



EXTENSION IMPACT

Improving Farms through Informed Decision-making

Agriculture is central to a prosperous Wisconsin, contributing more than \$100 billion annually to our state's economy and nearly 12% of our state's employment (providing over 435,000 jobs). Running a successful farm business is increasingly challenging and the current economic situation continues to have an impact financially for many farms. Much uncertainty exists for commodity markets and several factors influence prices, including weather, trade agreements for important export markets, the economy overall, and the continued impact of the coronavirus outbreak. Weathering these uncertainties depends on farm owners successfully managing their farm's financials, effectively managing their workforce, considering alternative enterprises as appropriate, or all three. When the time comes, farm owners also need to have an effective transition strategy to provide for themselves as they shift towards retirement.

In response, Extension's Farm Management Program provides research-based farm business management information, resources and decision-making tools to farmers and agribusinesses to improve business profitability and lifestyles through informed decision-making. We currently focus on supporting farmers with professional development related to farm financial management; improving skills in conflict management and employee motivation; and farm succession/farm transition.

For example, over 300 Wisconsin farmers attended price risk management educational programs held in over 30 counties in 2019 and 2020. Participants found the information helped improve their understanding of the federal programs (94%).

Through our "Becoming the Employer of Choice Program", approximately 150 farmers learned how to create a positive workplace environment by improving skills in conflict management and employee motivation. As a result of the training, farmers increased in knowledge around how to manage conflict (58% increase), how to create a positive farm business culture (62% increase) and how to develop a motivated workforce (61% increase).

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Over 75 farmers and farm owners attended five regional farm succession workshops. Through this program, farmers are better prepared to plan for farm succession and/or transition. Almost all (92%) said they planned to seek out resources and/or professionals to help in their farm succession planning; and 90% said they plan to implement one or more steps in their farm succession plan.

Farmers and agriculture professionals who participate in Extension Farm Management Program educational offerings increased their knowledge in farm business management in order to make good decisions for their business, themselves and their families. By learning about resources and strategies for farm business planning, Wisconsin farmers are equipped to have important conversations and can develop plans that lead to successful farm businesses.



The Farm Management program is part of Extension's Agriculture Institute. Learn more by visiting farms.extension.wisc.edu.

in 2020



28,000

educational contacts through live online & in-person education



26,000

views of educational videos, podcasts & apps



900,000

educational contacts through radio & television across Wisconsin



Extension
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