**Ag + Art Tour**

- **Program Area:** Education and Ag Promotion (EAP)
- **County Farm Bureau:** York County Farm Bureau
- **State:** SC
- **Membership Category:** 3,001-5,000
- **Year:** 2014
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- **Program Description:**

  Farming is a very technical trade. However, there is something artistic about the craft of growing and raising food. The members of the York County Farm Bureau wanted to bring ag and art together through their innovative and free Ag + Art Tour.

  This self-guided summer tour of county farms and artisans took guests on a journey to explore twenty farms and farm markets, twenty-five artisans and five restaurants. The concept for the tour developed as the county Farm Bureau heard from local farmers and artists for the need to increase opportunities to market their produce, food and art through agritourism initiatives. The objectives for organizing this tour were to increase the public's awareness of agriculture in the county, to change food purchasing habits through relationship building between farmers and consumers, and to stimulate economic development through agritourism promotion and product development.

  A planning team of fifteen volunteers came together to coordinate the event. The York County Farm Bureau brought in affinity partners such as university extension, the county arts council, convention and visitors bureau, the tourism district, and cultural and heritage museums. The team was successful in raising $14,000 in local funding to support the tour. In addition, the committee worked on building the tour experience for participants by developing a passport concept to help participants navigate their way through the many tour stops.
Volunteers at each site were able to keep track of over 3,000 visitors who participated in the Ag + Art Tour over the 2-day weekend. Many of the businesses that participated in the tour indicated that they sold out of products as a result of the traffic the tour brought to their retail locations. Not only was the group successful in achieving all of their original goals and objectives, but they were also able to successfully market and secure forty-four new Farm Bureau memberships as a result of the activity.

Photo 1:

Photo 2: