

Understanding Farmapreneurs' Perspectives on Farm-to-Fork Concept in Agro-Rural Tourism: A Study of Adoption, Challenges and Support Requirements in Pune District

Mrudula Pardeshi, PhD Scholar, Dr. Jyoti Peshave, PhD Guide

Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development, Pune

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51584/IJRIAS.2026.11090014>

Received: 21 September 2026; Accepted: 26 September 2026; Published: 30 September 2026

ABSTRACT

Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism, which is a combination of farm production, farm-based tourism and local and regional food traditions, provides an opportunity for farmapreneurs to diversify the enterprise activities through tourism. However, farmapreneurs are expected to handle a number of operational, human resource, marketing, supply chain and financial issues in a farm-to-fork agro-rural tourism firm. The present study was undertaken to learn the perception of farmapreneurs about the Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism in the context of development, particularly with respect to its adoption, motivation and challenges faced and support required for its implementation.

Objectives of the study this study has been conducted to analyse the farm-related profile of farmapreneurs, attitude and adoption of farmapreneurs and their motivation towards Farm-to-Fork, operational and managerial problems, and training, institutional support and policy needs of farmapreneurs. The study adopted a descriptive and exploratory research design. The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 117 farmapreneurs engaged in agro-rural tourism in Pune district, Maharashtra. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyse the data.

Findings reveal that the farmapreneurs' aspirational approach to Farm-to-Fork are additional revenue streams, environment, sustainability, and culture. Infrastructure, hygiene and food safety, trained manpower, consumer expectation management, marketing, supply-chain logistics, and finance are identified as operational concerns. The research also revealed a lack of awareness of government policies, and a clear need for practical training, handholding, and exposure.

The results provide valuable guidelines in designing capacity-building programs, and institutional support systems and of course the right approach for farmapreneurial enhancement and sustainable development of Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism in Pune district.

Keywords: Farm-to-Fork, agro-rural tourism, farmapreneurs, agro-rural tourism, rural entrepreneurship, tourism management, local food, Pune district

INTRODUCTION

Agro-rural tourism is a link between agriculture and tourism, where existing or potential resources, landscapes, local food, local products, local craft skills, as well as participation of the local community are used as tourism resources. It can be an alternative source of income for farmers and an opportunity to get closer to rural life and activity for tourists.

Agro-rural tourism is perceived as a potential supplementary income and a source of employment and another study revealed the factors and constraints such as skills, resources, finance and management that influence the functioning of agro-rural tourism farms. In a study of the agro-tourism business in Maharashtra, investors revealed challenges of finance and labour as constraints while a survey of operators in Maharashtra and Goa

highlighted resource management, customer satisfaction, promotion and publicity and government support as important factors.

Agro-rural tourism Farm-to-Fork – connecting food production with consumption The farm-based or local origin foods can be integrated into the agro-rural tourism experience of visitors by various means, including harvesting, food preparation and cooking, eating. With the Farm-to-Fork approach, this offer can be strengthened – its success can also bring benefits and dynamics to the rural economy and region, provided there are proper connections between agriculture, tourism and rural communities.

Farmapreneurs are thus an integral part of this process. They are expected to handle agricultural production but have to perform dual tourism functions such as infrastructure, food hygiene and safety, trained manpower, customer's expectations, marketing, supply chain management and pricing. The questionnaire in this paper is basically about these parameters.

The Farm-to-Fork idea could also be related to farmapreneur motivations. The questionnaire addresses motivations such as all year round income, promotion of local food, education of tourists, preservation of local culture, environment concerns and demand.

Simultaneously, the successful diversification depends on the appropriate knowledge and institutional support. It is reported that training, communication skills, finance, awareness and coordination between tourism and agricultural institutions are some challenges faced while promoting and developing agri rural tourism in Maharashtra.

The current study aims to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of farmapreneurs towards Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism in the Pune district. The study aims to explore the reasons behind their farmers' / farmapreneurs' adoption of such practices and to identify the major managerial problems faced in implementing the Farm-to-Fork experiences and the perceived training, institutional and policy support needs.

Objectives Of the Study

1. To examine the farm-related profile of farmapreneurs engaged with Farm-to-Fork concept in agro-rural tourism in Pune district.
2. To examine the adoption and motivations of farmapreneurs towards the Farm-to-Fork concept in agro-rural tourism.
3. To identify and assess the major operational, human-resource, marketing, supply-chain and financial challenges faced by farmapreneurs in managing Farm-to-Fork concept in agro-rural tourism experiences.
4. To examine the training, institutional support and policy requirements perceived by farmapreneurs for effective management of Farm-to-Fork concept in agro-rural tourism enterprises.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Agro-Rural Tourism and Farm Diversification

Agri-tourism: An important farm diversification activity is agri-tourism, which is essentially the diversification of farms through the integration of tourism resources and rural environment into the natural setting of the farm. This activity involves the diversification of farm tourism to provide supplementary income to farmers through the provision of farm stays, farm experiences, participation in farming activities, and rural life experiences. Krishna et al. (2020) define agro-rural tourism as "an alternative farm business enterprise, which brings additional income to farms and adds recreational and educational value to the visitor" and among other factors listed by the authors, location advantage, customer satisfaction, resource management, promotion & publicity and government support are critical factors for success.

