

# KIDRON PROJECTS

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## **Agricultural Tourism**

The Kidron watershed has traditionally supported agricultural activities; however, they have become disorganized and economically inefficient as urbanization has dramatically increased in the area. The region has become a hotbed for environmental problems. By developing agricultural tourism (also known as agritourism), the existing agricultural activities are brought to a new level, effectively diversifying the income resources for the residents and addressing the environmental issues. The offering of agricultural products and services related to raising crops and livestock will attract tourists, resulting in benefits for the farmers and communities in the region.

Households and small farms engaged in agricultural activities will be licensed as small businesses and will open their facilities to the public, offering various goods and services for the enjoyment and education of visitors. These initiatives will include a wide range of activities, such as the preparation and sale of food products (e.g. cheese, hummus, olive oil, breads, spices, baked goods) and a variety of activities (e.g. food preparation classes, crafts, caring for animals/plants, riding, children's activities, petting zoo).

The development of agritourism in the Kidron watershed will significantly impact the local economy through creation of employment opportunities for residents, including creation of demand for local input (products and services that support the agritourism activities). Socially, this project will incorporate non-traditional populations into the work cycle (e.g. women and the elderly). A sense of partnership will be fostered in the region as residents become stakeholders in the success of developing the region as a tourist attraction.

The environmental impacts of agritourism include both positive and adverse effects. Agricultural activities such as animal husbandry involve noise, smell, mosquitoes and other nuisances, disease, and increased demand for water and pesticides. On the other hand, agritourism will promote the conversion of private land to open space, an important element in sustainable growth.

A unified marketing effort for promoting the region's agritourism activities will include a shared logo, tourist maps, and cross-promotion by neighboring businesses. This cooperative effort promotes quality products and services.

This project will be financed through micro-financing of home-based and other small businesses. Small low-interest loans are provided with less emphasis on guarantees or demonstration of financial capability, but rather on the performance of the microenterprise.