



GROWING NEW FARMERS

A Northeast Service Providers Consortium

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Gathering and Using Case Studies and Profiles in Beginning Farmer Education

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As members of the Growing New Farmers (GNF) consortium we are looking for effective and innovative ways to provide education to new farmers. Through focus groups, interviews, and needs assessments conducted by various GNF projects, beginning farmers consistently say they are most interested in learning opportunities that are based on the practical knowledge and sharing among farmers. Two ways of providing this type of learning is by using case studies and profiles. Both of these formats tell a farmers story. The case study shares a story and relates a problem and does not include the final outcome. Case studies are used to stimulate farmer to farmer sharing and learning while developing problem solving skills in the learner. A case profile contains a story which includes the outcome and relates the process leading to the resolution. Case profiles are also used as farmer to farmer learning method. Both are based on real-life experiences and can be used as an independent or group learning tools. Case studies and profiles can of course be verbal, where a farmer shares their story during an educational program. For the purposes of this article they are written.

What is a Case Study?

The case study is an educational tool that started to gain popularity in the 1930's, notably at the Harvard business school to engage students using real life situations in the problem solving process. It is currently a popular teaching strategy for topics where decision-making can be a challenging process. Use of case studies shows that there is no one size fits all solutions to a problem. For these reasons, case studies lend themselves well as a beginner farmer education tool, as farming requires a high degree of decision-making skill. The study is a narrative summary of either a real life or fictitious situation or a combination of several situations into one story that contains a problem needing resolution. A solution is not presented or offered. The learner, as an individual or as a group member grapples with solving the problem by brainstorming, discussing and identifying options and solutions. Using case studies in groups creates an interactive, reality based learning environment.

Writing a Case Study

Elements of a good case study include: the history of the situation, relevant information, description of the main characters and the context of the problem written in a succinct manner - usually a half to full page in length. It is important to remember confidentiality when writing case studies. If the farmer requests confidentiality do not use real names or information that could identify the person or persons, using a combination of situations is a good method of securing confidentiality. The study usually ends with a question or two for the learner as a problem solving guide. Some case study writers draw their audience into the situation through the use of quotes and conversation that captures the reality of the family and situation. Dialogue helps maintain interest and can best describe the emotions and important issues of the problem or dilemma. The emotional context of the story is often an important component of the problem and can also illustrate that emotions go hand in hand with dealing with issues on a family farm.

Scenarios appropriate for case studies are many and you will find that a variety of topics lend themselves well to this learning method. Before gathering case studies it is important to identify the educational need that a case study will help address. For example case studies can be used to help illustrate common new farmer problems like locating affordable farm land, accessing start up capital, analyzing the feasibility of an enterprise, pest management challenges and strategies for taking over the family farm. Once the educational need is identified the next step is to generate a list of farmers who best fit the topic area.

Case studies can be written using several methods including interviewing farmers or using a summary of situations that you know of or that are fictitious based on your work with the farm community. You could also ask a farmer to write up the case study based on their experience, a farmer who has a current problem to solve or a farmer who has been through a problem solving experience who wants to share the story.

Often a case study is written from interviews with the person, couple or family who has faced the educational problem. Before gathering the case study information, outline what you want the case study to include and questions you have for the farmer interviewee – if you are doing interviews. Outlining your case study will help assure you collect the most relevant information. The subject of the interview may want their identity disguised and this can be guaranteed by name and location changes. Instructors who consistently use case stories in their teaching repertoire recommend the use of a neutral person who will critique the story for effectiveness and educational content. The interview allows for the collection of rich information and testimonials to use in writing the case study. Case studies can be written from using taped information with the farmer's permission, based on notes taken either by the interviewer and/or a third person who listens and take notes. The usual format for involving and collecting information from farmers is to have an initial phone interview describing the project and why case studies are being collected, asking for the farmers permission to be involved and scheduling time for a face-to-face interview. As writing progresses, additional contacts are normally necessary to follow up on important points or provide clarification. Once the case study is drafted it needs to be provided to the farmer for review and final approval.

Much has been written both in printed form and on the internet on the topic of writing case studies including examples of case studies. Some of these sources are included as references. Common elements of a case study include:

- Introduction including setting and history of the farm
- Description of main characters and personalities involved in the story
- Description of events
- Description of problem(s) and conflict(s)

The ending is usually not an element of a case study. Working through the problems to a workable solution is part of the learning process. However, depending on the goals of the educational program, the real life outcome may be presented at the end to the participants, providing the opportunity to know what happened and speculate if their solution was also feasible.

