

Country Corner “Working” Farm Market Group Tour Outline

Mission Statement

Our Mission at Country Corner is to provide our customers and visitors with friendly service, fresh quality produce, fair market prices, family fun and quality agricultural, ecological and educational experiences while visiting our working farm.

Tour Objective

Our objective is to provide a Quality Educational Experience, full of fun and enjoyment for all participants touring our farm. Goals achieved will be through ample opportunities provided within our programs to meet the educational needs and guidelines set forth in the Illinois Board of Education Standards of Learning (SOL's)

Overview

Tours are available seasonally, spring, summer and fall. Tours may include some or all aspects of meeting these standards depending on activities, season or packages chosen. Seasonal, spring, summer and fall tours are available with different focuses on content and activities by appointment only. (See Group Tour Rates Package List for package contents and availability) **Approximate length of tour 90 - 120 - minutes**

Arrival

Upon arrival, a designated Tour Guide will meet each Group in the parking lot. Finalization of any fee payments, head counts or needed introductions or instructions will take place. Tour guides will give a short organizational time allotment to the group prior to the beginning of the tour to facilitate restroom usage if needed. It is suggested that groups arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled tour start time to allow for organization of group and any final preparations.

Tours Begin

Guided tours depending on season, their size/numbers and availability will begin with a Tractor Drawn Hayrack Ride. Should there be a need to split the group a second tour guide may be utilized or half the Group be allowed to utilize Open Program areas, such as the Corn Maze, Petting Zoo or Timber Park. Keep in mind that many factors come into play during your tour, the weather, the group size, and arrival time, number of groups and Program area availability and tour package program selection.

“Our Farm Tours are Fun and Educational”

Spring – During a spring trip to the “Strawberry U-Pick Patch”, get a chance to select your very own berries to take home or enjoy as a snack along your way to visit the vegetable garden to see how fresh vegetables are grown and harvested. Discover how sustainability farming is used in our farming programs. Groups will visit and enjoy other areas of production and participate in fun educational activities they have chosen in their tour package.

Summer- During a summer a trip to the “Great Melon Patch”, where our tour guides may pick a watermelon if they are ready, for the group to share on their way home or with their lunch. Discover how watermelons are grown without seeds inside, how to grow a giant pumpkin and learn how to carve your name into a growing pumpkin. Groups will visit and enjoy other areas of production and participate in fun educational activities they have chosen in their tour package.

Fall- During a fall trip to the “U-Pick Pumpkin Patch” everyone will be allowed to pick his or her very own small pie pumpkin to take home and enjoy as a decoration or to use in their favorite homemade pumpkin pie recipe. Discover how watermelons are grown without seeds inside, how to grow a giant pumpkin and learn how to carve your name into a growing pumpkin. Learn the importance and the difference between a male and female pumpkin blossom. Groups will visit and enjoy other areas of production and participate in fun educational activities they have chosen in their tour package.

Tractor drawn Hayrack Ride (Approx. 20 min.)

The purpose of the hayrack ride will be both Educational and Fun. At designated stops along the way, our tour guides will delight you with “Farm Stories”, as they interact with the group, explaining the various types of produce grown and pointing out specific areas of interest. Topics of discussion will include photosynthesis, pollination, sustainable agriculture and seed to harvest life cycle. The changes in the season will dictate the topics, growing patterns and the product availability.

Barnyard Zoo (Approx. 15 min)

Visit our barn yard zoo for a chance to pet and feed the animals, learn interesting facts about all our friendly farm animals as you discover the answers to specific questions related to each. This portion of the tour is partly self-guided, a tour guide will be available to answer questions and pose them as well. Feeding tubes are available for those who prefer not to come in direct contact with the animals along with mandatory hand washing sanitizers at the exit of the zoo area.

Bee Barn (Approx. 15 min)

Visit our Bee Barn to see a glass enclosed working Honey Bee Hive, view a portion or all of a video giving the history and life cycle of a Bee colony. Learn interesting facts as you discover the answers to questions related to a bee’s life. Learn the difference between the worker, the drones and their responsibilities within the colony. Our tour guide will answer questions and pose them as they display Bee working equipment and tools used for collecting Honey.

Learning Center (Approx. 20 min)

Visit our Learning Center to discover interesting and fun farm facts, view displays, play interactive games, participate in discussions about farm related activities and procedures. Learn about the origin and agronomy of corn. Discover the answers to questions posed by our staff and other un-answered questions found within the other activity areas. Participate in pre-scheduled activities only found through our learning center programs.

Prairie Study Plot, Butterfly & Herb Garden (Approx. 15 min)

Stroll into the past as you experience a visit to our Prairie Study Plot, Butterfly and Herb Garden. Discover natural plants and wildlife indigenous to our area. Identify items within the Prairie that are living all around us. Learn the history of a Prairie and how Illinois Prairies were formed. Identify butterflies living in our area. Learn about herbs we eat everyday.

Corn Maze (Approx. 15 min)

Adventure awaits groups and individuals entering our Interactive Corn Maze during late September and October, Groups will need to work together or in small groups to solve the maze puzzle. Several levels of interaction are available from simple scavenger hunts to question and answer problem solving tasks depending on group size, age and time allotted. A small portion of the maze is utilized for many of our groups providing a scavenger hunt for our younger groups, with the options of utilizing one half or up to the entire maze for team building and additional adventures. An outdoor classroom is available within the maze to accommodate group discussion and discovery on Corn agronomy, maze construction and how corn affects our lives, in our Corn Agronomy Lab.

Spring/Early Summer- See how a corn maze is planted and how it is designed utilizing GPS techniques.

Mid September through October – Additional Maze Activities available to groups and individuals include, Maze Trivia, Haunted Maze and Flashlight Maze.

Timber Park (Approx. 20 min)

Relax and enjoy a visit to the Timber Park, where groups can let off a little steam playing at the Fun Park, climbing in the tree house, playing on the playground equipment or just sitting in the shade eating their lunch or snack. Take a walk along our UN-Natural Nature Trail where you will find many things that do not belong. Return to the Learning Shack to discover how the items may have gotten there.

References / Affiliates

Agriculture in the Classroom Curriculum – Illinois Farm Bureau
Educational Materials – The Land Connection
Illinois Prairie – Illinois Department of Natural Resources
The Honey Files – National Honey Board
Five-Minute Field Trips – Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
University of Illinois Extension
Henry County Extension Services / Soil and Water Conservation Department
Henry County Natural Resource Conservation District
Henry County Visitors Bureau
Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau

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