This angle of argument is mostly relevant to rural enterprises as agro-rural tourism needs to utilize other resources apart from an agricultural production related activity. Sawant and Kadam (2022) have studied selected

agro-rural tourism centres of Western Maharashtra. Centres in Pune and Satara are considered for finding agro-rural tourism centres problem, where financial and labour related problems were considered as major issues. The author suggests that owner of an agro-rural tourism enterprise faces problem which is beyond an agricultural production related activity and is related to enterprise level activities.

These researches demonstrate the importance of considering farmapreneurs beyond being agricultural producers as well as entrepreneurs that work with tourism related services and activities.

Farmapreneurship in Agro-Rural Tourism

Farmapreneurship is the application of farming, entrepreneurship, and tourism, whereby farm resources are utilized as tourism and other business ventures. To convert agricultural activities into tourism business activities, farm managers must oversee visitors, services, marketing, resources, as well as finances.

Indian agro-rural tourism studies also offer a glimpse of the skill set and resources needed for farmers to venture into tourism. Vishwanath et al. (2022) working with a sample of 120 farmers from four districts of Karnataka found a range of problems faced in the financial, human-resource, technical, situational, and policy parameters. The study found that high-cost labour, poor communication skills, insufficient knowledge base relating to agro-rural tourism activities, and lack of government support were some of the issues. The authors listed training, marketing support, tourism packages, and institutional support as some of the farmers' recommendations.

These results are especially important for Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism, where the farmapreneur has to manage agricultural production along with food operations and visitor management. Therefore, the entrepreneurial function does not end with the production of an agricultural good, but with the development of an integrated tourism experience.

Conceptualization of Farm-to-Fork concept in Agro-Rural Tourism

In this research, Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism is an organic farm-based tourism experience for tourists to learn about connections between agriculture and food, from farm (or region) to table through food growing, harvesting, processing, cooking and eating. Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism goes further than supplying food at a farm tourism destination, by linking the place of origin of food with the process and its interpretation.

What differentiates Farm-to-Fork from typical agro-rural tourism or farm tourism is its focus on the food pathway. In addition to farm visits, farm stays, agricultural and recreational activities, agro-rural tourism can be a broad concept while Farm-to-Fork emphasizes the production of food. Accordingly, in this study, Farm-to-Fork is viewed as an integrated enterprise activity, combining agriculture, food, hospitality and visitors.

Conceptual Distinction between Agro rural tourism and Farm-to-Fork

Agro-rural tourism may broadly be defined as tourism that provides connections for visitors to the agricultural environment, agricultural activities and rural lifestyle. For farm operators, it is a way of diversifying agricultural activities through tourism-related activities, including farm visits, farm stays, participation in agricultural activities, demonstrations, recreational activities and tasting local produce. Phillip, Hunter and Blackstock (2010) define agro-rural tourism as a more specific form of rural tourism where the farm environment and connections between agricultural production and tourism activities are central. In this way, the agricultural operation itself is a key aspect of the tourism product.

The term farm to fork is the most specific, food-focused aspect of the above and similar integrated frameworks. While with or without agro-rural tourism, the visitor experience might include some form of farm observation or activity, the farm to fork philosophy emphasizes the link between food production and food consumption. Farm origin or local foods are then incorporated into the visitor's experience such as with gleaning, picking, processing or preparation, eating and cooking. Here, the farm is not just the business and visitor attraction – it is the origin of the visitor's food.

This distinction could therefore be based on the core aspect of the visitor's experience. For example, conventional agro-rural tourism may offer the experience of the farm, the farm activities, the rural landscape and the local way of life, while farm-to-fork would concentrate on the consumer's plate, presenting the food from the farm on the plate. The farm-to-fork could then merge the farm experience with the culinary one.

From farmapreneur view point, this distinction carries significant managerial significance. In a typical agro-rural tourism enterprise, the facility and activities needed to enable visitors to access the farm and participate in farm-based activities will be the prime concern. In a Farm-to-Fork enterprise, one needs even further juxtaposition of agriculture production and marketing, procurement and harvesting, preparing, handling, hygiene and food safety, skilled manpower, handling visitors and food service operations. The farmapreneur needs to manage these both together and keep the food experience connected to the farm or the production system.

Tew and Barbieri (2012) it is important to study agro-rural tourism from the Point of view of the producer as farm operators derive many economic and non-economic objectives from the business of tourism. Krishna et al. (2020) found resource management, customer satisfaction, promotion and publicity; location advantage and government support to be important factors associated with agro-rural tourism companies. It is relevant for Farm-to-Fork since agricultural activities are complemented with food and tourism, which imposes additional manager's needs.

Thus Farm-to-Fork can be envisioned as an integrated farm-based tourism model and not just a food service activity which involves the linking of farm production, harvesting, food preparation, food consumption, visitor learning, and visitor engagement. Farm-production along with linking it to other stages can be an ideal niche for farmapreneurs to showcase farm products, build up local food systems, develop experiential value for visitors and earn additional income for farms. This, however, would require a helping infrastructure, well-established food safety standards, skilled manpower, supply-chain linkage, and effective communication with visitors.

