

Leisure Agriculture in China

Xiu Sun

Dianchi College of Yunnan University, Kunming, 650000

Keywords: China; Leisure agriculture; Development factor; Development status; Development trend

Abstract: The development of leisure agriculture cannot be separated from the popularization of modern information technology, the support of national policies natural resources and consumer demand. At present, China's leisure agriculture has achieved considerable development, and there appeared many development modes. But it is still restricted by many factors. After analyzing the future development trend of leisure agriculture in China, we believe leisure agriculture can develop by building the facilities, making full use of agriculture culture folks and stories, developing the human resources, and protecting the environment etc.

1. Introduction

Along with the popularization of modern information technology, there comes leisure agriculture. Leisure agriculture is the integration industry of primary, secondary and tertiary industries with the help of technology and policies. Leisure agriculture has the function of tourism, vacation, sightseeing and experience. When leisure agriculture got developed, it not only can fully develop agricultural, commerce and service industries, but also can promote the movement of human resources, information, and technology between urban and rural.

Leisure agriculture sprang up in Italy and Austria in the 2030-2040s, and then developed rapidly in Europe and America. The early leisure agriculture mainly took the form of leisure farm. L. A. Derno (1983) believed that leisure farms, as a sort of tourism resources is profits for rural communities, and has become increasingly importance in recent years. Another view believes that leisure agriculture is rural tourism. Bernard Lane (1994) thought that five elements affect rural tourism, which is located in rural areas, with a broad natural environment and traditional cultural activities, small-scale enterprises, traditional social and cultural characteristics; and diverse types of tourism. N. G. Mc Gehee (2004) believed that economic interests are the external motivation for the development of leisure agriculture, and social and cultural values are its internal motivation. Nigel Walford (2001) used GIS analyzed the spatial distribution of leisure farms.

As a new industry, leisure agriculture in China has a good development prospect. Relevant researches have appeared in recent years. Hu Weihua and Wang Qing (2002) analyzed the similarities and differences between rural tourism, leisure agriculture, family hotels, and farmhouse tourism. Dai Meiqi and You Bizhu (2006) considered that leisure agriculture is transformed from traditional sightseeing to new leisure and vacation, and it is an advanced form of sightseeing agricultural tourism. Zhao Shihong and Chang Xiangyang (2016) made an empirical analysis of 701 questionnaires collected by Nanjing citizens with logistic regression model, and found that the key factors affecting the demand of leisure agricultural tourism are people's discretionary time, per capita income level, personal lifestyle, age and educational level, etc.

Leisure agriculture in China appeared later than developed country. How to develop leisure agriculture in China is worthy to study. In this regard, this paper tries to solve this problem after studying the foundation and status of leisure agriculture in China. The next part of this paper is to discuss the development basis of leisure agriculture in China. The third is to describe the status. The fourth part is to analyze the development direction. The last part is the conclusion and advice.

2. The Foundation of Leisure Agriculture Development

Leisure agriculture aims at providing people experience beautiful rural landscape, natural ecology, environmental resources, agricultural business activities, rural culture and farm life combining with agriculture, forestry, fisheries and agricultural sideline products. The formation and development of leisure agriculture need the help of natural conditions, consumer demand, national policies, technological progress and other supporting conditions.

2.1 It's Pushed by Modern Information Technology.

Industrial integration cannot be separated from the support of modern information technology. With the popularization of modern information technology in China, Internet, big data, cloud computing and other technologies are constantly taking root in the industry. Modern information technology has the characteristics of operating fast, dissemination and application wide, and easy to form scale economies. With the help of modern information technology, agriculture gradually merges with tourism to form leisure agriculture. Promoted by modern information technology, leisure, experience, tourism, education, health care, pension and other industries are gradually integrated into leisure agriculture, which further promotes the rapid development of leisure agriculture.

2.2 It's Supported from National Policy.

China gives high support to the development of countryside, farmers and agriculture. On the Fifth Plenary Session of the Sixteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China adopted the Outline Proposals of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, which put forward a new socialist countryside construction. In 2015, the Ministry of Agriculture jointly with the Ministry of Finance and the other 11 departments issued the Notice on Actively Developing Agricultural Multifunctional Functions and Vigorously Promoting the Development of Leisure Agriculture. In 2016, the Guiding Opinions on Developing Leisure Agriculture Vigorously issued by 14 departments, which pointed out that by 2020, the pattern of leisure agriculture industry with optimized layout, abundant types, perfect functions and distinct characteristics will basically be formed. On May 31, 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture issued the Notice on Promoting the Implementation of Leisure Agriculture and Rural Tourism Development Policies. It provides a powerful policy which guarantees for speeding up the transformation of agricultural development mode, promoting the integration of rural primary, secondary and tertiary industries, promoting tourism investment and consumption, and supporting the innovation. It also provides guidance for leisure agriculture and promoting the deep integration of agriculture with tourism, education, culture and healthy old-age care industries.

