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The optimal model of agri-tourism or how to rural development by organizing agri-tourism: a case study of Lepsy county, Almaty region, Kazakhstan

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Abstract

The paper examines several models of agritourism and attempts to select the most suitable model for rural development of Kazakhstan, in particular in the Lepsy county. This area is still an underdeveloped market, which can bring quite a tangible profit, both for rural residents and the local administration. Almost the entire territory of the Lepsy area is located in a high-mountainous region near the Lepsy River. This area has a huge natural potential for the development of agri-tourism and its various types. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to propose an optimal model of the territorial organization of agri-tourism in the Lepsy county, the experience of which could be extrapolated to other rural areas of Kazakhstan. The research methodology is based on a literature review, field research data, as well as a mixed research method, where quantitative and qualitative methods are combined. As a research tool, an analysis of stakeholder questionnaires collected by conducting in-depth interviews is used. As a result, taking into account the specifics of the area, it was revealed that the agritourism development concept should not be reduced to one direction (model). It should include several models that are promising for the conditions of Lepsy county. However, it was found that the Western European model is most applicable for the development of agri-tourism in the studied village. The remaining models of rural tourism organization are not suitable enough for application and development, as they do not take into account national specifics, or require large investments for rural resorts and villages development or additional services.

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Keywords

optimal model of agri-tourism, Lepsy county, rural development, Agritourism in Kazakhstan, rural areas

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