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STATE AND PROSPECTS OF AGRITOURISM IN THE TURKESTAN REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНЫҢ ТҮРКІСТАН ОБЛЫСЫНДАҒЫ АГРОТУРИЗМНІҢ ЖАЙ-КҮЙІ МЕН ПЕРСПЕКТИВАЛАРЫ

СОСТОЯНИЕ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ АГРОТУРИЗМА В ТУРКЕСТАНСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН

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Abstract. The agritourism industry is one of the youngest in Kazakhstan, which determines the promising directions for the development of domestic tourism sector. Currently, European countries consider tourism industry to be a priority project for the development of rural areas. The goal - is a comprehensive analysis of the prerequisites and factors for socioeconomic growth in the Turkestan region and its attractiveness to rural tourism. Methods – observation and collection of information, analysis and synthesis, a systematic approach. Results – the article is devoted to the study of ecotourism problems in the region. The main tendencies of its organization are outlined. It has been established that this vector is developing progressively, based on existing world traditions and has Kazakhstani specifics associated with its features. The potential of tourism service sector and its role in modernization of the economy of this administrative-territorial unit is revealed. A SWOT-analysis of the state of tourism industry, classification of areas according to agritourism

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significance is presented. The effectiveness and expediency of expanding the sphere of ecological tourism are shown. *Conclusions* – for the first time, agritourism services have become widespread in Akmola, North Kazakhstan regions. It is noted that possibilities of the region allow to increase the flow of tourists, increase their interest in agritourism facilities, develop organic farming, contribute to the growth of the number of small businesses, production of environmentally friendly products of personal subsidiary plots and farms in rural areas, creation of additional jobs, decrease in the outflow of local population to cities, preservation and popularization of local architectural monuments, elements of art and customs of the people, strengthening the position of tourism business, paying special attention to tourism activities. The leisure industry has a large reserve of natural and human resources. However, as the authors state, farmers need information and advisory support from travel companies, including electronic means.

Андатпа. Агротуризм саласы - отандык туристік секторды дамытудың перспективалық бағыттарын айқындайтын Қазақстандағы ең жас салалардың бірі. Қазіргі уақытта Еуропа елдері туризм индустриясын ауылдық аумақтарды дамытудың басым жобаларына жатқызуда. Мақсаты – Түркістан облысындағы әлеуметтік-экономикалық өсүдің алғышарттары мен факторларын және оның ауыл туризміне тартымдылығын кешенді талдау. *Әдістері –* бақылау және ақпарат жинау, талдау және синтез, жүйелік тәсіл. Нәтижелері – мақала аймақтағы экотуризм мәселелерін зерттеуге арналған. Оны ұйымдастырудың негізгі тенденциялары көрсетілген. Бұл вектор бар әлемдік дәстүрлерге сүйене отырып, үдемелі түрде дамып келе жатқаны және оның ерекшеліктеріне байланысты қазақстандық ерекшелігі бар екені анықталған. Туристік қызмет көрсету саласының әлеуеті және оның осы әкімшілік-аумақтық бірліктің экономикасын жаңғыртудағы рөлі анықталған. Туристік индустрияның жай-күйіне SWOT-талдау, аудандардың агротуристік маңыздылығы бойынша жіктелуі ұсынылған. Экологиялық туризм саласын кенейтудің тиімділігі мен орындылығы көрсетілген. *Корытындылар* – агротуристік қызметтер алғаш рет Ақмола, Солтустік Қазақстан облыстарында таратылды. Өңірдің мүмкіндіктері туристер ағынын ұлғайтуға, олардың агротуризм объектілеріне деген қызығушылығын арттыруға, органикалық егіншілікті дамытуға, шағын кәсіпкерлік кәсіпорындары санының, ауылдық жерлерде жеке қосалқы және фермерлік шаруашылықтардың экологиялық таза өнімін өндіру көлемінің өсуіне, қосымша жұмыс орындарын құруға, жергілікті халықтың қалаларға кетуін азайтуға, жергілікті сәулет ескерткіштерін сақтауға және танымал етуге ықпал ететіні атап өтілді, халық өнері мен әдет-ғұрыптарының элементтерін, туристік бизнестің позицияларын нығайту, туристік қызметке ерекше назар аудару. Демалыс индустриясында табиғи және адами ресурстардың үлкен қоры бар. Алайда, авторлардың айтуынша, фермерлер туристік фирмалардың, соның ішінде электронды қаражаттың ақпараттықконсультациялық қолдауына мұқтаж.

