



NATIONAL TOURISM AWARD **To Agri Tourism ...Pure Holidayism...** **As the most innovative tourism product...**

Agri Tourism India (ATDC) gets the year 2008-2009 NATIONAL TOURISM AWARD as the Most Innovative and unique tourism Product.... National Tourism Awards are given by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India to recognize the efforts by the Tourism Industry from across the India. The awards was given away by the hands of The Hon'ble Vice President of India in the function organized by Tourism Ministry at New Delhi on 3rd March 2010.

Backdrop

Agri Tourism concept innovator, Pandurang Taware is natively from Baramati, Maharashtra, and belongs to the farmer's family and is aware of the problems of the farmers' community. His childhood memories from the small village 'Sanghavi' in Baramati taluka actually motivated him to start Agri Tourism, Agri Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC). Today when he looks back, he says I was lucky to be brought up as apart of the joint family in the Agri and rural setup in the small village.

ATDC mission

“To promote agriculture tourism to achieve income, employment and economic stability in rural communities in India, help boosting a range of activities, services and amenities provided by farmers and rural people to attract urban tourists to their area thus provide opportunity for urban people to get back to the roots”

Agri Tourism India makes World History

World Agri Tourism Day celebrated by Agri Tourism Development Corporation, Pune (ATDC) gets International recognition. as the pioneer institute in Agri & Rural Tourism development has been celebrating 16th May as 'World Agri Tourism Day' since the year 2008. It celebrates this day as 'World Agri Tourism Day' in order to popularize the concept of Agri & Rural tourism across the globe. It has initiated & successfully implemented various activities in last 5 years.

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has now acknowledged these efforts by ATDC and declared 16th May as 'World Agri Tourism Day'.

This is indeed a great achievement for International Agri Tourism sector as a whole and for ATDC in particular. It has carved a niche for itself & one has to take note of ATDC's work while writing the history of development of Agri Tourism. It has also brought Pune on the international agriculture map.

Agri Tourism - Need of the hour

Agro production faces difficulties every now & then. In such circumstances, traditional farming must be supplemented by different agro activities in order to maximize returns. Agri & rural tourism can be an effective tool in these efforts. We are spreading this message for last so many years. If an agrarian country like India aims at economic development, it cannot afford to ignore rural development. ATDC began its efforts to realize the dream from Baramati village.

First Agri Tourism center was set up in Baramati. Afterwards, ATDC, Pune took it upon itself to popularize this concept in every corner of Maharashtra. These efforts bore fruits and many such Agri Tourism centers came up in a short span of time. Baramati's project has become role model now and Agri Tourism revolution has not only spread across Maharashtra but the entire country. ATDC takes pride in the fact that it was pioneer in the field of Agri Tourism in India.

Establishment of MART

With a view to provide a common platform to various Agri tourism centers operating across the state, ATDC, Pune founded 'Maharashtra State Agri & Rural Tourism Co-op Federation Ltd.' (MART). This apex body, led by Mrs. Sunetra Ajit Pawar, has become the leader of Agri tourism sector in last 2 years. 12 co-operative societies, 124 Agri tourism centers & more than 400 farmers have become members of MART. MART, in association with ASSOCHAM has organized 1st National Agri Tourism Conference in New Delhi on 18th March 2010. Mr. Pandurang Taware has appealed to directors of Agri tourism centers and people interested in Agri Tourism Concept in Maharashtra, farmers & professionals in the field of Agri Tourism to attend this First National Convention on Agri Tourism

Success In 5 years

Agri Tourism concept which was initiated in Baramati in the year 2004 has become immensely popular in the last 5 years. This institute is now also working as a parent organization for other Agri tourism centers. Approx. 50000 urban & foreign tourists have visited Baramati center in the last 5 years. Pune district alone has seen emergence of 22 Agri tourism centers taking inspiration from this center.

Rural development through self-employment by Agri Tourism

‘Unless our villages are self-sufficient, our nation cannot progress. We must go to villages in order to achieve development of villages.’ This mantra given by Mahatma Gandhi still holds true & ATDC has come forward to realize Gandhiji’s dream.

Selfless intentions

Indian countryside is blessed with nature’s love. Dense forests, high hills & deep valleys, many rivers flowing across the length & breadth of the country have made India nature’s paradise. But this has to be complimented by planned development in order to generate employment. Acknowledging that traditional farming along with supplementary activities can generate tremendous employment, ATDC Pune has initiated various programmes.

Nostalgic mood

Many people now living in cities has spent their childhood in villages. Cold buttermilk in earthen pot, bullock-cart ride, having meal sitting under tree, Hurda party, enjoying the evening breeze... But unfortunately, we do not have time to enjoy these things in modern day urban life and if we do get some time, then we do not have appropriate option. Those who have only read stories about village life in books are deprived of a pure joy. Everyone aspires to experience this joy and that is what ATDC is working for. It has developed many Agri Tourism centers in Maharashtra. These Agri tourism centers are right blend of rural lifestyle & modern needs. In short, ATDC is working at providing a complete tourism experience to tourists without fatigue.

Substantial employment Generation

ATDC has opened up a new avenue of employment for farmers by enabling producers to meet customers directly. Farmers can sell their nutritious agro products in fewer prices due to elimination of middlemen. One can experience the fun behind eating sugarcane right there in fields or fruits just plucked from trees.

Students can see poultry, Emus breeding, cattle breeding, honey collection center etc and learn the work that goes behind these activities. It has led to a speedy generation of employment since both customers' liking & farmers' need are being taken care of. Products like pickle & papad prepared by ladies savings group (Mahila bachat gat) are tourist's all time favorite and demand for such products as well as some other unique products are on the rise.

The government is working towards development of villages but it is the responsibility of every citizen & we must do everything in our own capacity. ATDC, Pune has definitely taken a step in this direction.

ATDC's various concepts & projects will be adopted worldwide now due to United Nations World Tourism Organization's acknowledgement and with National Tourism Award by Tourism Ministry, Government of India. This will help in supplementing tourism activities to core agricultural activities and provide financial support to agriculture sector across the globe including India. Therefore this recognition and National Tourism Award is an important milestone in India's Agri Tourism development. ATDC is extremely proud to have been instrumental in bringing about this change.

To know more:

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