

Save the Date!!

March 5th 10 a.m. WATA Member Benefits / Annual Meeting

Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association Annual Meeting- Moving Forward in 2025.

Meeting links will be emailed to members on March 4, 2025.

Are you interested in serving as a WATA Board Member?

WATA will have elections for Board Positions March 2025.

Please contact/text Sheila at (608) 774-1354 or director@wiagtourism.com if you are interested in being a candidate. The Board Meets at 9 am via Zoom for approximately 45 minutes. 2025 Board Meetings are scheduled for April 16, May 14, June 11, July 16, Aug 13, Sep 10, Nov 12, Dec 10 (No Oct Mtg).



**Please complete survey
before February 15, 2025**

[2025 WATA Member Survey](#)



We are very excited about 2025. Agricultural tourism on the rise in Wisconsin, and WATA is working hard to help its members -- YOU -- grow your on-farm tourism enterprises.

For example, in 2023 we launched a two-year campaign that placed dozens of large, red signs in highway rest stops and information centers all across the state. Visitors are using the QR code on those signs to reach WATA's user-friendly website, and, thereby, finding your farm!

WATA continues to market our member farms, provide networking and educational opportunities, and advocate for policies and regulations that will help your efforts. Now, we need to learn more about your needs and interests as we look forward. Please fill out this online survey to help inform our programs and partnerships in 2025, and beyond.

2025

Growing Wisconsin Conference

(Formerly known as Wisconsin Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Conference)

Harvesting Knowledge, Cultivating connections,
Producing quality and Promoting success



SCHEDULE:

January 26-28, 2025 | Wisconsin Dells, WI

Sunday, January 26, 2025 Trends in Agricultural Tourism Track

~1-4 pm "Trends In Tourism; Cultivating your Social Media Platforms."

~NEW Hands-on Workshops – Bring your devices; laptop, tablet, mobile phone

~1:00 - 1:30 pm — Facebook

~1:35 - 2:15 pm — LinkedIn

~2:20 - 2:50 pm — Instagram & TikTok

~2:55 - 3:25 pm — Pinterest

~3:30 - 4:00 pm — Email Marketing

*Panelist will also be available to answer, "Trends In Agricultural Tourism; Cultivating your Social Media Platforms" workshop attendees' questions during the Monday January 27, 2025 Round Table Sessions 4:30 – 5:30 pm in the Trade Show Area.

Monday, January 27, 2025, Trends in Agricultural Tourism Track

~8-9 a.m. "Trends in Agricultural Tourism: Collaborative Marketing; Events & Bus Tours."

~9:15- 10:15 a.m. "Trends in Agricultural Tourism: Getting Started or Leveling Up, Internship Program & WATA's Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program." Learn what is new in 2025 and why Wisconsin is recognized as America's Agricultural Tourism Destination.

~10:30-11:30 a.m. "Trends in Agricultural Tourism: Collaborative Marketing – Partnerships with DMOs, CVBs, Tourism Commissions and Travel Wisconsin to bring International Conferences to your Agricultural Tourism Destination"

~11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Lunch Networking (45 minutes) Trade Show Area

~12:15 – 1 p.m. Wisconsin Department of Revenue Updates on Alcohol Laws Presentation

~1:10 p.m. – 1:40 p.m. Q & A Session on Alcohol Laws (Conference Room)

~1:10 p.m. – 1:40 p.m. Round Tables (trade show area)

1) Facebook & Pinterest

2) Instagram & TikTok

3) Email Marketing

4) Farm Stays

5) What Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association can do for you

(continued on next page)

- 6) Food on the Farm
- 7) Google Reviews
- 8) Agritourism Safety – Integrating Safety into Agritourism

~2-3 p.m. Trends in Agricultural Tourism; Cultivating Partnerships; 2025 Draft Corn Maze Experience Draft 2025 collaborating with the Packers Leadership Team.

~3:15- 4:15 p.m. Trends in Agricultural Tourism; Farm Diversification, Ice Cream & More.