Agro-rural tourism according to the present study Thus, in the context of present study, Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism hence understood as a specialized variant of agro-rural tourism where linkages in terms of production and consumption of farm products constitute an integral part of tourism experience. This conceptual delineation serves as the foundation for analysis of Farm-to-Fork adoption, farmapreneur motivation, operational constraints and support needs in district Pune.

Challenges in Managing Agro rural tourism Enterprises

Agro-rural tourism businesses also face some difficulties which may include infrastructure, human resources, finance, marketing, visitor management, and institutional coordination as farm operators have to look after both the agricultural business and the tourism enterprise.

Such financial and labour issues and their impact on sustainability and development were also highlighted by Sawant and Kadam (2022) where they discussed Agro-rural tourism centres in Western Maharashtra. Vishwanath et al. (2022) on the other hand grouped farmer challenges into five categories viz. Financial, human-resource, technical, situational and policy-related issues. They pointed out the need for training, marketing, tourism and government support.

Krishna et al. (2020) also proved that resource management, customer satisfactions, promotion & publicity, location advantage and government supports are the significant facilitating factors for agro-rural tourism enterprises.

Building on this literature, this study studies a larger number of operational dimensions relevant particularly to Farm-to-Fork concerns, such as the nature of the infrastructure, hygiene and food preparation requirements, labourforce credentials, pre-and intra- sale customer expectations, advertising, sale and marketing, supply chain management, financial backup, and pricing and profitability.

Human Resources and Training

Human resources have an important function in agro-rural tourism since tourism is based on the direct contact among farm managers, workers and tourists. The change from agricultural activities to tourism-related ones may imply that farmapreneurs and their workers must acquire new knowledge and skills in hospitality, communication, food service and managing visitors.

Vishwanath et al. (2022) found that farmers who promote agro-rural tourism exhibit limitations in communication skills and commercial orientation, issues related to human resources. According to their report training was one of the strategies recommended to address problems faced by agro-rural tourism.

Krishna et al. (2020) also mentioned resource management and customer satisfaction as successful factors to agro-rural tourism business. Human-resource capability can thus be regarded as an essential element of the whole successful Farm-to-Fork tourism management.

Therefore, the current study regards trained manpower as one of the operational problems and the various types of training and support that farmapreneurs regard as essential are analyzed.

Marketing and Customer Expectations

Marketing and the ability to gauge visitor expectations are essential for farm tourism enterprises, because the product is essentially experiential and largely influences its success in communication. Krishna et al. (2020) found customer satisfaction and promotion and publicity to be among the essential factors in the success of agro-rural tourism.

Vishwanath et al. (2022) also found marketing and promotional support among the list of measures provided by farmers to enhance the growth of agro-rural tourism. Their results involved the creation of various agro-tourism packages based on tourist needs and creating better associations with various institutions, organisations and other potential tourists.

In regards to Farm-to-Fork tourism these aspects are relevant as farmapreneurs must communicate to visitors what is special about their agricultural and food experiences while meeting specific expectations. As such, the current research addresses the dimensions of marketing and promotion and understanding customers' expectations as the operational dimensions studied.

Supply Chain, Finance and Pricing

In farm-to-Fork tourism, there is a need to establish linkages among the production of farms and the food-related activities that are undertaken by the tourists. The farm produce, procurement, handling, processing, storage and handling, and movement can affect farmapreneurs' ability to deliver food and tourism experience.

Financial management, resource management as an important favorable factor Krishna et al. (2020) and financial management came out to be an important factor among various other Indian studies regarding agro-rural tourism. Sawant and Kadam (2022) mentioned financial challenges as the factor influencing agro-rural tourism centres in Western Maharashtra. Vishwanath et al. (2022) listed high labour costs and other financial issues among farmers engaged in agri tourism. These results justify the inclusion of the dimensions of supply-chain logistics, financial backup, and pricing and profitability as relevant dimensions of Farm-to-Fork enterprise management.

Institutional and Policy Support

The institutional environment facilitating the creation and operation of tourism farms includes training and information, promotion, support financing, infrastructure and coordination of agencies.

Government support was reported by Krishna et al. (2020) as one of the five major critical enablers for the success of agro-rural tourism. Vishwanath et al. (2022) too identified the lack of government support as one of

the prominent policy constraints faced by farmers and presented a statement expressing farmers' wish for tourism promotion and marketing, policy and training support.

Hence, the study of Sawant and Kadam (2022) focused on the institutional and operational environment of agro-rural tourism centres in Maharashtra to justify the crucial significance of it.

Thus, the present study investigates the farmapreneurs' knowledge about policy measures and support schemes provided by the government and their training and institutional support needs, to gain an insight into the possible directions in which external support systems may help farmapreneurs in running their Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism enterprises.

Overall Literature Synthesis

The literature consulted confirms that agro-rural tourism is a means to promote diversification of the farm and the development of rural enterprises; together with resource management, customer management, marketing, human resources, finance and institutional management, the key to farm operation. Existing studies have examined agro-rural tourism challenges in Maharashtra and other Indian states, but there is comparatively less focused attention on the Farm-to-Fork concept from the farmapreneur's perspective, particularly regarding its adoption, operational challenges, and specific support requirements.

This aspect has been explored in the present study by taking Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism ventures in the Pune district in the following four broad perspectives, viz., farm-related profile, adoption and motivation, operational and managerial constraints, and training, institutional and policy needs. This was basis for the empirical study.

Research Gap

Existing literature establishes the potential of agro-rural tourism as a mechanism for rural diversification and identifies several challenges associated with its development. However, the literature also indicates that research has frequently examined agro-rural tourism broadly rather than focusing specifically on the Farm-to-Fork approach from the farmapreneur's perspective.

Studies in Maharashtra have already documented financial, labour, training, communication, awareness and institutional coordination challenges. Therefore, the contribution of the present study is not simply to identify that farmapreneurs face challenges. Instead, it examines a specific combination of Farm-to-Fork adoption, motivations for adoption, multidimensional management challenges, awareness of government support, and perceived training and institutional support requirements. Furthermore, limited empirical attention has been given to these dimensions together within the Pune district context.

Consolidated Research Gap

Although existing studies have examined agro-rural tourism development and identified challenges relating to finance, labour, training, marketing, infrastructure and institutional support, limited empirical attention has been given to Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism from the farmapreneur's perspective. In particular, there is a need to understand how farmapreneurs are adopting the Farm-to-Fork concept, what motivates adoption, what operational and managerial challenges they encounter, and what forms of training and institutional support they require. The present study addresses this gap by examining farmapreneurs engaged in agro-rural tourism in Pune district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and exploratory research design. The descriptive component examines the farm-related profile, adoption status and motivations of farmapreneurs. The exploratory component investigates operational challenges and perceived training, institutional and policy support requirements.

Research Approach

A quantitative approach was adopted using primary data collected through a structured questionnaire.

Study Area

The study was conducted in Pune district, Maharashtra, covering agro-rural tourism enterprises located across different talukas.

Population

The study was conducted in Pune district, Maharashtra, covering registered and operational agro-tourism centres located across different talukas of the district. The study population comprised 173 agro-tourism centres identified from the list received from the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), Pune Region. This list was used as the sampling frame for identifying the agro-tourism centres included in the study.

Sampling

Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents. From the identified population, 117 valid responses were obtained from farmapreneurs.

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed based on the study objectives and themes identified from the literature. The questionnaire consisted of sections covering farm-related characteristics, Farm-to-Fork adoption, motivations, operational and managerial challenges, government-policy awareness, and training and institutional support requirements.

Farm-to-Fork adoption was measured through a direct self-reported response indicating whether the enterprise had adopted the concept (Yes/No). Non-adopters were further asked about their preference to introduce the concept. Motivation items were measured through the selection of relevant reasons for adopting or considering the concept. Challenge items were measured using a three-point scale comprising Least Significant, Moderate and Significant.

Data Analysis

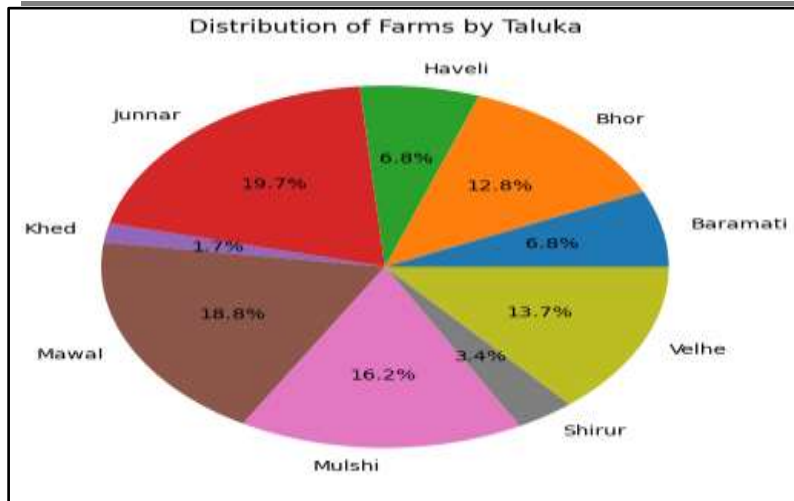
The collected data were analyzed using frequency and percentage analysis. For the challenge variables, the distribution of responses across significant, moderate and least-significant categories was examined to identify areas perceived as greater operational concerns.

Findings and Results

Farmapreneur and Farm Profile

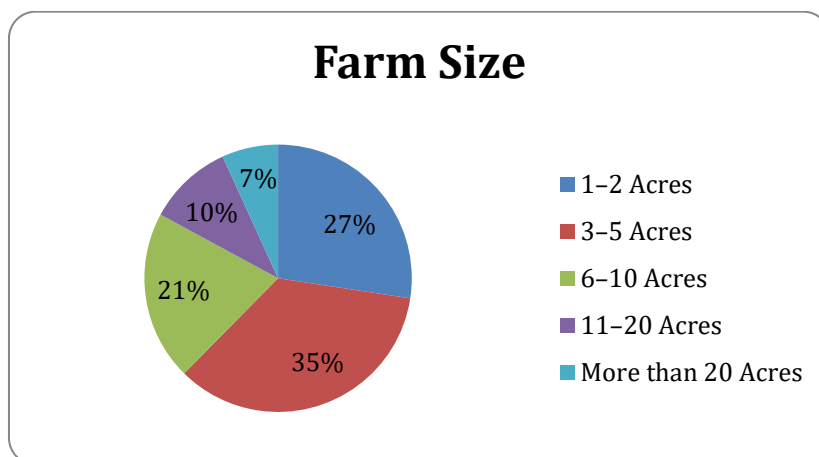
Distribution by Taluka

Junnar had the highest representation of agro-rural tourism enterprises (19.7%), followed by Mawal (18.8%), Mulshi (16.2%), Velhe (13.7%) and Bhore (12.8%). Baramati and Haveli accounted for 6.8% each, while Shirur represented 3.4% and Khed 1.7%. The distribution indicates that agro-rural tourism enterprises are concentrated more strongly in selected talukas of Pune district, particularly Junnar, Mawal and Mulshi.



Farm Size

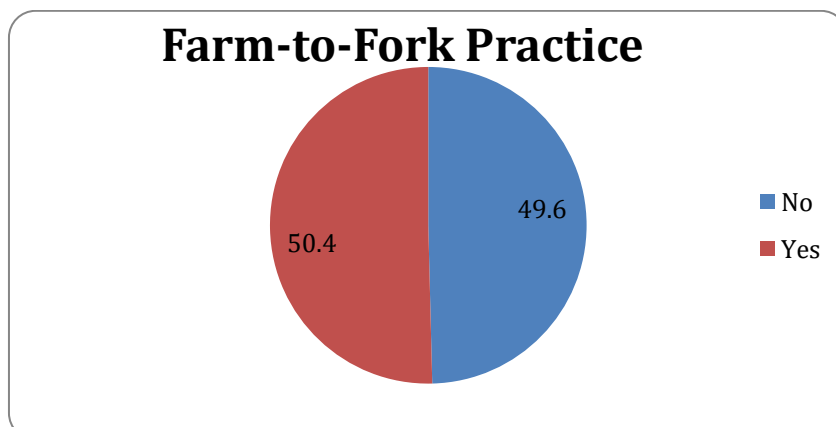
Farms measuring 3–5 acres represented the largest category (35.0%), followed by 1–2 acres (27.4%) and 6–10 acres (20.5%). Farms of 11–20 acres accounted for 10.3%, while farms exceeding 20 acres represented 6.8%. Thus, the findings indicate that agro-rural tourism enterprises in the study are predominantly associated with small- to medium-sized farms.



Adoption and Motivations towards Farm-to-Fork

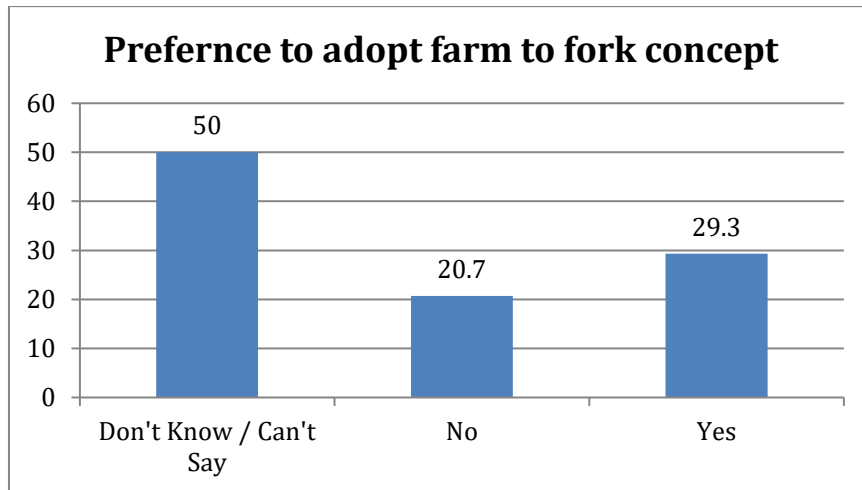
Adoption of the Farm-to-Fork Concept

The findings indicate that 50.4% of Agro tourism owners had adopted the Farm-to-Fork concept, while 49.6% had not. The near-even distribution indicates that the concept has gained considerable adoption among the surveyed enterprises, while a substantial proportion has yet to adopt it.



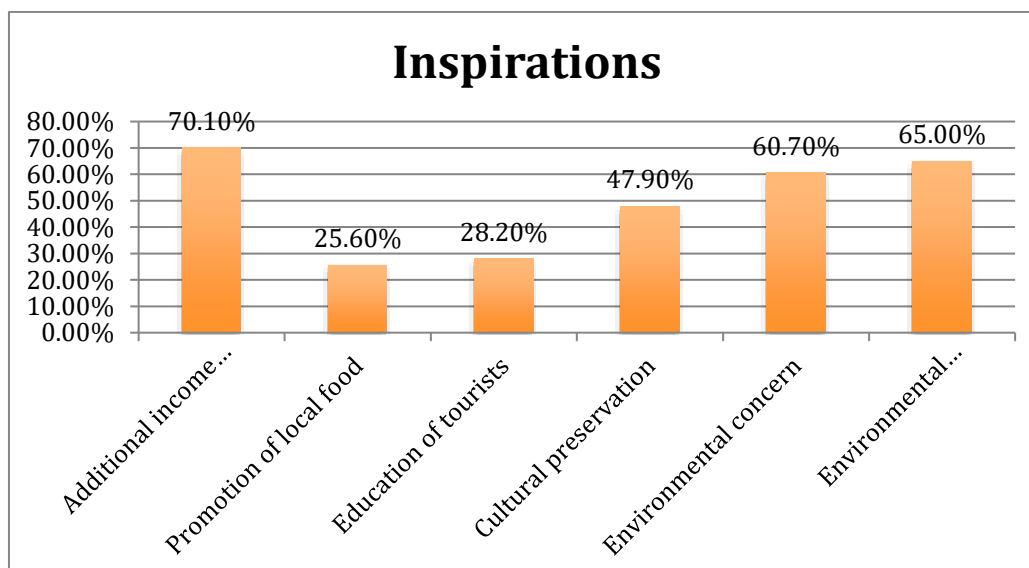
Preference to Introduce Farm-to-Fork among Non-Adopters

