



# Strategic responses to the challenges facing rural Pick Your Own Entrepreneurs.



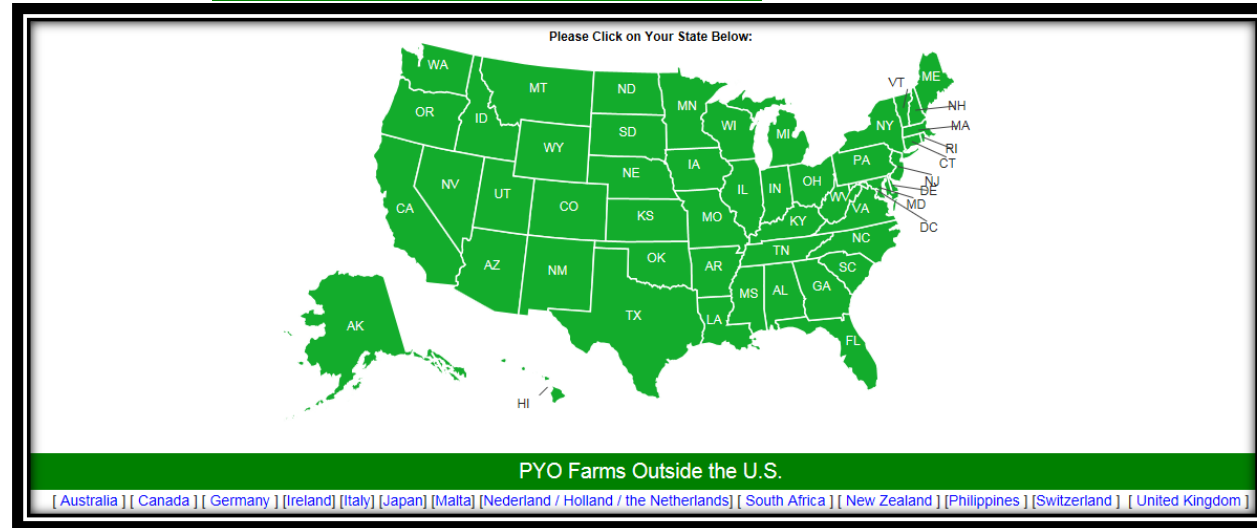
# Diversification



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## How to find a Pick-Your-Own farm

- Definition:
  - Pick your own,
  - U pick,
  - Cut your own



- DEFRA classifications.
  - Processing/retailing of farm produce ?
  - Sport and recreation ?

# Attraction v food.

What is the core exchange of the PYO farm?

Production based diversification?

OR recreational diversification?

PYO websites show that most farms are offering other activities, PYO is part of the product portfolio.



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## Things we do...

[Harewood Bridge PYO](#)

[Our Famous Asparagus](#)

[The Packhouse Gallery](#)

[The Potting Shed](#)

[Wholesale Supplies](#)

[The Fabulous Festive Shed](#)

[Wedding Venue Hire](#)

## The Packhouse Gallery

The Packhouse Gallery is the home gallery of Richard Snowden. We show only his work here and gallery owners come here from all over the UK to choose the paintings they'd like to have hanging in their own galleries. The gallery was Richard's Studio for years, but with a growing footfall, we moved his studio to an adjacent barn in 2007 to create a more comfortable viewing space.

All the works in The Packhouse Gallery are available to view on [www.richardsnowden.co.uk](http://www.richardsnowden.co.uk)



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• Art and Design etc

# The decline



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- 1980s the Telegraph stated that there were around 4000 PYO in the UK.
- By 2015 reported that there were fewer than 600 left.
- The website [www.Pickyourown.org](http://www.Pickyourown.org) listed 258 PYO farms in 2016.







# Challenges

- Super markets
- Theft
- Waste
- Weather
- Changing clientele
- Location





# The research

- Multi method
- Two Surveys
  - Survey 1: of 166 PYO owners as listed on the website [www.pyofarms.org](http://www.pyofarms.org).
  - Survey 2 of customers at a large PYO over a summer season.
- Two structured interviews, of owners of large PYO farms.
- Observation and rating of ten websites



# The results:

- The decline?
- What is the core product?
- What are the perceived threats?
- What strategies are farmers using?