Аннотация. Отрасль агротуризма – одна из самых молодых в Казахстане, определяющая перспективные направления развития отечественного туристического сектора. В настоящее время европейские страны относят туриндустрию к приоритетным проектам развития сельских территорий. Цель – комплексный анализ предпосылок и факторов социально-экономического роста в Туркестанской области и привлекательности ее к сельскому туризму. Методы - наблюдения и сбора информации, анализа и синтеза, системного подхода. Результаты – статья посвящена исследованию проблем экотуризма в регионе. Обозначены основные тенденции его организации. Установлено, что данный вектор развивается поступательно, опираясь на существующие мировые традиции и имеет казахстанскую специфику, связанную с ее особенностями. Выявлен потенциал туристической сферы услуг и ее роль в модернизации экономики этой административно-территориальной единицы. Представлен SWOT-анализ состояния туристической индустрии, классификация районов по агротуристической значимости. Показаны эффективность и целесообразность расширения сферы экологического туризма. Выводы – впервые агротуристические службы получили распространение в Акмолинской, Северо-Казахстанской областях. Отмечается, что возможности региона позволяют увеличить поток туристов, повысить их интерес к объектам агротуризма, развивать органическое земледелие, способствуют росту количества предприятий малого предпринимательства, объемов производства экологически чистой продукции личных подсобных и фермерских хозяйств в сельской местности, созданию дополнительных рабочих мест, уменьшению оттока местного населения в города, сохранению и популяризации местных памятников архитектуры, элементов искусства и обычаев народа, усилению позиций туристического бизнеса, уделяя особое внимание туристической деятельности. Индустрия отдыха имеет большой резерв природных и человеческих ресурсов. Однако, как констатируют авторы, фермеры нуждаются в информационноконсультационной поддержке туристических фирм, включая электронные средства.

Key words: rural areas, agritourism, farmers, organic products, natural landscape, historical sites, health centers, public support.

Түйінді сөздер: ауылдық жерлер, агротуризм, фермерлер, экологиялық таза өнім, табиғи ландшафт, тарихи көрнекті орындар, емдеу-сауықтыру орталықтары, мемлекеттік қолдау.

Ключевые слова: сельские районы, агротуризм, фермеры, экологически чистая продукция, природный ландшафт, исторические достопримечательности, лечебнооздоровительные центры, государственная поддержка.

Introduction. Agricultural tourism is actively gaining popularity among vacationers today. Agritourism is a special sector of tourism aimed at creating a set of agritourism products using the natural, historical, cultural and other unique resources and characteristics of rural settlements [1]. According to studies by foreign researchers, about 30% of city residents prefer to spend their vacations in the countryside [2]. This trend is also characteristic of the urban population in modern Kazakhstan.

In the Netherlands, for instance, about 50% of city residents like to vacation at agritourism sites [3]. However, there is no indication in socio-economic studies of the contribution of agritourism to the Gross domestic product of the country or to the tourism sector as a whole. But a number of European statistical organizations claim that its indicator is 10-12% [4]. The first state legislative and organisational support for agritourism in Europe was established in France in 1955. The Association for Agriculture and Tourism was set up there and it proved to be a great initiative [5].

In Kazakhstan, this industry refers to a newly emerging area of tourism. Although a number of regions of the country have made some progress in this area, there have been a number of successes. The Turkestan region, as we believe, has great prospects in the development of this business. It is connected with the fact that Turkestan region has a welldeveloped agricultural sector and tourism infrastructure. In the course of the study, we observed that there are several businesses in the region that are seeking to develop agricultural tourism. However, several factors influence the fact that entrepreneurs take concrete decisions and actively pursue the development of agritourism.

