

Strategies for Developing Community-Based Participatory Management of Agritourism and Farmer Networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province

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Abstracts

This study aims to examine and analyze strategies for developing community-based participatory management of agritourism and farmer networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province. A qualitative research approach was employed, collecting data from 35 farmers through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participatory forums. Participants included local farmers, community enterprise members, representatives of local administrative organizations, relevant public and private agencies, and visiting tourists. The data were analyzed using the TOWS Matrix to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The findings indicate that the area possesses significant potential in terms of natural resources, scenic landscapes, agritourism activities linked to local livelihoods, and strong community participation. However, limitations were identified regarding human resources, infrastructure, marketing, and basic facilities. Key development strategies include enhancing local personnel and community leadership, improving sustainable infrastructure and services, creating marketing strategies and unique branding, and integrating natural resources with local knowledge and modern technology. These approaches can strengthen community capacity for participatory agritourism management and position Chiang Dao as a model for sustainable agritourism in economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Keywords: Agritourism; Community Participation; Sustainable Development

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Introduction

Agritourism is a form of tourism development that integrates agricultural activities with tourism, allowing visitors to actively participate in experiences such as learning about farming practices, harvesting crops, processing local food, and engaging with the daily lives of farmers. This approach not only generates supplementary income for farmers but also adds value to agricultural products and fosters stronger relationships between producers and consumers (Hara & Naipaul, 2008). Moreover, agritourism plays a significant role in conserving natural resources, promoting the use of local knowledge, and encouraging community participation, which are fundamental factors for sustainable development (Panpeng, 2025). However, in many areas of Thailand, the management of agritourism sites lacks a systematic approach, particularly regarding community participation and the integration of farmer networks. This limitation hinders the continuous generation of income, the development of products, and the sustainability of tourism sites.

Chiang Dao District in Chiang Mai Province stands out for its potential in both agriculture and tourism. The district features beautiful landscapes, abundant and diverse natural resources, and unique local lifestyles, culture, and indigenous knowledge that can be transformed into distinctive agritourism activities. These factors position Chiang Dao as a potential model for agritourism that links production, learning, and tourism. However, past management efforts have mostly focused on short-term or project-based activities with limited continuity, lacking mechanisms to integrate the community, farmers, and relevant agencies. As a result, the district's potential has not been fully utilized, and sustainable benefits have not been achieved.

Previous studies indicate that a key factor for successful agritourism development is the establishment of farmer networks and community participation. Chotianusorn (2025) emphasizes that social networks among farmers, knowledge exchange, and collaborative work can enhance competitiveness and improve production and marketing standards effectively. Similarly, Tongplee (2025) highlights that the success of agricultural and tourism community enterprises depends on integrating production knowledge, technology, and innovation with marketing strategies and collaborative networks, which ensures continuity and sustainability. Without genuine participation and integration, development efforts may face

challenges such as non-distinctive products, unappealing tourism activities, and limited value addition.

Therefore, this study aims to explore approaches for developing participatory management of agritourism sites involving both the community and farmer networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province. The study seeks to propose practical frameworks that can strengthen community capacity, increase the value of agricultural products, and enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of agritourism sites, benefiting farmers, tourists, government agencies, and local stakeholders.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the internal and external environment of agritourism sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province.
2. To study and analyze approaches for developing participatory management of agritourism sites involving the community and farmer networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach, focusing on the context, processes, and perspectives of stakeholders involved in the participatory management and development of agritourism in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province. A case study method was used to gain in-depth understanding and provide a comprehensive overview of agritourism management in the area.

2. Population and Sample

The population comprised stakeholders related to agritourism in Chiang Dao, including local farmers, community enterprise members, representatives of local administrative organizations, relevant public and private agencies, and visiting tourists. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select 35 participants with relevant experience and knowledge, ensuring comprehensive and in-depth data for analysis.

3. Research Instruments

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The interview guide focused on key topics such as agritourism

management, the role of communities and farmer networks, and support from governmental and private sectors. Field notes were also maintained to capture behavioral and contextual information on-site.

4. Data Collection

In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants at convenient community locations following prior appointments. Observations of real activities, including agricultural operations, tourist management, and community meetings, were conducted to collect diverse and complete data. Secondary data, such as project reports, statistical records, and related documents, were also collected.

5. Data Analysis

Content analysis was employed to analyze qualitative data. Interviews and field notes were transcribed and coded to identify key themes related to agritourism management, community participation, and farmer network roles. The findings were synthesized and compared with secondary documents, theoretical frameworks, and relevant studies to draw accurate and comprehensive conclusions reflecting the real conditions of agritourism development.

