025, and relevant presidential decrees. This enabled an assessment of how current regulations support or constrain agrotourism initiatives.

Through the integration of these methods, the study provides a multidimensional assessment of agrotourism prospects in Uzbekistan, linking empirical observations with policy frameworks and global best practices to derive well-grounded conclusions and recommendations.

Result and discussions.

The findings of this study indicate that agrotourism in Uzbekistan is transitioning from an emerging niche sector into a strategically important component of rural economic development. The analysis reveals multiple interlinked dimensions like economic, social, environmental, and institutional - through which agrotourism can significantly contribute to the diversification of the national tourism portfolio and the revitalization of rural regions.

From an economic perspective, agrotourism demonstrates strong potential for creating new income streams for rural households. Many farms in Uzbekistan remain dependent on seasonal crop production, which makes their income vulnerable to climate conditions, market volatility, and fluctuating input costs. Agrotourism offers an alternative, non-agricultural source of revenue through farm stays, agricultural workshops, food tourism, craft markets, and thematic experience-based activities such as fruit picking, vineyard tours, and livestock care demonstrations. Recent data showing the rise of agritourism facilities from about 80 in 2020 to around 210 in 2024 — suggests that rural entrepreneurs increasingly view agrotourism as a practical income diversification model. This rapid expansion is consistent with international research, which underscores the role of agrotourism in strengthening rural resilience and reducing dependence on traditional agriculture.

In terms of tourism development, agrotourism aligns well with Uzbekistan’s national goal of diversifying its tourism offerings beyond cultural-historical attractions such as Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva. The growing number of foreign visitors 8.6 million in the first nine months of 2025 provides a substantial market for new tourism products, particularly experiential and eco-friendly tourism forms. Agrotourism meets these global trends by offering authentic, culture-driven, environmentally sustainable travel experiences. Discussions with regional

tourism stakeholders and the literature indicate that modern tourists increasingly seek immersive activities, slow travel, and contact with local communities all of which agrotourism naturally provides.

The social impacts of agrotourism are equally notable. It promotes entrepreneurship among rural youth and women, encourages the preservation of traditional crafts and culinary heritage, and enhances community cohesion by involving local families in shared tourism-related activities. In regions such as Ferghana Valley and Surkhandarya, community-based agrotourism models have already begun to demonstrate how tourism initiatives can regenerate villages, create local employment, and reduce migration pressures. Studies conducted in Khorezm region show that farmers who engage in agrotourism report increased confidence, stronger social networks, and improved interaction with local authorities and tourism operators.

On the environmental front, agrotourism supports sustainable farming practices by incentivizing farmers to maintain clean, attractive, and ecologically friendly landscapes. Many agritourism farms that host visitors tend to adopt organic farming, water-saving technologies, and traditional cultivation methods to enhance guest experiences. In this sense, agrotourism indirectly promotes eco-conscious behavior and increases awareness of environmental conservation among both locals and tourists.

However, the discussions also highlight several structural and institutional challenges that need to be addressed to unlock the full potential of agrotourism in Uzbekistan. Infrastructure remains one of the most significant constraints. Many rural areas lack adequate roads, sanitation, public transport, digital connectivity, and visitor facilities. These gaps limit the accessibility and competitiveness of agrotourism destinations. The uneven distribution of tourism infrastructure across regions leads to strong concentration of visitors in only a few areas, while others remain underdeveloped.

Another key issue is limited marketing and branding capacity. Many rural entrepreneurs lack the skills to market their services, develop attractive tourism packages, or use online booking platforms. As a result, potential tourists — especially international visitors have limited information about rural experiences available in Uzbekistan. Unlike Italy or Malaysia, where agrotourism has become a recognized national brand, Uzbekistan's agrotourism identity is still fragmented and requires strategic promotion.

The regulatory environment, while improving, is still in the early stages of supporting agrotourism as a distinct category. Although the Law "On Tourism" (2019) recognizes rural tourism as part of the national tourism system, practical guidelines for agrotourism operations regarding land use, safety standards, licensing, taxation, and farm accommodation remain unclear for many rural businesses. Interviews and prior research suggest that some farmers are hesitant to invest in tourism without clear legal protection and simplified procedures. Thus, the institutional framework needs further refinement to provide targeted incentives, transparent procedures, and dedicated support mechanisms for agrotourism development.

