



VISITORS' SATISFACTION ON AGRO-TOURISM  
PROJECT: A CASE STUDY OF THE NATIONAL  
BOTANICAL GARDEN, SHAH ALAM, SELANGOR,  
MALAYSIA

BY

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for  
the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning

Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Agro-tourism is one of the important sectors that contributes to the development of tourism in Malaysia. In this context, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industries has embarked on a number of agro-tourism projects which include the National Botanical Garden in Bukit Cerakah, Selangor, Malaysia, considered to be an iconic agro-tourism project in Malaysia. The study examines the visitors' satisfaction on the state of tourist products, activities and provision of facilities. As part of the research methodology, this study employed a number of methods that included a questionnaire survey and site observations. A total number of 120 respondents were involved in this questionnaire survey. The findings indicate that the park is in dire conditions where evidence of vandalism, lack of maintenance and lack of tourist activities can be seen clearly. As part of the strategies to further enhance the iconic status of the National Botanical Park, Malaysia, it is recommended that the responsible authorities under the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industries undertake a number of efforts such as increase safety and security facilities, provide more activities and improve park maintenance.

## ملخص البحث

السياحة الزراعية هي واحدة من القطاعات الهامة التي تساهم في تنمية السياحة في ماليزيا. في هذا السياق، شرعت وزارة الزراعة والصناعات المعتمدة على الزراعة على عدد من مشاريع السياحة الزراعية والتي تشمل الحديقة النباتية الوطنية في بوكيتجراكه ، سيلانغور، ماليزيا، التي تعتبر مشروع السياحة الزراعية مبدع في ماليزيا. وتبحث الدراسة التصور الفريق الضيف على الدولة من المنتجات السياحية والأنشطة وتوفير المرافق. كجزء من منهجية البحث، استخدمت هذه الدراسة عددا من الأساليب التي تضمن الاستبيان والملاحظات الموقع. ويشارك عدد مجموعه 120 المستجيبين في هذا الاستبيان. وتشير النتائج إلى أن الحديقة هي في ظروف قاسية حيث الأدلة من التخريب وانعدام الصيانة وعدم وجود أنشطة سياحية يمكن رؤيتها بوضوح. كجزء من استراتيجيات لزيادة تعزيز مركز ومبدع من نباتات الحديقة الوطنية، ماليزيا، فمن المستحسن أن السلطات المسؤولة التابعة لوزارة الزراعة والصناعات المعتمدة على الزراعة الاضطلاع بعدد من الجهود مثل زيادة مرافق الأمن والسلامة، وتوفير المزيد من الأنشطة وتحسين صيانة الحديقة.

## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Nor 'Adilah Binti Habsirun

Signature:..... Date:.....

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A CASE STUDY OF THE NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDEN, SHAH  
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This dissertation is dedicated to my parents:

*Mak & Ayah,*

Who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for its own sake and the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Agro-tourism is a form of cultural tourism that benefits rural areas as tourist attractions. Agro-tourism has several definitions, but mostly it refers to a combination of agriculture and tourism which involves visits to farms and other agricultural sites to experience various aspects of the agricultural lifestyle (Williams, 1997). Direct expansion of the agro-tourism concept of eco-tourism, which encourages visitors to experience agricultural life at first hand. Agro-tourism is gathering strong support from small communities as rural people have realized the benefits of sustainable development brought about by the natural course of the same form. If the attractions offered to tourists contribute to increasing the income of the regional population, agro-tourism can promote regional development. To ensure that it also helps to conserve biodiversity, the rural population itself must have been recognized as a valuable agricultural biodiversity and need protection. There are various forms of rural tourism, which is not necessarily part of the agro-tourism in the strict sense - such ethno tourism, projects tourism, health tourism, historical tourism, cultural tourism or adventure tourism (Iakovidou, 1997). The term 'agro-eco-tourism' is synonymous with 'agro-tourism'.

In general, agro-tourism is the practice of attracting travelers or visitors to an area or areas used primarily for agricultural purposes. Usually, the idea of mass tourism to stimulate travel images that attract a large number of production sites. For instance, the visitors have the opportunity to work in the field with real farmers and

fishing in the sea with fishermen hauling in their nets. Some of the organizations listed in the directory where the special emphasis on agro-tourism. These images may encourage small business owners from considering tourism as an option to increase the agricultural product of their culture. However, agro-tourism can be viewed as eco-tourism, which is the impact of small, low, and in the case of more education-focused. Agro-tourism, also known as a form of sustainable tourism development and activities in rural areas of medium through which visitors have the opportunity to get acquainted with agricultural areas, agricultural occupations, local products, traditional cuisine and daily lives of citizens, as well as cultural elements and features the authentic features of the area, while showing respect for the traditions environment. In addition, these activities bring visitors closer to nature and rural activities in which, they can participate, be entertained, and enjoy visiting, learning and meeting (Agritourism & Centres, 2008) (Figure 1.1).

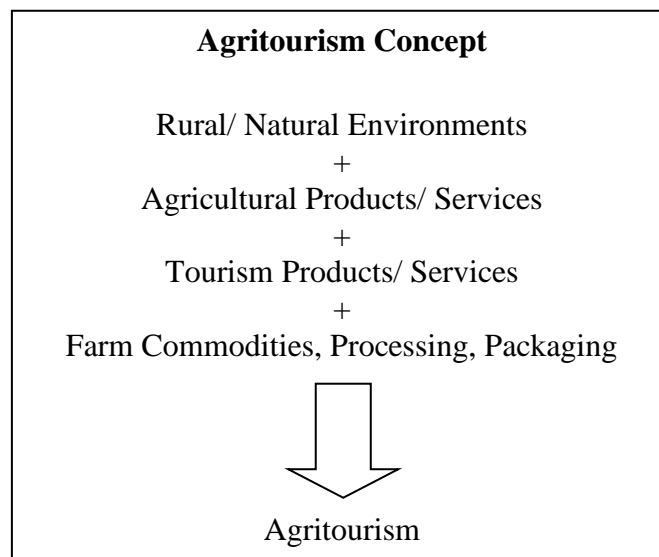


Figure 1.1: Agro-tourism concept  
*Source: Agritourism & Centres, 2008*

Recognizing that the agro-tourism holds both attracted to people of Malaysia and the visitors, the organizer of this agro-tourism includes visits to the plantations of rubber and palm oil, and pepper plantations, fish farms, flower nurseries and fruit orchards. Orchards have proven to become the most popular sites for visitors as they enjoy eating delicious exotic fruits besides learning. Tours are conducted to offer information on planting, maintaining, processing, and manufacturing, the commodities for sale or export. Industries, including crops such as corn, cocoa, rubber, rice, fruits, oil palm and many other products from which many Malaysians still earn for living.

### **1.1 AGRO-TOURISM IN MALAYSIA: AN OVERVIEW**

Agro-tourism continues to be a chance for human nature to increase their incomes for farmers and agribusinesses to some parts of the world. We can see that, in the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimated that more than 62 million people aged above 16 years have visited the farm at least once between 2000 and 2001. Meanwhile, about 20 million children under the age of 16 years have also visited the farm during that period, bringing the number of visitors to the farm to approximately 82 million people. The number of visitors clearly shows that the agricultural tourism has become more popular among us.

USDA also did some surveys on the reasons why people visited the farm, and a lot of positive responses they received are shown in Table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1  
National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NRSE).

Reason for trip	Number of respond* (million)	Percent of respond
<b>Enjoy rural scenery</b>	53	86
<b>Learning where food come from</b>	44	71
<b>Visit family or friends</b>	40	63
<b>Watch or participate in farm activities</b>	41	64
<b>Purchase agriculture product</b>	27	39
<b>Pick fruit or product</b>	27	43
<b>To hunt and fish</b>	16	27
<b>Spend a night</b>	19	8

*Retrieved from [www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends](http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends), 2000-2003*

Currently, Malaysia is greatly involved in tropical agricultural product research. It continues to enhance its excellency in research and development for new agricultural source. Meanwhile, exploring new industrial products generate new knowledge in agriculture. Many people are getting more interested on how their foods are produced, or how foreigners produce their food. Agro-tourism farm in Malaysia allows a person to see the growing, harvesting, and processing locally grown foods, like corn, coconut, sugarcane, and pineapple. Farmers often provide lodging houses and public education on the field trip.

Children who visited the farm often have not seen live duck, or a cow, and do not pluck an apple right from the tree. This form has evolved as agro-tourism has given birth to what is often called entertainment farms (Randall, 2011). These farms cater to the public pick-your-own, offering not only regular farm products, but also food, mazes, open-pen animals, train ride, picnic facilities and yield pick-your-own.

At the same time, the farmer create new markets for their products and continue to contribute to the local agricultural sector in particular. The same thing goes to agricultural tourism. Agro-tourism holds opportunities and advantages to our users and also to the economic development of our country.

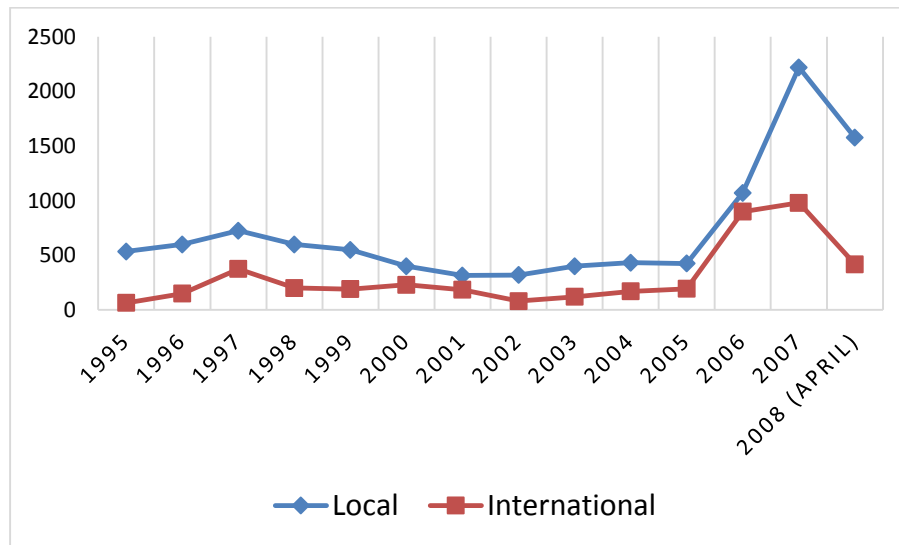
Even though, agro-tourism in Malaysia may be a little unusual, but the existence of agricultural tourism is nothing new. The benefit of agricultural tourism has been proven in many countries in worldwide. Agro-tourism is still new in Malaysia in line with Malaysia's economic development. However, local and international tourists have great interest in agricultural tourism.

Although agro-tourism is still new in Malaysia, but the development of agro-tourism is positive among Malaysians. The government also worries about the people and tries to support them by encouraging them to explore the tourism and agricultural industry. At the same time, the government tries to help by providing loans and also provides the budget for the industry.

For example, the ninth Malaysia plan (*Rancangan Malaysia ke-9*) was introduced by the Malaysian government and has been given the space to be involved in this field. Based on the Ninth Malaysia Plan, the government tries to increase agricultural products, including new sources of growth, with the participation of the private sector. The government also spent agro-based processing activities and product diversification.

The government helps to strengthen marketing and the global network so that income of small holders, farms, and fishermen be increased. Table 1.2 below shows the number of tourists visiting places in Malaysia that offers activities of agro-tourism from 1995 to April 2008:

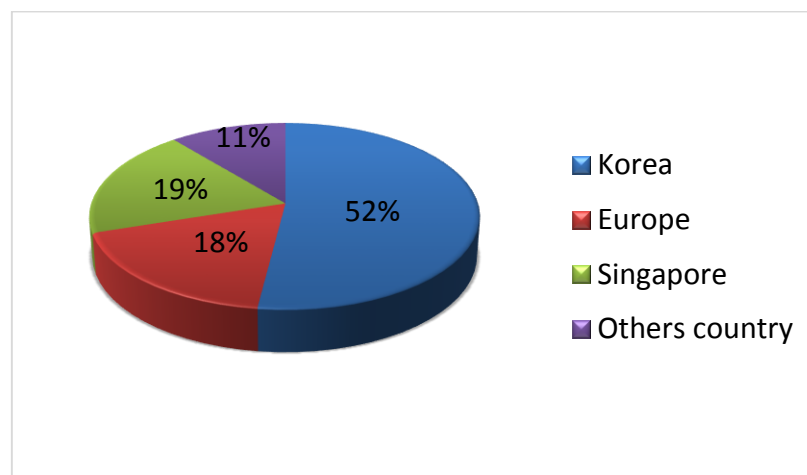
Table 1.2  
The number of tourist that visits Malaysia as the place that offers agro-tourism activities.



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia, 2008

According to Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia, below are the percentages of the international tourist that came to Malaysia since 1995 to the April 2008:

Table 1.3  
The percentages of the international tourist that came to Malaysia since 1995 to the April 2008.



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia, 2008