2.3 It's Supported from Nature Resources.

Leisure agriculture is also known as sightseeing agriculture or tourism agriculture in the mainland. Its basic attributes are to fully develop agricultural resources and agricultural products with sightseeing and tourism value. It is also an efficient agriculture based on agricultural production and combined with modern tourism. China is a large agricultural country with a long history. It has a vast of agricultural region, beautiful natural landscape, diversified agricultural management types, rich agricultural culture and rich rural folk customs. In 2004 and 2005, the National Tourism Administration selected 359 agricultural tourism demonstration sites. Among them, there are 112 agricultural tourist spots, 60 agricultural scientific and technological tourist spots, 56 agricultural ecological tourist spots, 20 folk cultural tourist spots, 26 leisure resorts (villas), 39 ancient towns and new villages, 18 farmer's music, 28 natural scenic spots, which are located in eastern China (about 100), central China (about 65), and Western China (about 38).

2.4 It's Driven by Consumer Demand.

In order to alleviate the pressure of urban life, people are eager to enjoy leisure and tranquility in rural areas and experience rural life. As a result, eco-leisure agriculture gradually appeared in Italy, Austria and other places, and then developed rapidly in European and American countries. With the

economy development and the living standards improvement, people put forward new and higher requirements for leisure, sightseeing, experience, tourism. The beautiful natural scenery and rural life have irresistible attraction for people who have lived in cities for a long time. Because there are vegetables, fruits, flowers, seedlings and animals in farm, so that visitors can visit, or taste or buy fresh agricultural sideline products, which currently dominates the market, accounting for 28.8%. In leisure agriculture, people can enjoy teaching, experiencing, tourism and buy agriculture products. Leisure agriculture compounds the needs of current consumers under the development theme of green, recycling and organic.

Leisure agricultural integrates pastoral scenery and high-tech to meet the needs of tourists returning to nature. Besides, higher level of service and higher sustainable development capacity are also the new pillars for expanding leisure agriculture, which prospers rural areas and affluent farmers.

3. The Status of Leisure Agriculture in China

Although leisure agriculture in China appeared later than developed country, it has gotten developed and formed diversities development modes in these years.

3.1 Leisure Agriculture has Gotten Development.

Leisure agriculture has become a new economic growth point and has gotten development rapidly. By the end of 2012, 85,000 villages in China had carried out leisure agriculture and rural tourism activities. The main bodies of leisure agriculture and rural tourism management reached 1.7 million, which includes 1.5 million farmers and 28 million employees (accounting for 69% of the country's rural labor force). 800 million tourists were received annually, and the business income exceeded ¥240 billion. According to the survey on 135,000 typical leisure agricultural operated by China Agriculture Ministry, a Mu of farmers' land output is close to ¥12,000, and per capita output value of farmers engaged in leisure agriculture is close to ¥54,100, which has reached 2.75 times of the average agricultural labor force output value in the same period. By the end of 2013, more than 1.8 million leisure agriculture operators in China have received 900 million tourists annually, with a business income of ¥270 billion, and 29 million farmers' income has been increased by radiation. In 2016, China's leisure agriculture and rural tourism received nearly 2.1 billion tourists, with business income exceeding ¥570 billion and employees exceeding 8.45 million, which led to 6.72 million farmers' income increase. According to estimates, in 2018, the receivers number of leisure agriculture and rural tourism in China exceeded 3 billion, and the business income exceeded ¥800 billion. Leisure agriculture has become an important destination for urban residents, and a new bright spot of rural industry.

3.2 Leisure Agriculture has Diversified Development Mode.

Since the 1990s, leisure agriculture has begun to develop rapidly in China. By the 21st century, leisure agriculture has entered to a period of comprehensive development with variety development modes.

The first is the "individual peasant households" mode, which takes peasants as the main body of management. Usually it has the characteristics of small scale, single function and elementary product, which can absorb the idle labor in the vicinity. It can join in the service industry through handicraft, performance, service and production, thus forming a point-to-area development mode. "Farmhouse Entertainment" is a typical representative of this business mode and it locates everywhere, which refers to farmers use their own homes surrounding pastoral scenery and natural landscape at a low price to attract tourists to eat, live, play, entertain, buy and other tourism activities.