Turkestan region is one of the most culturally and architecturally important regions for tourists. More than one million tourists visit the territory of the region every year. In 2021, the number of tourists coming to the regional centre of Turkestan city amounted to about 1 million 400 thousand people [6]. If at least 30% of this huge inflow of tourists were to be channelled into agritourism, this would certainly give an impetus to the development of rural communities [7].

Material and methods of research. The study draws on the existing theoretical writings and conclusions of Western scholars in the field of agritourism and marketing services. This is because the role of American researchers is high in improving their economic model, turning agritourism into a specific type of business. E. Rodgers' Theory of the Economic Model can be taken as an example. This theory discusses the models and methods that determine the directions of agritourism. In particular E.Rogers justifies the theory of the "Diffusion of Innovation" [8]. This theory involves encouraging market entities to use new technologies in their activities at the level of "personal communication".

That is, business is very interested in developing personal relationships in the light of new techno-logies. Today, among the problems that hin-der the development of tourism in rural areas in the Turkestan region are the lack of innova-tive technologies, the lack of mutual agree-ment between Travel Companies and far-mers, and misunderstanding between the authorities and entrepreneurs.

Considering this, we aimed to actively use methods of statistical sampling, SWOT-analysis, factor analysis, logical thinking, etc., which would help to identify barriers to the development of agritourism in Turkestan re-

gion and address further improvement of existing management and marketing techniques.

Results and their discussion. Currently, agricultural (rural) tourism is one of the promising trends in the tourism industry in Kazakhstan. First of all, this is a huge breakthrough in increasing the social and economic potential of rural areas. In general terms, agritourism can offer comprehensive solutions and opportunities for solving socio-economic problems of rural regions. Its revival will ensure the de-

velopment of small and medium-sized enterprises in rural areas, the construction and repair of roads, the production and processing of agricultural products, the development of historical and ethnographic resources and the attraction of innovative technologies. In addition, among the main ones, it can help to perform an alternative function in solving the problem of unemployment in rural areas. Socio-economic factors from the development of agritourism are shown in the table1.

Table 1 – Obtaining Socio-Economic Impact for Rural Areas from Development of Agritourism

Elements of Rural	Effects on the socio-economic development	Socio-economic results	
Tourism	of the village		
Living conditions	The infrastructure of the region will change	An increase in the income and living	
Food	Food sales in the private trading system of	standards of the rural population with-	
	the village. For example, shops and rural	out spending large financial costs.	
	markets. Cultivation of products in personal	Growth of rural, rural premises.	
	subsidiary farms	Improving the social infrastructure of	
Entertainment	Development of cultural institutions and creative teams. Development of entrepreneurship in the field of entertainment and recreation (walking, excursions, and routes)	the village. Increasing tax fees and budget revenues with increasing the level of employment and self-employment in rural areas. Increasing demand for locally produced goods. Raising capital, including from abroad.	
Transport links	Development of public transport, taxi		
Ensuring the safety	Insurance institutions, Banks.		
of tourists	The revival of collectivism in the villages,		
	the increase in collective actions and re-		
	sponsibilities		

The above factors will be realised through the development and support of agritourism. Turkestan region is the largest region in the middle of the country in terms of population. The settlements are numerous and densely populated. The role of mutual competition in the problem of unemployment is high. Getting a job in public institutions causes great difficulties. It can be said that Kazakhstan has already developed experience in setting up agribusinesses where excursions can be organised for tourists through the blishment of farms of different animal species. For example, the Fauna ostrich farm in the village of Aymen in Enbekshikazakh district of Almaty region has already managed to gain some popularity in this area [9].

The above-mentioned farm facilities have also begun to appear in Turkestan region. But their level of tourist attraction is not relatively high. For instance, in Baidibek district of Turkestan region, the farm "DODA" is breeding pedigree Hissar sheep [10]. Today, the number of Hissar sheep is only a few hundred and has features that it offers for tourists to enjoy. After visiting the area on a historical and cultural pilgrimage, however, the tourists were convinced that they were not aware of the existence of the farm. When we asked 5 tourists

who were visiting the mausoleum of Domalak Ana about the farm "DODA", it turned out that they did not have any information.

