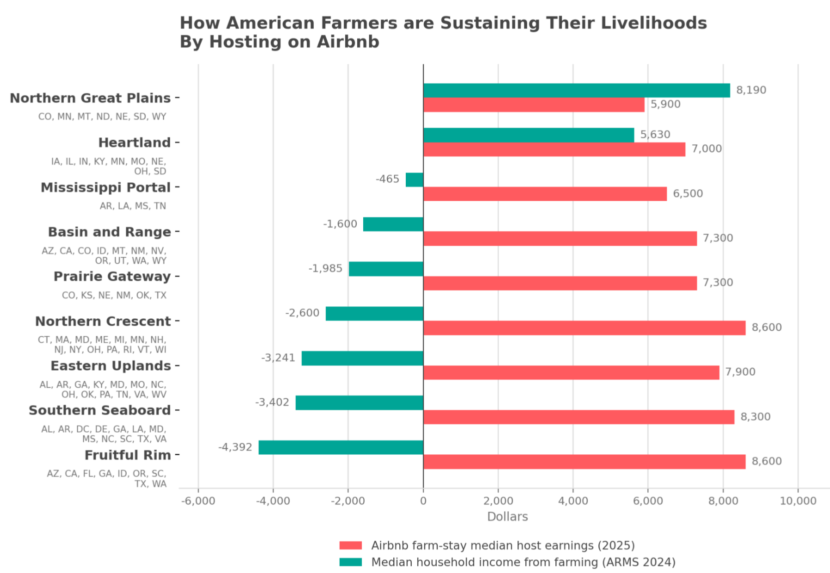
Farm to Stay: How Agritourism Is Helping Save the American Family Farm

Across the country, farmers are turning their barns, grain bins, and spare rooms into something new: a lifeline for their land. In 2025, Airbnb farm stay hosts in the U.S. collectively earned close to $120 million, with the typical farm stay host taking home about $8,000.[1] [2] That money matters: in 2024, the median small farm lost roughly $2,800 on agricultural activity alone.[3] For many hosts, this income isn't just supplemental, it's what helps keep the farm in the family.

Airbnb is spotlighting how a growing number of American farmers are turning their land, their agricultural assets, and their way of life into a destination, and why that's arriving at exactly the moment rural communities need it most.



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[1] Based on Airbnb data of the total and median US farm stay host earnings between January 1 - December 31, 2025.
[2] A farm stay is defined as a guest night at a listing where the host self-selected “Farm Stay” as their listing space type when creating their listing on the Airbnb platform.
[3] Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2026, February 5). *Farm household well-being: Farm household income estimates*, Households associated with intermediate and residence farms reported median farm income of -$2,799 and -$2748,
https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-household-well-being/farm-household-income-estimates
The USDA ERS defines farm typology groups farms by gross cash farm income and the principal operator's primary occupation: residence farms are farms with less than $350,000 in gross cash farm income and where the principal operator is either retired from farming or has a primary occupation other than farming, intermediate farms are farms with less than $350,000 in gross cash farm income and a principal operator whose primary occupation is farming, commercial farms are farms with $350,000 or more gross cash farm income and nonfamily farms.
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2026, February 5). *Farm household well-being: Glossary,*
https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-household-well-being/glossary#farmtypology