# Reasons for the decline:

- Replies from PYO farms that had ceased offering PYO gave these reasons:
  - Loss of customer base
  - Price competition
  - Seasonality of their produce
  - Inability to offer a 'farm experience'
  - Distance from customers
  - Change in clientele





# What IS the core product?

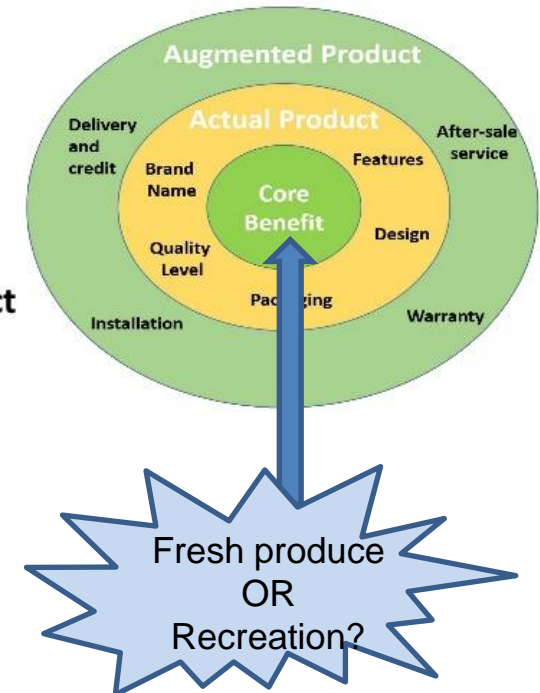
- Survey 1 showed that owners believe they have to offer other recreational diversifications to support the PYO business.
- Customers from Farm A - 67% were seeking freshness and quality,
  - Only 2.8% wanted an outing for the family.
- Have the PYO owners sacrificed the core product of 'fresh produce', in order to provide a 'family experience'?

## Levels of Product

1.Core Benefit

2.Actual Product

3.Augmented Product



# Web sites

- Analysis of 10 of the 258 PYOs listed showed that 9 offered augmentations to the product, such as Garden centres, pony rides, coffee shop, nurseries, Christmas markets, glamping, educational visits ....
- Some PYO have well developed social media profiles, using Facebook, twitter, Trip Advisor, and sophisticated web sites.



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Experience the finest Herefordshire Countryside

National Winners of the FARMA Pick Your Own Farm of the Year 2014



#### Farm Shop

Fresh, natural and healthy produce, plus Tea rooms, Picnic area and Play area.

[more...](#)



#### Pick Your Own

Pick your own fruit and vegetables fresh from the field.

[more...](#)



#### What's New

Thursday 9th June - Ready to PYO now:- Strawberries, Gooseberries, Rhubarb, Asparagus, Peas and Broad Beans. Our own New Potatoes, available in the shop. Blueberry Tea shop open. Come and see the baby piglets and baby ducklings. Shop opening hours 9.30- 5.30pm daily



#### Fishing Lakes

What could be more relaxing than a day or two at our fishing lakes

[more...](#)



#### Events

See our list of seasonal attractions

[more...](#)



#### Growing Local is Going Local...

is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company. We offer educational, land based courses and activities for children and adults.

[more...](#)

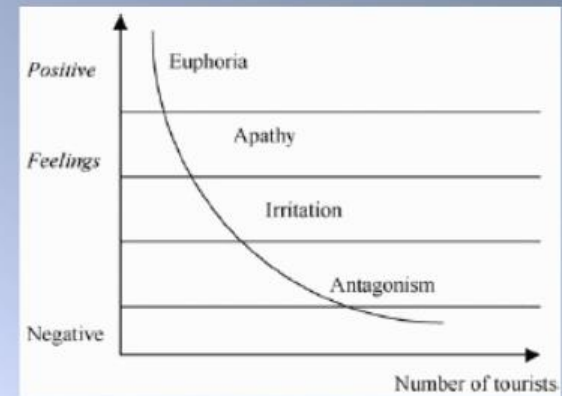
# What threats did the owners perceive?



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1. Changing clientele, showing increased cultural insensitivity and hence generating host 'irritation' towards them.
2. Theft – some amusing stories from owners, one claiming pickers had arrived with a tub of cream and spoons! Evidence of frustration, as client typology has evolved.
3. Waste – also increasing as customer typology change.