After that, when asking local residents (3 people) about the address of this farm, we observed that only one of them was aware. Based on this, it is possible to determine the level of popularity of farms engaged in specific local types of farming in the community. It is apparent that they lack information and methodological links with society.

This is due to the fact that one of the most attractive areas for tourists in the region is Baidibek district. It is obvious that on the territory of district, along with historical and cultural monuments, there are many interesting natural objects. For example, the cave "Akmeshit", located in the mountainous region of the district, annually attracts tourists not only from the country, but also from abroad. Undoubtedly, engaging a number of them to familiarise themselves with the activities of horse and sheep farms provides a great incentive for the development of livestock farming. Taking into account these factors, we organized a SWOT analysis on the development of agritourism in the Turkestan region. Its results are outlined in the table 2.

Table 2 - SWOT Analysis of the Status of AgriTourism Development in Turkestan region

Strengths	Weaknesses	
 magnificent natural sites in the region (Aksu-Jabagaly, Shardara); objects of religious and cultural significance (Tur-kestan, Otyrar, Domalak Ana, etc.); large number of villages on the territory of the region (841 rural settlements); natural healing resources (Saryagash, healing waters); large stock of horticultural production; favorable climate for investment and abundance of the population; developed type of transport communication 	 insufficient development of tourism infrastructure; lack of effective marketing activities to promote rural tourism products; lack of information and managerial support for the development of this type of Tourism; imperfection of legislation that contributes to the development of agritourism; lack of state support for entrepreneurs who want to start activities in the field of rural tourism 	
Opportunities	Risks	
 increased provision of services to tourists on horseback and on foot, fishing, hunting, baths, etc; introduction of horticultural areas and creation of jobs; formation of the agritourist sector, improving the concept of sustainable development of the region in the future 	 respond to the competition that occurs with the agritourist centers of neighboring countries and regions; high tariffs for air and rail transportation; threats of pollution of the natural environment on the part of tourists who do not comply with the rules 	

The data presented in the Table above shows the strengths and great natural and economic opportunities for agritourism development in Turkestan region. The imperfection of marketing methods and the lack of information support can be cited as weak sides [11]. Given that the region is rich in horticultural production, there should be an acknowledgement of the need to invest heavily in the development of this sector. In addition to visiting natural resources, exposing tourists to man-made natural production resources and generating income through them is an urgent task.

The classification of districts in Turkestan region according to their agritourism attractiveness is important in our study. The region consists of 14 districts. Their tourist attractiveness depends on various factors. For example, the Tulkubas district attracts tourists with its magnificent natural appearance. Villages on the territory of the district develop various offers for tourists from horticultural and honev products. There are built houses in recreational areas, health centres, swimming pools, and horseback riding sites. But the provision of glamping (tent) recreation services, which are currently in trend, is not yet developed. However, thanks to tourism, the rural inhabitants of Tulkubas and Tolebi districts have managed to solve the issues of work, roads and transport links.

The "Zhaillau" Health and Medical Centre is being built at a total cost of \$347 million in the territory of the district. In the future, it will become a center with a capacity of 100 seats and provide 50 new jobs [12]. The natural

landscape of the district creates favorable factors for the development of horse breeding and the revival of its products. One of them is the Treatment Center by Saumal. Saumal is currently in great demand among tourists and local residents. In this regard, it is planned to open Saumal Treatment Center in the center of Tulkubas district. It is likely that this will bring the development of agritourism to a new level. According to the administration of Tulkubas district, in 2025 it is planned to attract more than 20 thousand tourists to the district and 10% of them are expected to be foreign.

Taking into account the location of historical monuments and sanctuaries in the settlements of the newly created Sauran district on the territory of the region, the prospects for the development of tourist exhibitions and small markets of ethnographic orientation are high. Factors of promotion of exhibitions and shops in rural areas, consisting of handicrafts and products with images of historical monuments, are relevant in Sauran and Otrar districts.