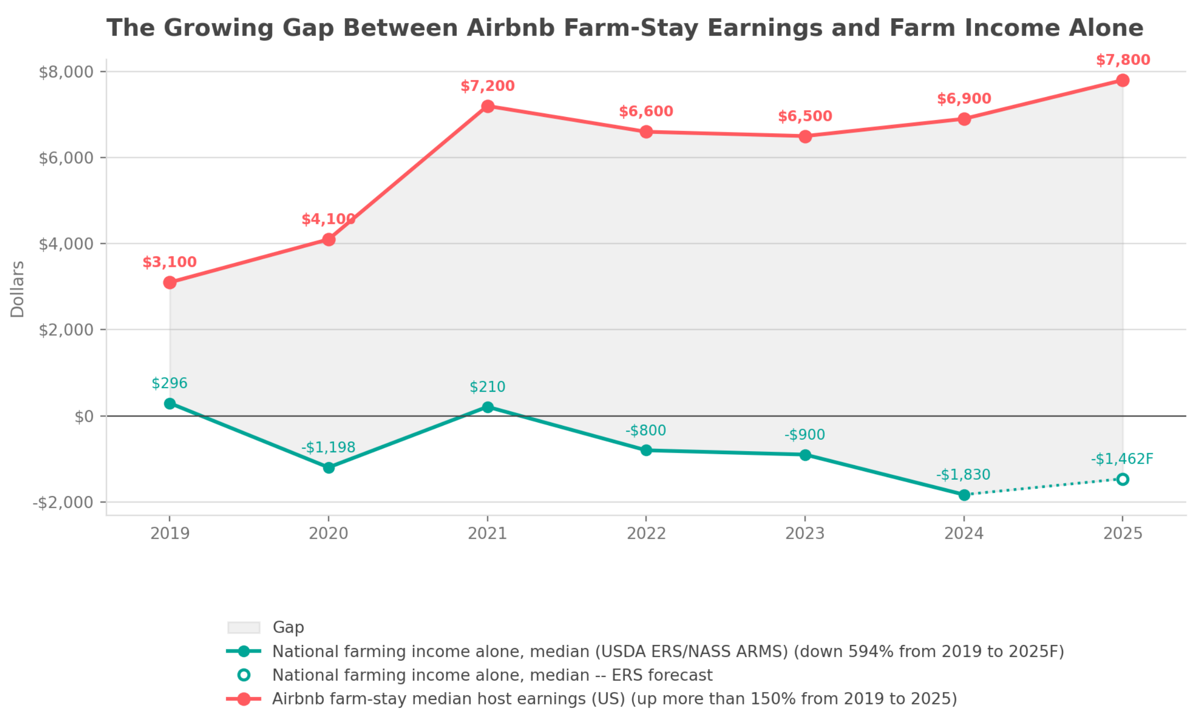
Airbnb is Filling a Growing Gap

Global demand for farm stays has grown sharply and consistently: Google Trends shows search interest for all "farm stay" nearly quadrupled between 2016 and early 2026.[4]

Airbnb's own numbers back that up: farm stays generated close to $330 million in host earnings globally in 2025.[5] Since 2018, the number of farm stay listings has grown over 120%, while host earnings have risen by nearly 400%.[6]

The United States is Airbnb's largest agritourism geography by host earnings, accounting for more than a third of global farm stay earnings in 2025. Last year, hosts in the US earned close to $120 million across nearly 10,000 farm stay listings.

In more than 60 rural counties, farm stays account for more than a quarter of all Airbnb host earnings. For these rural communities, hosting a farm stay isn't a niche activity. It's a key way to participate in the visitor economy.



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4 Source: Google Trends, https://trends.google.com/explore?q=farm%20stays&date=2016-01-01%202026-03-31&geo=Worldwide

5 Based on Airbnb data of total global farm stay host earnings between January 1 - December 31, 2025.

6 A farm stay listing is one whose host self-selected "Farm Stay" as the listing's space type when creating their listing on Airbnb. Listing growth and host earnings growth are calculated based on the total number of farm stay listings and total host earnings between 2018 and 2025. Note that farm stay listing as a listing space type only became available on Airbnb in 2018.

Putting new farm towns on the map

Across the United States, farm stays are routing visitors into rural and agricultural communities that sit well outside the reach of conventional tourism infrastructure. Nearly two-thirds of US census tracts with farm stay listings have no other lodging options at all.[7] Texas leads in total supply, followed by California, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, but farm stays are active in every state, spread across a long tail of rural agricultural counties.

The benefits don't stop at the farm gate, there are meaningful spillover benefits for the broader rural hosting community. Rural areas that gain a farm stay see total Airbnb earnings for all local hosts grow roughly 15% faster than similar areas without one.[8] Farm stays are not competing with existing rural tourism, instead they are creating new supply and new demand, bringing in more guests and activating economic participation from hosts who would not otherwise rent their home or share their land with guests. One farm stay listing can be the thread that pulls an entire small town onto the map.

Small farms, real income

The hosts behind these listings are, overwhelmingly, farmers first. In 2025, the typical Airbnb farm stay host earned about $8,000 from hosting. Using the platform as a practical income buffer that also gives guests an authentic agricultural experience.