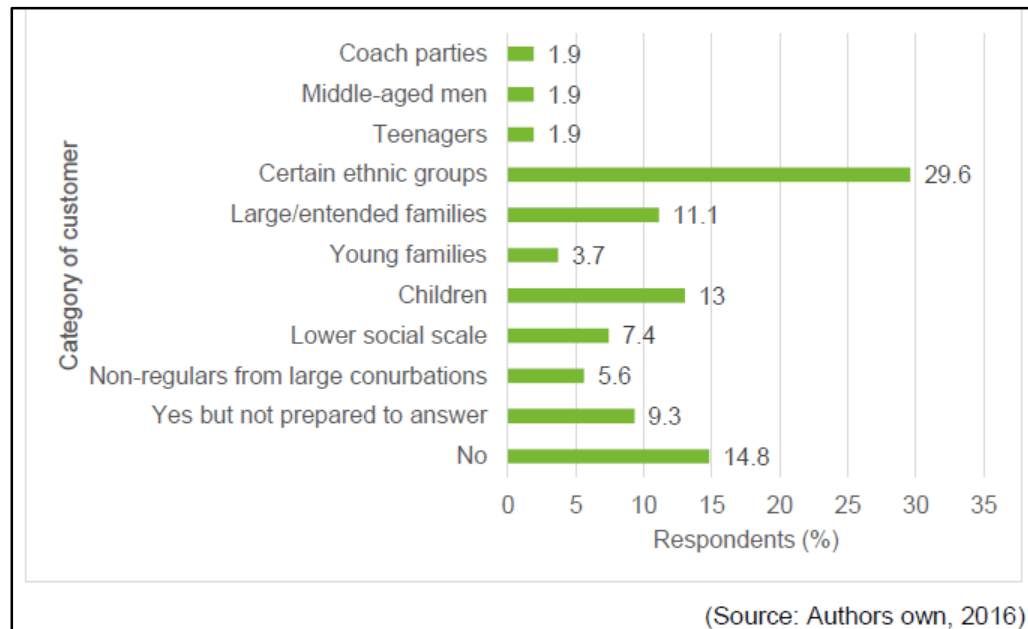
## Doxey's Irritation Index





# Eating without paying:

Q: Do you have issues with a particular category of customer?







# Threats continued.....

4. Increasingly extreme weather conditions – worsening an existing problem.

5. Public liability.

One PYO respondent has ceased PYO because of claims by visitors.

# Strategic responses.



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- Offer PYO as part of a whole farm experience
- Weather
  - Covered poly tunnels
  - Raised beds
- Waste
  - Raised beds
  - Signs
  - Write off the fruit



# Theft.



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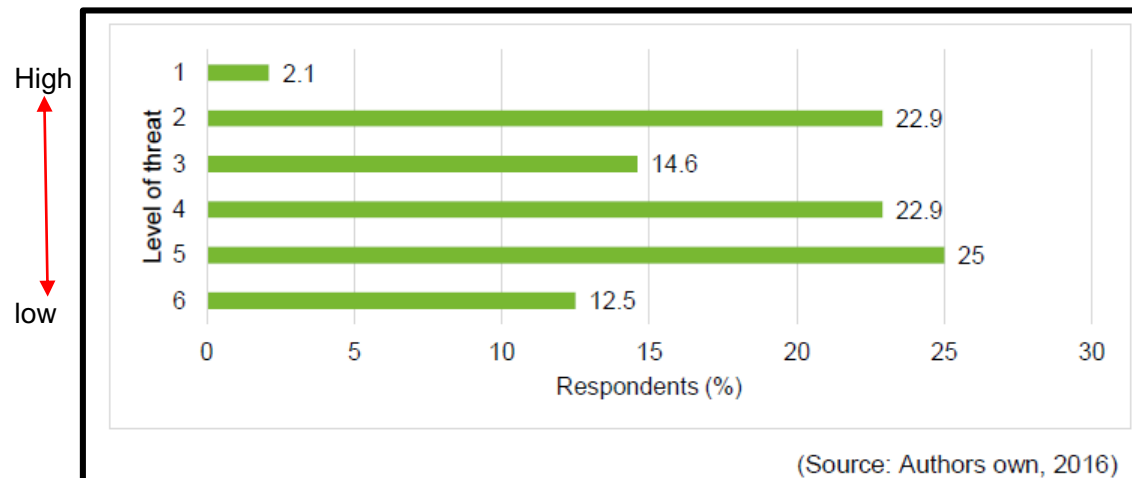
- “We handle our u-pick differently then we did just a few years ago,” said Robin Miller, owner of Miller’s Orchards Farm Market in Scott Township, Pa. “We limit the opportunities for theft by being more ‘hands-on.’ By that I mean we use the u-pick as an educational opportunity. One of the family is present with the u-pick folks, educating them about the crop they are picking, talking about how we grow the crop, proper picking, etc.”
  - (Can pilfering PYO pickers be pinched? Growers News. 2012)
- Having someone in the field, unobtrusive security.
- Charging entry to the PYO field, sometimes refundable.
- Signs
- Most responses were that it was something that they had to tolerate.



www.alamy.com - AM7XAB

# Public liability.

- Cases were discovered where the farm had ceased doing PYO because of claims made. Calcott farm in Essex, Boddingtons Berries, Cornwall.
- Signs and ropes
- Survey results revealed that 60% of respondents were not particularly concerned ( score < level 4)





# Thank you for listening.



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- Any questions?