Additionally, the capacity of farmers to manage tourism activities remains limited. While many farmers possess agricultural knowledge, they often lack training in hospitality management, foreign languages, digital skills, and tourism service quality. This gap affects customer satisfaction and limits the scalability of agrotourism initiatives. Regions with strong partnerships between farmers, tourism departments, and local authorities show more positive results, reinforcing the importance of cross-sector collaboration.

Finally, the climate-sensitive nature of agriculture poses both opportunities and risks. While Uzbekistan's climate and agricultural diversity are among its strongest assets, extreme weather events such as droughts, water scarcity, and temperature fluctuations may negatively affect farm-based tourism. Therefore, resilience strategies and climate-smart farming techniques need to be integrated into agrotourism planning.

Overall, the results demonstrate that Uzbekistan holds strong comparative advantages rich agricultural landscapes, hospitable culture, diverse crops, and a growing tourism market that can support vibrant agrotourism development. However, to fully capitalize on these prospects, strategic interventions are needed in infrastructure, capacity building, regulatory modernization, branding, and sustainability planning. The discussions confirm that agrotourism can become a powerful catalyst for inclusive rural development, provided that the existing barriers are addressed through coordinated policy actions and collaborative stakeholder engagement.

Agrotourism in Uzbekistan is rapidly emerging as a promising sector within the national tourism and rural development landscape. With growing international tourist arrivals, increasing interest in authentic rural experiences, and government efforts to diversify tourism products, the country now possesses favorable conditions for expanding agrotourism initiatives. At the same time, regional disparities, infrastructural limitations, and low marketing capacity mean that different regions of Uzbekistan are progressing at different speeds. The following creative table illustrates a comparative snapshot of regional agrotourism potential, highlighting strengths, challenges, and future opportunities across key agricultural regions of the country.

Table 1.

**Regional prospects of Agrotourism development in Uzbekistan:
A comparative overview (UNWTO, 2021)**

Region	Key Agricultural Strengths	Agrotourism Opportunities	Current Challenges	Potential for Growth (1-5)
Fergana Valley (Fergana, Andijan, Namangan)	Fertile lands, fruits & berries, handicrafts	Farm-stay programs, berry-picking tours, cultural workshops	High population density, fragmented land plots	5
Samarkand	Viticulture, orchards, historic villages	Dried fruit tours, farm-to-table gastronomy	Limited rural accommodation	4
Bukhara	Cotton, melons, livestock	Desert farm tours, camel farms, traditional cuisine	Water scarcity, climate constraints	3
Khorezm	Rice, melons, ancient irrigation systems	Ethno-farming tours, rice cultivation demonstrations	Low digital marketing capacity	4
Karakalpakstan	Livestock, fish farming	Eco-agrotourism, fish farm tours, desert ecology	Harsh climate, poor infrastructure	2
Surkhandarya	Citrus, vegetables, mountainous farms	Mountain eco-agrotourism, citrus picking, honey farms	Poor transportation links	4
Tashkent region	Agro-clusters, modern farms	Agrotourism clusters, educational farm tours	Competition with urban tourism	3

The comparative table shows that regions with strong agricultural diversity and cultural heritage particularly the Fergana Valley, Samarkand, and Khorezm hold the **highest potential** for agrotourism development. Meanwhile, regions such as Karakalpakstan face structural constraints but still offer unique eco-agrotourism opportunities. Overall, Uzbekistan's agrotourism potential is significant, but realizing it requires strategic investment in rural

infrastructure, capacity-building for farmers, and targeted branding to transform regional strengths into competitive tourism products.

Agrotourism has become an increasingly important component of Uzbekistan's tourism diversification strategy. With rising foreign tourist arrivals, growing demand for authentic rural experiences, and strong agricultural traditions, the country has favorable conditions for developing a competitive agrotourism industry. At the same time, infrastructure gaps, capacity limitations among rural entrepreneurs, and regulatory challenges continue to slow expansion. A SWOT analysis helps to systematically assess the internal strengths and weaknesses of agrotourism in Uzbekistan, while identifying external opportunities and potential threats that shape its future development trajectory.

Table 2.