~4:15 p.m. – 6 p.m. Social and Cash Bar in Trade Show Area

~4:30-5:15 pm. Round Tables/WATA Networking in trade show area

- 1) Facebook & Pinterest
- 2) Instagram & TikTok
- 3) Email Marketing
- 4) Farm Stays
- 5) What Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association can do for you
- 6) Food on the Farm
- 7) Google Reviews
- 8) Agritourism Safety – Integrating Safety into Agritourism
- 9) USDA SCBG 23-10 WATA Peer to Peer Mentoring Program

Tuesday, January 28, 2025, Business Strategies/Tourism

~8 a.m. – 9 a.m. Trends in Agricultural Tourism: Protecting Your Assets, Insurance, Business Structures, Limited Liability Law

~9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Trends in Agricultural Tourism: Transitioning to Selling Alcohol at your Agricultural Tourism Destination or not

~10:30 – 11:30 a.m. Department of Revenue Update Alcohol Laws – Private Event Venues

~1:00 p.m. Conference & Trade Show Adjourns

Register today.

Registration open Sunday at Noon, Monday & Tuesday at 7AM.

Member Registration - \$85 / Person

Non-Member Registration - \$95 / Person

On-Site Registration Additional \$15 / Organization

Rooms have to be reserved as soon as possible before block is sold out.



Go WI Ag Tourism



2025 Peer to Peer (P2P) Mentoring Program SCBG23-10

“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.”

John C. Crosby

Get 1-to-1 guidance from an experienced agricultural tourism destination owner/manager who can help you:

- Learn best practices for your type of agricultural tourism farming operation
- Prepare your agricultural tourism farm/operation for guests & direct to consumer sales
- Move your agricultural tourism farming operation forward with experienced guidance

This learning experience involves a mentor who is an experienced agricultural tourism farmer and a mentee (farmer) who is seeking agricultural tourism knowledge and guidance through online and of-line sessions.

Structured around specific goals, current trends, and best practices. This educational opportunity will help ambitious farmers plan, pilot and evaluate their future possible revenue streams generated from the agricultural “direct-to-consumer” business model / market.

- First Virtual Meeting February 5, 2025 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Mentee farmers register online to become a WATA member to participate in the program, which includes participation in (P2P) mentoring program; 2025 WATA Member benefits.

Membership payment is due upon acceptance into the program. This program will be limited to 12-15 Mentee farmers.

The 2024 P2P Mentorship Program, which runs from January 26, 2025 – March 26, 2025.
For more information – click GoWiAgTourism.com

This P2P mentoring program is a program of work for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Specialty Crop Block Grant SCBG23-10. Program contents are solely the work of the administering grant awardee and do not represent the views of the USDA or DATCP.

In The News...

- ~[Latest WATA Podcast - Private Hunt Club Pheasant Farm Classic Green Reunion](#)
- ~[2025 The Year of Agricultural Tourism Experiences WCLO JVL](#)
- ~[Announcing Classic Green Reunion 2025 "All Things John Deere" June 12-14, 2025. WTAQ](#)
- ~Please help us congratulate 2025 Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs, Megan Salentine
- ~Thank you Dorothy Harms and Clara Hedrich for hosting the WATA Booth at WAF WI Dells.



WATA's Marketing Campaign continues to Drive Visitors to Your Farm



The Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association continues with our statewide push to get more visitors to members' farms, event barns, vineyards, petting zoos, and tree farms.

Large, easy-to-read signs boasting LUV-R-AG and smartphone friendly QR codes were placed at highway rest stops and visitor centers from Hurley to Kenosha, Ashland to Beloit, Superior to Platteville, and Menominee to La Crosse.

Over 30 signs, each measuring 30" x 20" are now hanging in high traffic areas in rest stops and visitor centers across Wisconsin. Travelers will be able to see the signs, use the QR code, and find their next ag-venture.

The QR code on the signs will guide visitors to WATA's website and, thereby, to member listings. Now is a good time for all WATA members to review their website listings and get them ready for the 2025 Ag-Venture Seasons. The goal is to get more eyes on the signs and on your farms in time for the 2025 Spring tourism season.

This marketing effort is the result of WATA working with key agencies to elevate the visibility of member tourism opportunities, and to help make Wisconsin America's Agricultural Tourism Destination.



2025 Membership Renewal

Don't Miss Out...Renew Today!

The Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association (WATA) would like to **invite you to continue your support of Agricultural Tourism** by being a 2025 member. Make sure we receive your 2025 membership promptly as 2025 will be another banner year. Events will start in January 2025. Take a minute to create, review and update your membership application features. Be sure to let visitors know what is new for your destination in 2025.

Mark your calendar as our statewide promotion of Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Fall Season, September 18 – October 31, 2025.

Annual Membership Fee \$125.00 (Membership runs Jan – Dec 2025)

Simply go to www.wiagtourism.com/membershipform to complete renewal today!

Thank You for Your Support!

WATA Membership is an investment in your Agricultural Tourism Destination!

Be sure to renew in 2024 to take advantage of 2024 tax benefits.

Reasons to Join WATA in 2025...

First reason why more and more farmers are joining the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association: Our updated website helps individuals and families find Wisconsin's agriculturally based adventures. The user-friendly [WATA website](#) makes it easy to find corn mazes and pumpkin patches, event barns, petting zoos, U-pick opportunities, or vineyards. Want to take a pasture walk, meet sheep, or cut down a Christmas tree? This website makes it easier for consumers to locate tourism opportunities across the entire state. Join WATA and have your destination added to the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association Website.

Second reason why farmers value their WATA membership: Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association advocates for regulations that can help farmers and growers open their operations to visitors year round. WATA engages with various state level leaders and departments to promote a business environment that will make it possible to expand tourism opportunities. WATA worked to establish Wisconsin Act 269; find more facts [here](#).

Third reason WATA members join and renew their memberships year after year: As a WATA member, you'll have access to member-only educational webinars, monthly newsletters and conferences that will help and support the growth of your business. For example, how do you price entry fees for your activities? What are the regulations around selling food? And what about using social media? Because of our strong partnerships with farm organizations, the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and other agencies, WATA provides members with updates about many factors affecting tourism.

Join or Renew Your WATA Membership [online](#). Then register for member-only educational webinars and conferences. Registration is now open, for WATA's 2025 online Agricultural Tourism Educational series: Enhancing and Growing your Agricultural Tourism Destination.

WATA is...

An organization that can help you find other farmers with knowledge and experience that are willing to share what they've learned. Ultimately, the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association is about offering information, connections, and advocacy that will help you as you work for your success, growing and enhancing your Agricultural Tourism Destination.

Thank you for your time and promptness in renewing your 2025 Membership. Please don't hesitate to contact Sheila Everhart, WATA Executive Director, with any questions or comments. She can be reached at (608) 774-1354 or director@wiagtourism.com.

Make sure to check out our [Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Facebook](#) page!

Are you interested in serving as a WATA Board Member?

WATA will have elections for Board Positions March 2025.

Please contact/text Sheila at (608) 774-1354 if you are interested in being a candidate.

Upcoming Events...

- January 26-28, 2025 Growing Wisconsin Conference - Wisconsin Dells
- February 21-22, 2025 Marbleseed Conference/Trade Show - LaCrosse
- March 5, 2025 Annual WATA Meeting 10:00 am via Zoom
- March 9-12, 2025 Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism - LaCrosse
- June 12-14 2025 Classic Green Reunion - West Bend
- June 13-15, 2025 International Peony Festival - Beaver Dam
- August 5, 2025 Wisconsin State Fair - Milwaukee
- September 18 – October 31, Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Fall Season



MORNING AgClips
AMERICA'S #1 AG NEWS SOURCE



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

