Each year hundreds of city families spend their vacations on a farm. More would like to, but don’t know how to get in touch with farm families. Many farm families, on the other hand, are not aware of this interest and desire on the part of the city people.

HOW DOES A VACATION-ON-THE-FARM WORK?

Suppose you are a farm family with spare bedrooms or an unoccupied tenant house and want to earn some extra income while becoming acquainted with city people. You list your name with a vacation or resort service agency, or place a classified ad in a city newspaper. The ad tells about accommodations and attractions of your farm and home, and includes a mailing address for inquiry:

VACATION ON A FARM
near Zenith, Illinois; 210 acres
of extensive farming activity
along historic Wabash river;
dog, horses, cows, 70 head of
purebred sheep; fishing and
hunting in season; community
square dances, swimming,
boating; historic places of in-
terest; good farm food, com-
fortable beds. Mr. and Mrs. A.
Farmer, Route 1, Zenith.

The city people who read the notice introduce themselves by mail. You exchange letters (and perhaps snapshots) giving information about both families, such as hobbies, special interests, children’s ages. As the farm family, you supply additional details concerning facilities and rates. (Rates vary according to accommodations and services offered. Those mentioned by host families from Maine to California range upward from $35 per person per week, including meals, with lower rates for children.) If you and the city family find yourselves compatible, reservations are made and you begin planning for an enjoyable week or two together.
MENTION THE RESOURCES

Historic points of interest:
- Churches and other buildings
- Summer theater
- Square dances and other special events
- 4-H meetings; local club activities
- Legends and lore
- Community sports: Scenery; possibilities

WHAT CITY PEOPLE WANT

A well-kept farm;
- Two or more bedrooms
- Inside toilet and tub
- Good standards of sanitation
- Joining the host family for meals daily
- A genuine sense of belonging to a farm family
- A chance to watch farm work and part in community life
- A sample of life as it is on the farm

WHAT FARM FAMILIES EXPECT

City and farm families:
- A holiday-host relationship
- A rural-urban understanding
- Rural boys and girls, often college with income requirement, a home to city guests.
- Many lasting friendships; city families return to farms.
- One farm family is represented as twenty city families; three main backgrounds, nine professions

HOW TO GET STARTED

Visit with your county adviser or extension agent; may be that others can help you. A group meeting of county advisers invites leading city families to the resort and recreation area; interests are discussed with neighbors about the possibility of having city families involved in this new activity.
MENTION THE RESOURCES OF YOUR COMMUNITY

- Historic points of interest nearby
- Churches and other centers of religious activity
- Summer theater; fairs and festivals
- Square dances and picnics
- 4-H meetings; local crafts and hobbies
- Legends and lore of the land
- Community sports and games
- Scenery; possibilities for photography

WHAT CITY PEOPLE WANT IN A FARM VACATION

- A well-kept farm; house with electricity
- Two or more bedrooms for four or more guests
- Inside toilet and tub bath or shower
- Good standards of cleanliness
- Joining the host family for three wholesome meals daily
- A genuine sense of hospitality on the part of the farm family
- A chance to watch or help with chores and take part in community activities
- A sample of life as country people live it

WHAT FARM FAMILIES SAY ABOUT THIS PROJECT

City and farm families who get together in this holiday-host relationship contribute greatly to rural-urban understanding.

Rural boys and girls are being put through college with income received by opening the farm and home to city guests.

Many lasting friendships are formed, and some city families return to the same farm each year.

One farm family reportedly has hosted as many as twenty city families in one summer. Their guests represented three major religions, eight nationality backgrounds, nine professions and occupations.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Visit with your county farm and home advisers. It may be that others in your county are interested.

A group meeting might be arranged, with your county advisers inviting resource people from the resort and recreation industry to tell you and your neighbors about the procedures and precautions involved in this new venture.
Farm couples are finding new and revitalized use for big, comfortable farm homes by bringing in their city neighbors as guests. Some are diversifying their crops and livestock as attractive, recreation-education features for their paying guests. Farm women who love to cook, and like a big family to cook for, enjoy this chance to use their favorite recipes. Playing host to city vacationers can be a year-round enterprise. Guests can be spaced to coincide with less busy times on the farm.

Some of the farm activities that appeal to city families are: milking a goat, feeding the pigs, gathering the eggs, driving and riding horses, picking flowers, picking fruit and vegetables, cranking an ice cream freezer, watching sheep dogs and hunting dogs perform. Such activities contribute much to the growth and development of the city boy and girl, and strengthen the role of the parent.

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