Results

The researcher conducted a study entitled "Strategies for Developing Community-Based Participatory Management of Agritourism and Farmer Networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province" The study's findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Analysis of the Internal and External Environment of Agritourism in Chiang Dao District, The study examined the internal and external factors affecting agritourism in Chiang Dao and developed a TOWS Matrix to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis provides a strategic framework for enhancing agritourism management and guiding sustainable development in the area.

TOWS Matrix	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
Strengths (S)	SO Strategies 1. Develop tourism packages integrating natural beauty with agricultural activities (S1, S3, O1)	ST Strategies 1. Implement sustainable natural resource management to address climate change (S1, T1)

TOWS Matrix	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
	2. Implement content marketing via online platforms for well-known sites and organic products (S2, S4, O3) 3. Create tourism routes linking agritourism with major Chiang Mai attractions (S2, O4) 4. Develop new products connecting local lifestyles with organic agriculture (S5, S4, O5) 5. Seek government support to establish model organic agriculture learning centers (S1, S3, O2)	2. Create a unique identity for Chiang Dao agritourism sites to differentiate from competitors (S2, S3, T2) 3. Promote community participation in conserving resources and local lifestyles (S5, T3) 4. Develop environmentally friendly waste and pollution management systems (S1, T4) 5. Build cooperative networks among operators to advocate for supportive policies (S2, T5)
Weaknesses (W)	WO Strategies 1. Develop online marketing platform to enhance promotion (W1, O3) 2. Seek government support for infrastructure and facilities development (W2, O2) 3. Establish collaborative networks between agritourism and other tourism businesses (W3, O4) 4. Utilize technology in tourism management to improve tourist accommodation efficiency (W4, O3) 5. Conduct training programs to enhance personnel skills in tourism services (W5, O1)	WT Strategies 1. Develop risk management system for natural disasters and climate change (W1, T1) 2. Collaborate with private sector to develop eco-friendly infrastructure (W2, T4) 3. Promote formation of farmer/operator groups to enhance policy advocacy (W3, T5) 4. Develop quality-focused tourism models prioritizing visitor experience over volume (W4, T2, T3) 5. Design training programs emphasizing sustainable and eco-friendly tourism management (W5, T4)

Table 1 TOWS Matrix of Agritourism Sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province

1. Existing Potential and Strengths, The research indicates that Chiang Dao District possesses abundant natural resources and scenic landscapes, along with tourism sites and activities that align with local lifestyles. These factors reflect strong readiness in terms of resources, venues, tourism activities, and learning bases, which received high to very high mean scores. Such strengths form a

foundational basis for making agritourism in Chiang Dao distinctive and remarkable. Moreover, community participation and farmer networks in the conservation and development of tourism sites serve as crucial mechanisms to enable sustainable management and integration with the local context.

2. Limitations and Challenges, However, several limitations were identified, particularly regarding personnel and marketing, which scored lower than other areas. Foreign language proficiency and service skills remain insufficient to support international tourism. Marketing efforts lack clear target group analysis, branding, distribution channels, and modern promotional strategies. These factors pose obstacles to market expansion and sustainable income generation. Additionally, basic facilities such as public restrooms, waste management systems, and tourist feedback mechanisms require serious development to create a positive visitor experience.

3. Opportunities for Integrated Development, The study synthesizes that the most promising development approach involves integrating natural resources, local wisdom, modern technology, and collaborative networks. Emphasis should be placed on creating a distinctive Chiang Dao agritourism experience, such as linking agricultural tourism with ecotourism, health tourism, and cultural tourism. This should be coupled with the development of infrastructure, upskilling of personnel, and strategic marketing plans. Such integration not only enhances community income but also strengthens the competitiveness of the tourism sites at both national and international levels.

4. Strategic Conclusions, The research suggests that the development of agritourism in Chiang Dao District should be guided by three main strategies:

4.1 Human Capital and Personnel Development – through training, mentoring systems, and lifelong learning to enhance language skills, service quality, and tourism management capabilities.

4.2 Infrastructure and Facility Development – to provide standardized, environmentally friendly, and sustainable facilities that deliver a high-quality visitor experience.

4.3 Marketing and Branding – creating a distinctive identity through storytelling, online marketing, strategic partnerships, and integrating local products with the tourism experience.