A number of districts of the region occupy the lowest positions in terms of agritourist attractiveness. Identifying their causes and dealing with the consequences requires comprehensive research. Indicators of agritourism attractiveness of the districts of Turkestan region are given in the table 3.

Based on the data in the Table above, it is evident that the areas rich in natural land-scapes, therapeutic and historical and ethnographic sites are popular among tourists.

Table 3 – Classification of districts of Turkestan region by Agritourist Attractiveness

	Agritourist Attractiveness Level		
	High	Average	Low
	Tole Bi, Tulkubas,	Shardara,	Ordabasy,
Districts of Turkestan region	Saryagash, Sauran	Baidibek	Keles

Despite the fact that Ordabasin, Keles districts lack resources, they still have opportunities for tourism development [13]. Ordabasy district is one of the most favorable regions for animal husbandry.

In order to determine the structure of the Turkestan region in terms of agritourism

attractiveness, we relied on the method of factor analysis. Overall, we found a high level of prospectivity (52%) for the agritourism attractiveness of the districts in the region while summarising the overall statistical results for 2018-2021. The results of the overall indicators are analysed in the figure.

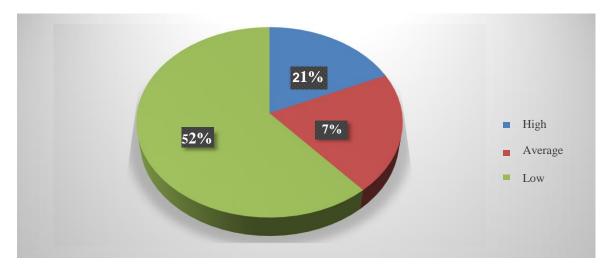


Figure – Structure of the district of Turkestan region by the level of agritourist attractiveness for 2018-2021, %

The data presented above clarifies the high agritourism attractiveness and opportunities of the region as a whole. The following characteristics are considered as the main directions of agritourism development on the territory of Turkestan region:

- increase in the flow of tourists visiting the Turkestan region for tourist purposes and the tendency to increase their interest in the objects of agritourism;
- improving the professional level of market owners working in rural tourism;
- growing the range of household products;
 - development of organic farming;
- increase in the number of small business organizations in rural settlements;
- increase in the volume of production of private farms and farms in rural areas;
- preservation and promotion of local architectural monuments, elements of art and customs of the people;
- ensuring the expansion of the service sector, paying special attention to tourist activities.

Amidst the aforementioned directions, it is important for us to preserve the customs of the people and to use elements of customs and traditions for business purposes. In fact, Turkestan region concentrates the main centres of traditions and customs of the country, and interest in them has been growing from year to year.

Conclusion

- 1. To sum up, agricultural tourism is an important element in the development of rural settlements and the improvement of living standards in Turkestan region. The pandemic has given impetus to the development of digital technologies, and a number of important steps have been taken by the state. With the help of these innovative technologies, there are excellent opportunities for the development of horticultural production in the region and increasing the number of visitors.
- 2. Undoubtedly, the factor of the location of such a metropolis as Shymkent on the territory of the Turkestan region will increase the demand for the services of nearby villages and recreation areas. In connection with the formation of megacities following the

approach of developed foreign countries, state projects are focused on modifying the development Map of nearby settlements. The construction of innovative agricultural complexes in villages in the region and the effective use of modern information and communication technologies should be prioritised in our view. Western experience shows that the results of using electronic and digital technology will increase agricultural production by 2%, save up to 15% in energy costs and increase productivity by up to 12% [14].

3. We found that the agritourism industry is once again taking shape in Turkestan region and has great potential for the future. The natural and human resources in the region are sufficient for this and government support has been actively pursued. Nonetheless, as noted during the study, local farmers need information and advisory support in dealing with Travel Agencies. One of the first tasks is to systematise the work of farmers in explaining new ideas and changes in promotion and marketing methods via electronic resources.

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