The second is "peasant household + peasant household" mode, which combines peasant households together to participate in the development and management of rural tourism. This is also a primary mode. Only through cooperation among farmers, the peasant household can achieve the

purpose of resource sharing. In rural areas far from the market, most farmers are reluctant to hand over their funds or land, and they trust those "model households". In the mountain villages, usually "pioneers" developed rural tourism and achieved success firstly. Driven by their demonstration, farmers joined the ranks of tourism reception one after another, and learned experience and technology from the demonstration households. After a short run-in, the rural tourism development mode of "farmers + farmers" was formed. This mode usually has less investment and limited reception, and the rural culture is the most authentic, and tourists can experience the most authentic local customs and culture with less cost. It is the most popular form of rural tourism. However, due to the influence of management level and capital investment, the driving effect of tourism is usually limited.

The third is the "company + farmer" mode. The main characteristics of it are company operation and management, and farmers participation, which combines by direct contact. This mode is usually formed by the company to buy off the farmer's land management rights and hire the farmers' labor, so that farmers can benefit from it. In the practice of rural economy development, it is a management mode introduced by high-tech breeding industry. It fully considers the interests of farmers and promotes the development of rural economy with the participation of the whole community. By absorbing community peasant households to participate in the development of rural tourism, it makes full use of idle assets, surplus labor and abundant agricultural activities of peasant households, increases the income of peasant households, enriches tourism activities, and shows the real rural culture to tourists.

3.3 Various Factors Restrict the Development of Leisure Agriculture.

Leisure agriculture industry in China has become one of the highlight points of agricultural and rural economic development. It will become an important measure of agricultural modernization which constructs with Chinese characteristics and increases farmers' income. However, there are still lots of factors restrict its development, such as poor infrastructure, shortage of talents, lagging planning, non-prominent characteristics, traditional management and low level of service.

From the view of macro point, the importance of developing urban leisure agriculture is not well understood by government. Especially the urban management departments are insufficient understanding the importance of leisure agriculture in promoting urban economy sustainable development and coordinating urban-rural development. The advantages of cities have not been fully utilized. The development strategies and development goals of rural leisure agriculture are not clear. So leisure agriculture has developed into homogeneity tourism industry, which ignores the participation of rural characteristics and simply meets the basic requirements of tourist. In the long run, these rural tourism products with basic tourism functions cannot support their long-term and effective development, which is also a bottleneck for the rural future development. In addition, the mechanism system of urban-rural coordinated development has not been formed. The free flow of factors between urban and rural has been restricted. The supply of infrastructure is inadequate. Rural tourism development is mostly located in underdeveloped economy areas, where infrastructure is relatively backward, and the development of tourism depends largely on the strong support of the government.

From the view of micro point, there are some problems in leisure agriculture in China, such as insufficient funds, weak brand awareness and lack of managerial personnel. Most of the operators of leisure agriculture are agricultural owners. They develop leisure agriculture on the basis of their land and other natural resources. The initial capital accumulation is difficult, and the financing capacity is weak. Most of the projects have to be paused. The managers are not value the important of brand. They always think that "wine fragrance is not afraid of deep lanes", which is the fatal weakness of leisure agriculture development. In addition, most operators are lacking the modern management consciousness, and the established equipment is often shelved in off-season and often insufficient in peak season. So leisure agriculture has the characteristics of "people see people, people crowd people" in the peak season and "hotel closing, tourism infrastructure shelving" in the off-season. As result, it blooms everywhere with no local characteristics and blindly following

trend.

4. The Future Development Trend of Leisure Agriculture in China

International experience shows that when the per capita GDP of a country or region exceeds \$5000, the demand for leisure vacation will be formed, and the leisure consumption capacity will be significantly enhanced, showing a trend of diversification. In the next 20 years, China's per capita GDP will further improve. It is expected that the per capita annual leisure tourism will exceed five times, and the national leisure tourism market will exceed 8 billion times, showing an explosive growth trend. In the future, leisure agriculture in China will develop in the trend of integration, specialization, interesting, entertainment, and fictionalization.

4.1 Leisure and Entertainment is the Key.

"Leisure and entertainment" is the key of modern leisure tourism and the primary goal of most tourists. Leisure agriculture includes not only agriculture, but also leisure tourism. In the future, leisure agriculture will be combined with "leisure and entertainment" to make leisure agriculture more interesting. Specifically, some recreational facilities such as children's playground, water playground, chess and card room can be added in leisure agricultural places to attract tourists. It is also easy for adults to return to carefree childhood, arouse emotional resonance, prolong tourists' stay time, and improve tourists' satisfaction. Play items can not only increase the viscosity of tourists, but also create better profit space for leisure agriculture. In addition, experience is also a major way of leisure and entertainment. Tourists can improve their participation, interest and entertainment by participating in the process of planting, cultivating and picking agricultural products. "Leisure and entertainment" has become a major feature of modern leisure agriculture and rural tourism, and is the key to attracting tourists.

