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POUTA, EIJA, OVASKAINEN, VILLE,
Assessing the recreational demand for agricultural land in
Finland

Keywords recreation, rural tourism, participation, demand, travel cost
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Abstract

It is widely assumed that the scenic attractiveness and other public good aspects of agricultural land can be utilized as a source of livelihood in rural areas in the form of recreation and tourism. In this study we use two approaches to consider whether agricultural landscapes are preferred as a destination for recreation (day trips) and rural tourism (overnight trips). We first analyse the choice of recreation site type based on a model that aggregates sites using the presence of agricultural land as an aggregation variable. Population survey data on recreation trips reveal an association between the respondent's living environment, recreational activities and visit characteristics and the probability of choosing a destination with agricultural land. Second, we also estimate the demand functions for trips to agricultural sites and other destination types to consider whether the presence of agricultural land, as opposed to other land use categories, increases the number of trips and the benefits of recreation. The results suggest that agricultural landscapes are inferior to alternative site types in terms of per-trip benefits. However, agricultural landscapes are associated with high annual benefits because of the high rate of visitation.

Contact ejja.pouta@mtt.fi

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