2. To study and analyze strategies for developing community-based participatory management of agritourism and farmer networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province. Such strategies, if systematically supported by government agencies, the private sector, and academic institutions, together with strong community participation, can elevate Chiang Dao District to become a model area for sustainable community-based agritourism, fostering economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Research Aspect	Research Findings	Strengths / Advantages	Limitations / Issues	Development Strategies
1. Tourism Resources	Very high average; tourists satisfied	Abundant natural resources; scenic landscapes	Some areas lack proper management; risk of degradation	Develop conservation plans and sustainable resource use
2. Tourist Sites	Very high average	Diverse sites connected to local lifestyles	Some facilities are insufficient	Develop infrastructure to meet standards
3. Tourism Activities	High average	Activities reflect agricultural and cultural lifestyles	Limited variety for international tourists	Create new activities tailored to global markets
4. Facilities	Moderate average	Basic facilities available	Insufficient restrooms and waste management	Establish standardized public services and environmental systems
5. Services	High average	Attentive and friendly service	Service standards inconsistent	Conduct training on service and hospitality standards
6. Personnel	Moderate average	Strong community leadership	Lack of foreign language skills and professional tourism knowledge	Provide training in language, communication, and tourism skills
7. Public Relations	High average	Some use of online media	Lack of branding and proactive marketing	Implement storytelling and digital marketing strategies

Research Aspect	Research Findings	Strengths / Advantages	Limitations / Issues	Development Strategies
8. Marketing	High average but lower than other aspects	Access to local tourists	Lack of market analysis and pricing strategies	Develop marketing plans and establish partnership networks
9. Community Participation	Very high average	Community involved in all stages	Participation does not cover all age groups	Create diverse forums and participatory mechanisms
10. Farmer Networks	High average	Knowledge exchange and mutual support	Limited connection to external markets	Strengthen collaboration with government, private sector, and consumers
11. Learning Centers	Very high average	Presence of knowledge and organic agriculture learning sites	Content and teaching media outdated	Develop creative learning centers using modern technology

Table 2 Summary of Research Findings and Development Strategies for Community-Based Agritourism in Chiang Dao District

Discussion

Based on the study on *Strategies for Developing Community-Based Participatory Management of Agritourism and Farmer Networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province*, several key discussion points can be highlighted.

1. Potential, Strengths, Limitations, and Challenges, Analyzing the internal and external environment through the TOWS Matrix allowed for the systematic synthesis of integrated strategies for sustainable development. Chiang Dao's main strengths lie in its abundant natural resources and outstanding landscapes, along with well-known agritourism destinations recognized both locally and regionally. The diversity of tourism activities reflects local agricultural lifestyles and indigenous knowledge, complemented by high-quality organic agricultural products and robust learning centers. These factors form a strong foundation that

distinguishes Chiang Dao's agritourism from other areas. Furthermore, community participation and farmer networks contribute to management practices that are linked to local contexts and promote sustainable resource conservation, aligning with findings by Sawasdiphol & Teerarojanapong (2025), which emphasize that community involvement is a key factor in continuous and meaningful development.

2. Limitations and Challenges, The study also highlights several limitations and challenges, particularly in terms of personnel, service quality, and marketing. Language and communication skills remain insufficient for international tourists, while marketing lacks distinctive branding and modern promotional strategies. Basic facilities, such as public restrooms, waste management, and the overall environmental quality of tourism sites, are still inadequate to create lasting positive impressions. These challenges are consistent with the findings of Sutthikhun, Nillakan and Lertkrai (2025), who noted that community-based tourism often faces obstacles due to insufficient infrastructure and lack of qualified personnel.

3. Opportunities for Integrated Development, At the macro level, agritourism and ecotourism trends are increasingly popular, supported by government policies and modern communication technologies that facilitate access to diverse tourist markets. Integration with mainstream tourism in Chiang Mai Province and opportunities to develop new products further support the potential of Chiang Dao agritourism to become a prominent regional and national destination. When local resources, indigenous knowledge, and modern innovations are integrated effectively, the potential for sustainable growth and competitiveness is significant.

4. Strategic Implications, The strategic synthesis of the findings suggests that agritourism development in Chiang Dao should focus on three key areas:

4.1 Human Capital and Local Personnel Development: Training programs to enhance language, service, and tourism management skills.

4.2 Infrastructure and Facility Development: Establishing standardized, environmentally friendly facilities to improve tourist experiences.

4.3 Creative Branding and Marketing: Utilizing storytelling, digital media, and integrating local products into tourism activities.

These strategies not only enhance community income and resilience but also strengthen the competitiveness of Chiang Dao agritourism at an international level, contributing to long-term sustainable development of agritourism destinations (Roekrueangrit & Setthajit, 2023).