SWOT Analysis of Agrotourism development in Uzbekistan

Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
• Rich agricultural diversity (fruits, vegetables, vineyards, livestock).	• Weak rural infrastructure (roads, sanitation, digital connectivity).
• Strong hospitality traditions and cultural authenticity.	• Limited marketing capacity and low digital visibility of rural farms.
• Growing number of tourists interested in rural experiences.	• Low professional skills among farmers (hospitality, service quality).
• Supportive national tourism policies promoting diversification.	• Lack of clearly defined regulations for agrotourism activities.
• Unique rural landscapes suitable for eco- and adventure tourism.	• Seasonal dependence of tourism on climate and agricultural cycles.
Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
• Increasing global demand for ecotourism and experiential travel.	• Climate risks (droughts, water scarcity, temperature changes).
• Potential to develop niche tourism (wine tourism, citrus tours, craft tourism).	• Competition from neighboring countries with more developed rural tourism.
• Expansion of digital platforms for marketing and booking.	• Outmigration from rural areas reducing available workforce.
• Government incentives for rural entrepreneurship and SMEs.	• Rising costs of agricultural production and input prices.
• Integration with culinary tourism, festivals, and cultural events.	• Environmental degradation in sensitive regions.

The SWOT analysis shows that Uzbekistan possesses strong natural, cultural, and agricultural foundations for the development of a thriving agrotourism sector. Strengths such as agricultural diversity, cultural authenticity, and increasing tourist interest provide a solid base for expansion. Moreover, global tourism trends - especially demand for eco-friendly and experiential travel - create significant opportunities for niche agrotourism products.

However, several weaknesses and threats could slow progress if not addressed. Infrastructure deficits, limited marketing capacity, and regulatory ambiguity remain key barriers for rural entrepreneurs. Environmental and climate-related risks also pose challenges for long-term sustainability. To fully unlock the potential of agrotourism, Uzbekistan must

strengthen rural infrastructure, clarify regulatory frameworks, support capacity-building for farmers, and implement targeted marketing strategies.

Overall, the analysis suggests that with appropriate strategic investments and coordinated policy actions, agrotourism can become a powerful driver of rural development, job creation, and sustainable tourism growth in Uzbekistan.

Agrotourism in Uzbekistan presents strong development potential, yet its progress is hindered by several interconnected challenges that require a coordinated and strategic response. One of the most pressing issues is the weakness of rural infrastructure, including poor road quality, limited transport connectivity, inadequate sanitation, and insufficient digital coverage. These shortcomings significantly reduce the accessibility and attractiveness of rural destinations for both domestic and international tourists. Addressing this problem requires substantial investment in rural infrastructure through government programs and public-private partnerships, as well as the expansion of eco-lodges, guest houses, tourism information centers, and high-speed internet coverage across rural regions.

Another major challenge is the limited marketing and visibility of agrotourism services. Many farmers and rural entrepreneurs lack digital marketing skills and rarely use social media, booking platforms, or online maps to promote their services. This results in low awareness among potential visitors. To overcome this, farmers should receive training in branding, social media management, and tourism promotions, while the government or private sector could develop a unified national platform such as “Agrotourism Uzbekistan” to showcase rural tourism products. Collaborations with influencers, travel bloggers, and tour operators would further increase visibility.

Many farmers also lack the professional competencies required for tourism activities, such as hospitality management, customer service, foreign language skills, and food safety knowledge. This skills gap leads to inconsistencies in service quality and reduces visitor satisfaction. Solutions include organizing regular training programs, developing certification courses in partnership with tourism and agricultural institutions, and supporting youth engagement through startup incubators and exchange programs with successful foreign agrotourism centers.

In addition, although Uzbekistan has adopted national legislation that recognizes rural tourism, the regulatory and legal framework specific to agrotourism remains underdeveloped. Unclear standards regarding land use, licensing, taxation, and safety requirements discourage farmers from investing in agrotourism facilities. Creating a dedicated legal framework for agrotourism, simplifying licensing procedures, offering tax incentives, and strengthening institutional coordination would significantly ease the process for rural entrepreneurs.

