

The South Carolina Ag + Art Tour

The South Carolina Ag + Art Tour is a free, self-guided tour of designated farms in South Carolina featuring local artisans at each site. During the tour visitors have the opportunity to see first-hand where their food comes from, watch artists in action and purchase their works, and learn more about rural life. In 2018, ninety farms across twelve South Carolinas from Myrtle Beach to Spartanburg participated in the tour. As far as is known, this tour is the first grassroots tourism product to cross county lines.

There are three goals of the tour: economic development, both direct and indirect, community development by creating a new agri-tourism community in each participating county, and education, putting food and homemade and home grown products with the faces of the farmers and the artists. In addition to the participating farmers markets, there are three types of farms involved with the tour: educational, new and emerging, and established (already involved in commerce with the public). The educational farms are the ones that do not have a product that is sold directly to consumers, such as timber farmers and tobacco farmers. Small, generally family-owned farms that have had no dealing with the public make up the new and emerging category of farms. Lastly, as stated before, established farmers are those who operate a retail farm store, already selling to the public.

Presenters will share information about the unique grassroots organizational structure of the tour, provide details of tour impacts on participants and local communities, and discuss how art and agriculture can blend to create new experiences that strengthen producer and consumer relationships.