



EXTENSION IMPACT

Improving Farm Profitability

Supply chains strained by the COVID-19 pandemic have made agricultural markets increasingly volatile. Farmers are trying to manage these disruptions by exploring new directions and opportunities. One strategy farmers are pursuing is diversification of farming enterprises. Diversifying a farm's enterprises reduces large year-to-year variations in income and ensures adequate cash flow. But diversifying a rural business is complicated; acquiring knowledge about a new enterprise requires building expertise and strong, farm business management skills. Expanding into new areas or experimenting with new enterprises may increase capital investment requirements or require new or additional financing (for land, facilities, and/or equipment) that can be challenging to obtain. These ongoing economic conditions take a toll on farm families and their rural communities.

In response, Extension provides research-based farm business management information, resources, and decision-making tools to agriculture professionals such as farmers and farm managers. This includes information on alternative business strategies to ensure the continuation of the current business or a new business enterprise. These resources and education can help them explore new ideas in support of new farm businesses, or assist farms that struggle with revenue in a changing agriculture economy. Across our programs, farmers and other agriculture professionals learned how to make sound business decisions based on current and future economic challenges and leverage competitive advantages during the pandemic and beyond.

Through webinars, videos, individual consultation, and educational materials and tools, agriculture professionals made informed decisions when diversifying their operations.

Over 2,500 farmers, agriculture professionals, and educators participated in Extension Farm Management webinar programs from December 2020 through June of 2021, with more than 167,000 page views of supporting materials for additional learning. Extension resources that help farms conduct a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) have been accessed by 2,900 users. The Extension farmland values report has been accessed by over 8,500 users; over 1,900 accessed information on agricultural contracts and leases.

Extension provides farmers and agriculture professionals with resources and decision-making tools that improve business profitability and lifestyles.

The ongoing economic conditions and business pivots in agriculture are also taking a continued toll on farm families and their rural communities. The associated chronic stress impacts mental and physical well-being, relationships, and decision-making. Extension provided farmers with education related to mental health and well-being through programs like the Farm Management series on Farming for Health and Healthy Minds Healthy Farms, which reached over 100 farmers, educators, and ag professionals in 2021.

in 2021



167,000+
online resource
page views



2,500+
individual farmers,
agriculture professionals
& educators served



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



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