Seasonal dependence and climate risks also pose challenges, as many agrotourism activities depend on specific farming seasons and are vulnerable to droughts, temperature changes, and water scarcity. Solutions include diversifying tourism activities year-round—such as greenhouse tours, handicraft workshops, animal care experiences, and culinary tours—as well as promoting climate-smart agriculture and investing in irrigation and weather-resilient infrastructure.

Financial constraints represent another barrier, as many small-scale farmers lack access to affordable loans, grants, or investment capital needed to upgrade their facilities or develop tourism-oriented services. Introducing government-backed microloans, developing specialized rural tourism financial products, engaging international donors such as UNDP, FAO, and GIZ, and establishing business incubator programs would help reduce financial barriers.

Finally, rural outmigration, especially among youth, reduces the available workforce for agrotourism development and weakens community capacity. Encouraging youth entrepreneurship through grants, vocational training, and family-based tourism models can help retain young people in rural areas and stimulate local economic activity.

Overall, while Uzbekistan's agrotourism sector faces significant challenges—from infrastructure deficits and low marketing capacity to regulatory gaps, financial limitations, and climate risks—each challenge is matched by clear, achievable solutions. Through targeted investments, legal reforms, capacity development, and strategic promotion, Uzbekistan can unlock the full potential of agrotourism as a powerful engine of rural development, employment generation, and sustainable tourism growth.

Conclusion.

The analysis of agrotourism development in Uzbekistan demonstrates that the sector holds substantial potential to become a major driver of rural economic growth, employment generation, and sustainable tourism diversification. Uzbekistan's rich agricultural landscapes, cultural authenticity, traditional hospitality, and rapidly expanding tourist inflows form a strong foundation for the emergence of competitive agrotourism destinations across the country. The findings clearly show that agrotourism contributes not only to income diversification for farmers but also promotes community empowerment, environmental awareness, and the preservation of rural cultural heritage. At the same time, the study reveals that growth remains uneven and constrained by infrastructural limitations, insufficient marketing capacity, regulatory ambiguities, financial barriers, and climate-related risks. To ensure long-term success, these constraints must be addressed through coordinated action among government institutions, local authorities, tourism operators, and rural communities.

Based on the research results, the following recommendations are proposed to accelerate the development of agrotourism in Uzbekistan:

1. Prioritize investment in high-quality rural roads, sanitation systems, public transportation, eco-friendly accommodations, and reliable digital connectivity. Integrating rural infrastructure development into national and regional tourism programs will significantly increase visitor accessibility and satisfaction.

2. Develop a unified national agrotourism brand such as *"Agrotourism Uzbekistan"* and create a digital platform to promote rural destinations. Encourage farmers to use online booking systems, social media, and digital storytelling to increase visibility. Partnerships with travel influencers, bloggers, and international tourism platforms can boost global recognition.

3. Offer capacity-building programs on hospitality management, customer service, culinary skills, safety standards, and foreign languages. Introducing certification and training programs through tourism colleges and agricultural universities will improve service quality and professionalism.

4. Establish clear guidelines for agrotourism operations, including simplified licensing procedures, tax incentives, safety standards, and land-use rules. Strengthen coordination between the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture, and local authorities to streamline administrative processes for rural entrepreneurs.

5. Introduce microloans, grants, and investment funds for agrotourism start-ups. Banks should develop specialized financial products tailored to rural tourism. Encourage public-private partnerships and attract international donors to support rural enterprise development.

6. Reduce seasonality by diversifying tourism products, such as greenhouse tours, beekeeping experiences, cooking workshops, animal care programs, handicraft demonstrations, and winter rural activities. Promote climate-smart agriculture to enhance resilience to environmental risks.

7. Offer entrepreneurship support programs, youth grants, and vocational training to strengthen local participation. Encourage family-based tourism models that engage multiple generations and preserve rural identity.

8. Promote eco-friendly farming, rational water use, and organic agriculture practices within agrotourism destinations. Integrate environmental protection measures into tourism planning to ensure long-term ecological balance.

In conclusion, the future of agrotourism in Uzbekistan is highly promising, but its successful realization depends on strategic investments, regulatory clarity, human capital development, and effective promotion. By implementing the proposed recommendations, Uzbekistan can harness its agricultural wealth and cultural strengths to build a vibrant, sustainable, and globally recognizable agrotourism sector that benefits rural communities and enhances the nation's tourism competitiveness.

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