Among the non-adopters, 50.0% were uncertain about introducing the concept. A further 29.3% expressed willingness to introduce it, while 20.7% did not intend to introduce it. The relatively high proportion of uncertain respondents suggests that non-adoption may not necessarily represent rejection of the concept. Instead, the relatively high proportion of uncertain respondents indicates that non-adoption should not necessarily be interpreted as outright rejection of the concept. The specific reasons for this uncertainty require further investigation..



Sources of Inspiration

The major reported sources of inspiration were additional income generation (70.1%), environmental sustainability and protection (65.0%), environmental concern (60.7%) and cultural preservation (47.9%). The findings indicate that additional income generation was the most frequently reported motivation among the respondents, followed by environmental sustainability and protection, environmental concern and cultural preservation. while environmental and cultural considerations also feature prominently among the motivations reported by farmapreneurs.



Operational Challenges

Infrastructure

Infrastructure was primarily perceived as a moderate challenge (45.3%), followed by significant challenge (35.9%).

Hygiene Standards

Hygiene standards were mainly reported as a moderate challenge (41.0%), while 23.9% considered them a significant challenge.

Food Preparation Safety

Food preparation safety was primarily perceived as a moderate challenge (43.6%), while 17.9% considered it significant.

Trained Manpower

Trained manpower emerged as an important operational concern. 51.3% of respondents rated it as a moderate challenge, while 35.9% considered it a significant challenge.

Understanding Customer Expectations

Understanding customer expectations was primarily perceived as a moderate challenge (51.3%), while 39.3% considered it least significant.

Marketing and Promotion

Marketing and promotion emerged as an important area of concern, with responses distributed almost equally between moderate (40.2%) and significant (39.3%) challenge categories.

Supply-Chain Logistics

Supply-chain logistics was predominantly perceived as a moderate challenge (53.0%), while 39.3% considered it least significant.

Financial Backup

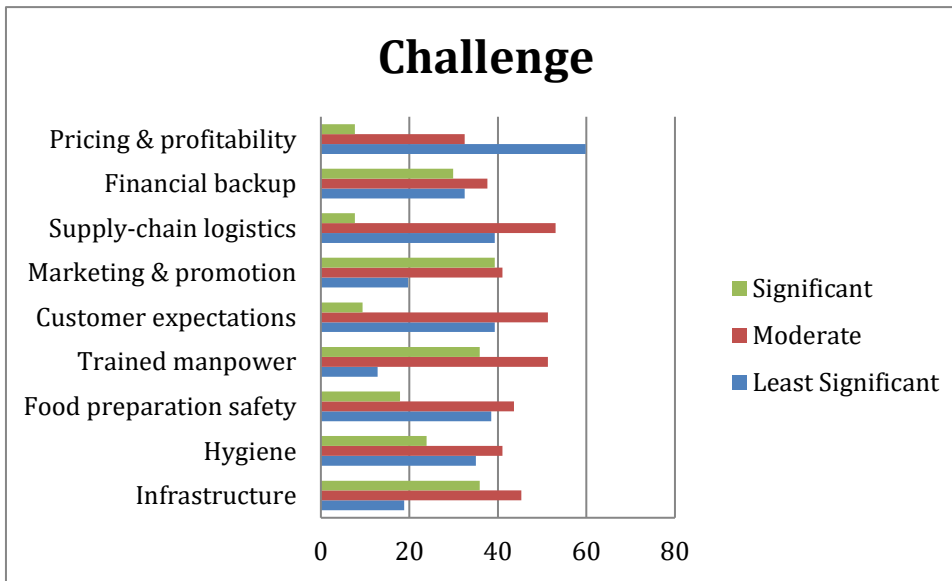
Financial backup was primarily perceived as a moderate challenge (37.6%), followed by least significant (32.5%) and significant (29.9%).

Pricing and Profitability

Pricing and profitability were predominantly considered the least significant challenge (59.8%), while 32.5% rated them as moderate and 7.7% as significant.

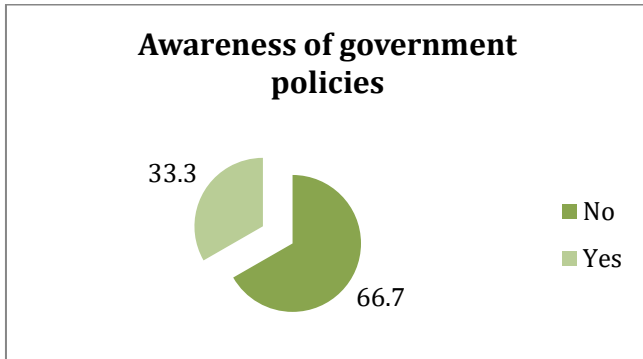
Challenge	Least Significant	Moderate	Significant
Infrastructure	18.8	45.3	35.9
Hygiene	35.0	41.0	23.9
Food preparation safety	38.5	43.6	17.9
Trained manpower	12.8	51.3	35.9
Customer expectations	39.3	51.3	9.4
Marketing & promotion	19.7	41.0	39.3
Supply-chain logistics	39.3	53.0	7.7

Financial backup	32.5	37.6	29.9
Pricing & profitability	59.8	32.5	7.7



Government Policy Awareness

The findings reveal a significant gap in awareness of government policies related to agro-rural tourism and Farm-to-Fork. 66.7% of farmapreneurs reported that they were not aware of relevant government policies, indicating that policy availability may not automatically translate into effective awareness among enterprise operators.



Support Requirements

Observation and exposure visits emerged as the most preferred form of support (23.9%). This was followed by ATDC training and guidance (18.8%) and MTDC guidelines/government support (18.8%). Mentors and workshops accounted for 12.8%. The preference for observation and exposure visits suggests that farmapreneurs may value practical, experience-based learning.

DISCUSSION

□ Farm-to-Fork adoption is at a transitional stage

- 50.4% of respondents reported adopting the Farm-to-Fork concept.
- 49.6% had not adopted the concept.
- Among non-adopters, some expressed willingness or uncertainty about introducing the concept.

☐ **Additional income is an important motivation**

- 70.1% identified additional income generation as a motivation for adopting Farm-to-Fork.
- This supports the role of agro-rural tourism as a farm-diversification and supplementary-income strategy.

☐ **Human resources require managerial attention**

- 51.3% rated trained manpower as a moderate challenge.
- 35.9% rated it as a significant challenge.
- This indicates the importance of training and professional skills for Farm-to-Fork operations.

☐ **Marketing and promotion are important concerns**

- 39.3% considered marketing and promotion a significant challenge.
- 40.2% considered it a moderate challenge.
- Effective promotion is therefore relevant to communicating Farm-to-Fork experiences to potential visitors.

☐ **Infrastructure, hygiene and food safety are relevant to Farm-to-Fork operations**

- Infrastructure, hygiene standards and food-preparation safety emerged as areas requiring managerial attention.
- Farm-to-Fork requires coordination between agricultural production, food preparation and visitor consumption, making these aspects particularly relevant.

☐ **Supply-chain management is an operational consideration**

- Supply-chain logistics was identified as an area of concern by respondents.
- Farm-to-Fork requires coordination of farm produce with food preparation and tourism activities.

☐ **Limited awareness of government support**

- 66.7% of respondents were unaware of government policies or support schemes relevant to their enterprises.
- This indicates a need for better dissemination of information regarding available institutional and policy support.

• Practical exposure and training are preferred support mechanisms

- 23.9% needed observation and exposure visit.
- Other standards included ATDC training/guidance (18.8%) and MTDC/government support (18.8%).
- Indicating that the hands-on experience in a operating agro-tourism and Farm-to-Fork ventures can add to the theoretical train that occurs within the classroom.

• Overall result

The results suggest that enhancing Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism would requires focus on human resources, infrastructure, food safety, marketing, supply chain, policy knowledge and capacity building in practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Practical Farm-to-Fork Training

Training programs must emphasize the design of Farm-to-Fork experiences, food safety and hygiene, meal preparation, visitor handling, customer service, pricing and costing, and sustainable food methods.

Exposure and Observation Visits

Since observation and exposure visits were the most preferred support mechanism, structured exposure programmes should be developed in which farmapreneurs can visit successful agro-rural tourism and Farm-to-Fork enterprises.

Strengthening Skilled Manpower

Training should be provided to local workers in food production, hygiene, hospitality, customer interaction, farm interpretation and basic tourism management.

Marketing and Digital Promotion

Farmapreneurs should be supported in developing social-media presence, digital storytelling, Farm-to-Fork branding, online booking mechanisms, local-food promotion and visitor testimonials and reviews.

Institutional Coordination

Greater coordination among agricultural, tourism and rural-development institutions can help farmapreneurs access information, training and relevant schemes.

Government Policy Awareness

A dedicated information mechanism should communicate available government schemes and guidelines in a simple and accessible format.

Food Safety and Hygiene

Farm-to-Fork businesses ought to establish uniform protocols for hygienic food preparation, individual cleanliness, secure storage, water safety, waste disposal, and food services for visitors.

Farm-to-Fork Management Framework

Based on the identified operational and support requirements, a preliminary Farm-to-Fork management framework are proposed: **Farm Production → Harvesting → Food Preparation → Visitor Experience → Consumption → Feedback → Continuous Improvement.**

Empirical finding	Recommended intervention
35.9% rated trained manpower as significant	Practical hospitality, food-safety and customer-service training
39.3% rated marketing significant	Digital marketing and promotional training
35.9% rated infrastructure significant	Basic infrastructure and facility-development guidance
66.7% unaware of policies	Simplified policy-information mechanism
23.9% preferred exposure visits	Structured exposure/benchmark visits

43.6% rated food-preparation safety moderate	Food-safety and hygiene training
51.3% rated trained manpower moderate	Skill development and local workforce training

CONCLUSION

The study provides an understanding of farmapreneurs' perspectives towards Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism in Pune district. The findings indicate that Farm-to-Fork adoption is already present among approximately half of the surveyed enterprises, while a considerable proportion of non-adopters remain uncertain about introducing the concept.