4.2 It Obtains Multifunction.

Leisure agriculture is a cultural agriculture based on the general agricultural land resources, the industrial chain of characteristic agricultural creative products and the combination of landscape and infrastructure. Leisure agriculture relies on agricultural scenic spots with strong plasticity. It has many functions such as sightseeing, entertainment, health preservation, vacation, conference, and exhibition and so on. Participants can sketch, photograph, sightsee and play in farm bases and agricultural scenic areas. They can also meet, eat, vacation and even support the elderly in farmhouse, farm and mountain villas. Leisure agriculture can provide tourists with educational activities to understand agricultural history, learn agricultural technology and increase agricultural knowledge through agricultural sightseeing parks, agricultural science and technology ecological parks, agricultural products exhibition halls, agricultural expositions, museums, etc. As an important link of scientific research achievements and production practice of scientific and educational institutions, agricultural science and technology parks provide a stage for agricultural science and technology achievements display and industrial incubation.

4.3 It Integrates Urban and Rural.

With the acceleration of the integration of urban and rural development in China, the factor flowing between urban and rural areas is more frequent, which also accelerates the development and distribution of leisure agriculture in urban and rural areas. The construction of agricultural ecological landscape in cities, the introduction of local rural and peasant characteristics into cities, and the construction of urban ecological parks will enable residents living in urban areas to feel rural life and culture at anytime and anywhere. Urban residents' leisure has formed the gathering place of greenhouse ecological restaurant, farmhouse entertainment, and farmhouse, folk and civil activities. At the same time, the introduction of tertiary industry in the countryside, the search for agricultural attractions in the countryside, the construction of leisure and recreational facilities, provide accommodation, reception, sightseeing, tourism, health care and old-age services. Finally, we can feel the information of agriculture and the achievements of rural development in the city,

and the convenience and high-quality service level brought by urban modernization in rural agriculture.

4.4 It has More Diversified Modes.

Leisure and recreation in leisure agriculture not only refers to accommodation experience, but also brings physical and mental relaxation and enjoyment to consumers in all aspects, which is in line with tourists' tourism purposes. With the development of rural leisure agriculture and the acceleration of tourism, rural tourism products are experiencing the development process from sightseeing to leisure and from sightseeing to experience. With the support of national policy and the promotion of modern information technology, the future development model of leisure agriculture in China will be based on new modes such as pastoral complex mode, urban ecological park mode, recreational health park mode, leisure resort mode, and educational experience mode etc.

5. Conclusion and Advices

Leisure agriculture is a new industry, which involves many fields and covers a wide range of areas. Although leisure agriculture in China has gotten rapidly development and has many development modes, it is restricted by the inadequate infrastructures and the product factors, such as capital, human resources and technology. In order to make sure leisure agriculture development towards multifunction and diversification, we should use the follow advice. First is building the facilities, for example constructing more roads, so that people and production factors can travel and flew easily between the urban and rural. Second is developing human resources through skill training and supporting adult education. Third is making full use of agriculture folks and stores to enrich the characteristics of leisure agriculture. That is the main factor which can attract tourist. Besides, we also should protect the environment, because the environment is an important factor which decides whether leisure agriculture could sustainable development.

Acknowledgement

[Foundation Project] Scientific Research Foundation Project of Yunnan Education Department, "The selection of industrialization management mode of Yunnan plateau characteristics agricultural industry: from the perspective of evolutionary economics" (2017ZX323).

References

- [1] Louis A Dernoï. Farm Tourism in Europe [J]. *Tourism Management*, 1983, 4(3):155-166.
- [2] Bernard Lane. What is Rural Tourism? [J]. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1994, 2.
- [3] Nancy G Mc Gehee, Kyungmi Kim. Motivation for Agri-Tourism Entrepreneurship [J]. *Journal of Travel Research*, 2004, 43(2):161-170.
- [4] Nigel Walford. Patterns of Development in Tourist Accommodation Enterprises on Farms in England and Wales [J]. *Applied Geography*, 2001, 21:331-345.
- [5] Hu Weihua, Wang Qing. Nongjiale's Current Situation and Development Direction of Tourism [J]. *Journal of Guilin Tourism College*, 2002 (03): 79-83.
- [6] Dai Meiqi, You Bizhu. Research on the Development of Leisure Agricultural Tourism in China [J]. *Journal of Xiangtan University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 2006 (04): 144-148.
- [7] Zhao Shihong, Chang Xiangyang. Analysis of the Influencing Factors of Leisure Agricultural Tourism Demand: An Empirical Study Based on Multivariate Logistic Model [J]. *Social Scientist*, 2016 (09): 88-93.