

<http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=31009>

## 2014 Agri/Eco-Tourism Workshop

The Nebraska Tourism Commission is taking registrations for its annual Agri/Eco-Tourism Workshop. The event is designed for those who want to learn more about the agri/eco-tourism industry. It will be held February 3-5 at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center in Kearney.

“While agritourism may be new to some, it has been practiced by Nebraskans who, for generations, have served up agricultural products and services with warm hospitality and down to earth charm. Today’s growing interest in agritoursim offers new and additional opportunities for landowners and rural communities. It allows visitors to experience agriculture first-hand and to be a part of nature, away from the pressures of city life,” commented Kathy McKillip.

Workshop attendees usually include farmers, ranchers, outfitters, vineyard operators, u-pick operators, managers of eco-tourism attractions, chamber/tourism directors and more. Workshop objectives include helping attendees learn how to get the most out of their land, utilize fresh marketing ideas, discover greater financial opportunities and network with potential partners.

Keynote Speaker Carol Patterson will be sharing her strategies about how you can reinvent your tourism organization and rediscover your passion. Carol Patterson has helped emerging tourism destinations for over two decades. Her work in product development provides innovative new travel products, some increase revenues 25 percent in one season. Carol's travel writing is regularly featured in the Red Deer Advocate and she is the author of several books including “The Business of Ecotourism”.

Lincoln, Nebraska advertising and public relations firm, Swanson Russell and Associates, will offer ideas on how to leverage low-cost and no-cost public relations opportunities. Other key topics will include inventorying your potential, building strong partnerships, exploring potential cross-marketing opportunities and calculating your return on investment.

To get more information about the 2014 Agri/Eco-Tourism Workshop or to register for the event, go to <http://www.visitnebraska.com/industry>. If you have any questions about the workshop or would like information on sponsorships, call Karen Kollars at 308-249-3220.

Examples of some of the state’s private or non-profit Agri/Eco Tourism attractions and their reported 2012 attendance:

- Kimmel Orchard and Vineyard 120,000
- Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park and Wildlife Safari 110,878
- Roca Berry Farm 50,500
- Arbor Day Farm 37,500
- Bellevue Berry Farm and Pumpkin Ranch 20,000
- SchillingBridge Winery & Microbrewery 18,500
- Poppy’s Pumpkin Patch 10,000
- Prairie Loft Center for Outdoor and Agricultural Learning 6,600
- Wessel’s Living History Farm 6,000

The mission of the Nebraska Tourism Commission is to expand Nebraska’s dynamic and diverse travel industry making it more viable by creating awareness, attracting increased visitors which results in greater tourism revenue and economic gain throughout the state. To learn more, go to [www.VisitNebraska.com](http://www.VisitNebraska.com). Order your free travel guide today at [VisitNebraska.com](http://www.VisitNebraska.com). Then stay connected with Nebraska Tourism on our Visit Nebraska Facebook page, on Twitter, on Pinterest and on YouTube.