While modest, that additional income matters because farming alone often doesn't pay the bills. The median small farm in the United States lost about $2,800 in 2024 on agricultural activity,[9] meaning many small farms are propped up by income earned off the farm. More than three-quarters of small farm households depend on non-farm income to stay afloat.[10] Airbnb earnings, at roughly a fifth of household income for farm stay hosts, can be critical support as a way for small farms to absorb the ups and downs of farming.

An economic engine for rural America

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[7] To measure this, we assigned every active ever booked Airbnb listing to a geographic cell using the H3 hexagonal grid (~225 km² per cell), then identified cells where farm stay listings were the first ever booked listing and no other listing types exist. These are places that would be entirely absent from the visitor economy Airbnb connects to, were it not for a farm stay host.
[8] We use a staggered difference-in-differences design that compares rural census tracts gaining farm stay listings to adjacent never-treated rural census tracts across 2016–2025. In addition, this delayed but sustained earnings lift is not driven by COVID-era disruptions; results are nearly identical when tracts that adopted farm stays during 2020–2021 are excluded entirely.
[9] USDA Economic Research Service, Farm Household Well-Being, https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-household-well-being/farm-household-income-estimates
[10] Farm Bureau, "The Other Paycheck: How Off-Farm Income Keeps Farmers Farming" https://www.fb.org/intel/markets/the-other-paycheck-how-off-farm-income-keeps-farmers-farming

Farm stays don't just support the host, they ripple through the local economy. In 2025, farm stay guests on Airbnb reported spending close to $120 million at local businesses around their destinations across the US, and farm stays contributed nearly $500 million to GDP overall, including:

More than 5000 jobs supported[11]

Close to $125M in total tax revenue[12]

Over $286M in labor income[13]

Who is leading the movement

The average American farmer is 58 years old,[14] and in the United States, like many developed economies, farming faces a real succession crisis: aging operators without clear successors, and a shrinking pipeline of younger entrants willing and able to take on the challenging economics of full-time farming.

Airbnb's data shows that farm stay hosting may be helping change that. Since 2019, new farm stay hosts joining the platform have been getting younger.[15] This generational shift suggests that Airbnb is beginning to function as an on-ramp for a new kind of agricultural operator: younger people who are entering rural land management not through traditional farming channels, but through hospitality, using transferable skills like digital marketing and social media to drive farm value.

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[11] Estimated number of full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs supported by the output generated by Airbnb activity from January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025. This metric includes direct, indirect, and induced effects.
[12] Estimated total tax revenue associated with economic activity generated by Airbnb stays from January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025. This includes the total value of taxes associated with hosts' income and spending, and the economic activity stemming from guests visiting local businesses.
[13] Estimated labor income includes both Proprietor Income (e.g. for small business owners that benefit from guest spending), but also Employee Compensation (e.g. cleaners, employees of small businesses) from January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025.
[14] Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.agdaily.com/news/usda-2022-census-agriculture-numbers/
[15] Based on the typical age of all farm stay hosts between January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2025.

Tourism is Helping More Women Enter a Male-Dominated Industry

Women are leading this shift, too. Across the United States, women make up 70% of Airbnb farm stay hosts.[16] This is particularly important in what has traditionally remained a male-dominated industry. In comparison, the latest USDA Census of Agriculture finds that women farmers accounted for 36% of all producers in the United States, showing how hosting is helping more women step into the agricultural industry, often as the primary force behind the on-farm experience.[17]

Why this matters

Farm stays turn agricultural land itself into the destination, with no hotel infrastructure, no marketing budget, and no existing tourist draw required. For farmers facing thin margins, rising costs, and often no clear successor, a farm stay listing offers a way to keep working the land while diversifying income streams.

There's more that could help this grow in the right way: right-sizing short-term rental rules, expanding grants and technical support for beginning hosts, and closer coordination between tourism boards and agricultural organizations so more travelers discover the countryside is a destination worth planning a trip around. The fundamental case is already made: demand is strong, growth is real, and the benefits reach well past the farm gate. What's left is making the opportunity easier to reach for the farmers who need it most.

[16] Based on Airbnb data.
[17] USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). (2024). "USDA release: 2022 Census of Agriculture data." usda.gov.