Additional income generation emerged as the leading motivation, while environmental and cultural considerations also represented important motivations. At the operational level, trained manpower, marketing and promotion, infrastructure, hygiene, food preparation safety and supply-chain management emerged as areas requiring attention.

The study also reveals a substantial gap in government-policy awareness, with 66.7% of respondents indicating that they were not aware of relevant policies. The preference for observation and exposure visits as the leading form of support suggests that practical and experiential capacity-building may be particularly relevant for farmapreneurs.

Overall, the findings indicate that the development of Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism requires more than the availability of agricultural resources. It requires farmapreneurs to develop capabilities in hospitality, food safety, human-resource management, marketing, supply-chain coordination and visitor experience management. The findings suggest that practical training, exposure opportunities, skilled-manpower development and improved institutional communication are relevant areas for strengthening the management capacity of Farm-to-Fork agro-rural tourism enterprises in Pune district.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to farmapreneurs associated with agro-rural tourism enterprises in Pune district and therefore the findings may not be directly generalizable to all agro-rural tourism enterprises in Maharashtra or other regions. The study primarily uses self-reported responses, and perceptions of challenges may vary according to the characteristics and experience of individual farmapreneurs. Therefore, the findings do not establish causal relationships between farm characteristics, motivations, support requirements and adoption. Further studies can examine relationships between farm characteristics, adoption status and perceived challenges using appropriate inferential statistical techniques.

Scope for Future Research

- Compare Farm-to-Fork adoption across different districts of Maharashtra.
- Compare adopters and non-adopters of Farm-to-Fork.
- Examine the relationship between farm size and adoption.
- Study the influence of farmapreneur experience on perceived challenges.
- Investigate tourists' willingness to participate in Farm-to-Fork activities.
- Develop and validate a Farm-to-Fork management framework.
- Explore and use various platform of digital marketing in attracting Farm-to-Fork tourists.

REFERENCES

1. Barbieri, C. (2010). An importance-performance analysis of the motivations behind agritourism and other farm enterprise developments in Canada. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 5(1–2), 1–20.
2. Borlikar, R. R. (2017). A study on agritourism operations in Pune region: The perspective of tourists and operators [Doctoral dissertation, Pondicherry University].
3. Havale, D. S., Chaudhari, C., & Jadhav, S. (2022). Agro-tourism in Maharashtra: A study of influential factors and challenges. *International Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences*, 11(Special Issue 1), 902–911.
4. Jadhav, M., & Peshave, J. (2025). Farm-to-fork in agro-rural tourism – A sustainable concept. *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, 5(4). <https://doi.org/10.52783/jier.v5i4.4028>
5. Krishna, D. K., Kumbhare, N. V., Sharma, D. K., Kumar, P., & Bhowmik, A. (2020). Facilitating factors for a successful agri-tourism venture: A principal component analysis. *Indian Journal of Extension Education*, 56(2), 18–21.
6. Pal, S. (2016). Agricultural tourism—Typology study & tourist perception with reference to Maharashtra. *KIMI Hospitality Research Journal*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.21863/khrj/2016.1.1.003>
7. Palani, M. V. (2021). Review on agritourism tourism policy of Maharashtra. *Agricultural Economics Research Review*, 34(Conference Issue), 235.
8. Phillip, S., Hunter, C., & Blackstock, K. (2010). A typology for defining agritourism. *Tourism Management*, 31(6), 754–758. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.08.001>
9. Sawant, B. S., & Kadam, M. S. (2022). Study of challenges in sustainability and growth of agritourist centres in Western Maharashtra. *International Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences*, 11(10), 213–219.
10. Star, M., Rolfe, J., & Brown, J. (2020). From farm to fork: Is food tourism a sustainable form of economic development? *Economic Analysis and Policy*, 66, 325–334. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eap.2020.04.009>
11. Tew, C., & Barbieri, C. (2012). The perceived benefits of agritourism: The provider's perspective. *Tourism Management*, 33(1), 215–224. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.02.005>
12. Vishwanath, H., Suresha, S. V., Manjuprakash, & Savitha, C. M. (2022). A study on challenges and suggestions of farmers to promote agro tourism centres in Karnataka State in India. *International Journal of Environment and Climate Change*, 12(11), 3693–3698. <https://doi.org/10.9734/IJECC/2022/v12i111419>
13. Walke, S. G., & Kumar, A. (2015). Agritourism: Supplementary business for farmers in Maharashtra state. *MERC Global's International Journal of Social Science & Management*, 2(6), 480–485.
14. Wanole, S. N., Kadam, J. R., & Sawant, P. A. (2020). Scope and challenges of agri-tourism centers in Konkan region of Maharashtra State. *International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences*, Special Issue(11), 1306–1314.