1) The study on *Community-Based Participatory Management of Agritourism and Farmer Networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province* highlights the district's outstanding potential, particularly in terms of tourism resources, tourist sites, and learning centers, all of which were evaluated at very high levels. This reflects Chiang Dao's readiness as a unique agritourism destination, characterized by abundant natural resources, scenic landscapes, and local knowledge that can be further developed into educational and creative activities. However, despite these strengths, limitations remain, especially in resource management, which may risk environmental degradation, and in outdated content and learning materials, indicating the need for systematic development to ensure sustainability. Regarding tourism activities, services, and promotion, the community effectively reflects local agricultural identity and lifestyle, providing authentic cultural experiences. Services are friendly and attentive, but inconsistencies in quality and a lack of activities tailored to international tourists remain challenges. These findings align with Maopraman (2022), who emphasized that agritourism must adapt to global market demands and continuously improve service standards to build trust. Therefore, enhancing service standards, developing diverse new activities and implementing digital marketing strategies are crucial for strengthening Chiang Dao's tourism potential.

In terms of personnel, marketing, and facilities, although average levels are moderate to high, gaps remain that require attention, particularly regarding language and service skills of personnel and insufficient infrastructure and environmental facilities, which may affect tourists' experiences. Fongkham and Phongphet (2022) highlighted that personnel skills and standard facilities are key factors in creating visitor satisfaction and positive impressions. Hence, investment in training for language and service skills, as well as effective infrastructure and environmental management, is urgently needed.

Regarding community participation and farmer networks, the research shows strong and distinctive engagement. Communities participate in all management stages, and farmers exchange knowledge and support one another. This is a key

mechanism for sustaining agritourism. Although participation is high, it does not yet cover all age groups, and external market linkages remain limited. Supun, Prasongthan, and Silpsrikul (2025) emphasized that inclusive networks and platforms for all groups are essential for enhancing competitiveness. Thus, development strategies should focus on establishing diverse participation mechanisms, strengthening collaborations with government and private sectors, and expanding marketing networks to regional and international levels.

In conclusion, this study indicates that Chiang Dao has high potential to become a model for community-based participatory agritourism. With systematic support from government agencies, private sectors, and educational institutions, coupled with strong community engagement, the outcomes will not only promote the local economy but also strengthen social cohesion and environmental sustainability. This foundation is essential for driving Chiang Dao toward becoming a national exemplar of agritourism development.

New Knowledge

The study on Strategies for Developing Community-Based Participatory Management of Agritourism and Farmer Networks in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province has generated new knowledge that contributes to the systematic development of organic agriculture. The findings can be summarized into three key areas:

1. Knowledge on Resource and Agricultural Management. The research highlights that sustainable agritourism relies on effective resource management. Integrating organic agriculture with tourism promotes both food security and value creation through tourism activities. The study emphasizes that the use of technology and innovation, combined with local wisdom, is crucial for improving production quality while maintaining ecosystem balance.

2. Knowledge on Marketing and Value Addition. The findings underscore the importance of strategic marketing that incorporates storytelling, branding, and digital media to effectively reach consumers. Creative marketing and clear target group identification not only increase community income but also enhance the competitiveness of agritourism destinations at regional and international levels.

3. Knowledge on Networks and Community Participation. The research demonstrates that the success of agritourism development depends on building

strong collaborative networks within the community, among farmers, and with external agencies, including government, private sectors, and educational institutions. Participation from all stakeholders enhances management capacity and serves as a key driving force for achieving economic, social, and environmental sustainability in the area.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province, demonstrates outstanding potential in natural resources, tourism activities, and community and farmer network participation, reflecting its strengths as a distinctive agritourism destination. However, there remain limitations in personnel, marketing, and facilities that require development, particularly in enhancing language and service skills, proactive branding and promotion, and sustainable environmental management. The synthesis of findings indicates that an integrated approach combining local resources and wisdom with modern technology, strengthening collaborative networks, and receiving systematic support from government, private sectors, and educational institutions is essential to position Chiang Dao as a model for sustainable community-based agritourism in economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The study proposes three key practical benefits:

1. For Communities and Farmers. The research enhances the capacity for organic agricultural production and management alongside tourism activities that reflect local identity. Communities can apply the knowledge to plan and develop agritourism, generate stable income, reduce reliance on monoculture farming, and strengthen community resilience sustainably.

2. For Academics and Research. This study provides empirical data that can be further explored in community-based tourism management and systematic organic agriculture development. It also serves as a case study for comparison and as a knowledge base for research in other areas with similar contexts.

3. For Policymakers and Relevant Agencies. The findings can inform policies supporting sustainable agritourism development by emphasizing integration among government, private sectors, and local communities. They also guide the design of support programs, infrastructure investment, personnel skill development, collaborative networks to promote Chiang Dao as a model area at the regional level.

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