Using Case Studies with Beginning Farmers

Using case studies works well in a variety of educational settings where discussion with peers is possible so they can grapple with the issues and problems illustrated by the case study. Case studies help the learner apply the concepts to their own situation while working on someone else's problem. Working on your own problem situation can be uncomfortable in a group setting, but the principles of the case study exercise can be applied at home. Using case studies is also a method of stimulating farmer to farmer learning beyond the scheduled educational event. Because case studies involve active involvement and learning by the participants, relationships develop that go beyond the event.

What is a Case Profile?

The case profile is another format that uses real life situations and illustrates what others have done to solve a problem or deal with a multi-faceted situation like a farm transfer. It is a summary of an individual's or families experience around an identified learning topic. Unlike a case study in a case profile the ending and the steps taken to reach the outcome are known. A profile illustrates to the reader that others have tackled the situation and describes their decision-making process and outcomes. A profile can help illustrate a complex process like a farm transfer by showing how others have accomplished the task. Both success and non-success stories are educational and provide significant learning experiences.

Writing Case Profiles

There is less reference material available in print or on the web on case profiles as exists for case studies. However, some GNF members are using case profiles as an educational tool. NY FarnLink is using case profiles to illustrate the farm transfer process in a booklet titled *Profiles of Innovative Farm transfers in New York*. This booklet contains ___ profiles. The guidelines used for collecting and using those profiles are the basis for this information.

A case profile summarizes one story around a topic area - several case profiles can be compiled into a booklet of stories around a similar theme or situation such as

transferring the farm, getting started in farming or accessing start up capital. If compiling profiles into a booklet it is important that each profile include consistent information.

Before gathering case profiles it is important to identify the educational need and beginning farmer audience (end user) that you want the profiles to focus on. The next step is to identify profile situations that would best illustrate and provide a learning opportunity for the beginning farmer reading the profile. For example the NY FarmLink program identified an educational need around highlighting the diversity of farm transfer strategies available to farm owners. The targeted audience was farm owners who contacted the program for assistance in transferring their farm to the next generation. Many had limited information on the various strategies available and to meet this information need in a cost effective manner a booklet of farm transfer profiles was compiled. The booklet is sent to farm owners as introductory information for their review prior to requesting and then receiving personalized follow up assistance.

Once you have identified the educational need and target audience you need to develop a strategy for identifying and collecting profiles. Like case studies profiles are often written from interviews with the person, couple or family who has faced the educational problem. Before gathering the case profile information, outline what you want the case profile to include and questions you have for the farmer interviewee(s). Outlining your case profile will help assure you collect the most relevant information. This outline serves as an interviewer's guide. The NY FarmLink project involved using several interviewers because farmers were profiled across the state and the use of several interviewers allowed the project to be completed in a few months. One editor edited each profile for consistent information and layout. The interviewers outline that NY FarmLink used to gather case profiles is attached for your review.

The interview allows for the collection of rich information and testimonials to use in writing the case study. Case studies can be written from using taped information with the farmer's permission, based on notes taken either by the interviewer and/or a third person who listens and take notes. The usual format for involving and collecting information from farmers is to have an initial phone interview describing the project and why case profiles are being collected, asking for the farmers permission to be involved and scheduling time for a face-to-face interview. As writing progresses, additional contacts are usually required to follow up on important points or provide clarification.

After the interview is set up, the interviewer prepares through the use of the interview guide. This guide helps the interviewer/writer to gather important and consistent information. As a case profile is a type of story, quotes from the farmer and other individuals involved add interest to the profile and help draw the reader into the narrative. Therefore note taking is important. This can be accomplished through tape recording, note taking by the writer, or note-taking by a helper. Interviewing skills are important, with the writer asking open-ended questions that elicit as much information as possible from the interviewee. Once the profile is drafted it needs to be provided to the farmer for review and final approval.

Using Case Profiles with Beginning Farmers

Case profiles lend themselves to both self directed and group learning environments and can be used with a diversity of beginning farmer audiences. Case profiles can be used with prospective farmers to help them gain an appreciation for what

farm career choices are possible and with beginning farmers who are in their early farming years and who could benefit from the experiences of farmers who have encountered similar problems. With the permission of the profile farmer, it is possible for beginning farmers to use the profile farmer as a mentor if contact is allowed and encouraged. Often farmers allow contact information to be shared as part of their profile – always get permission.

Case Profile Example:

Farm Transition Case Profile –Steuben County, New York

Prepared by Steve Richards, Director, NY FarmLink

Synopsis: The following case study is provided as a real example of one type of farm transition. It describes an installment sale transfer of a family farm. The senior generation needed cash from the farm assets for retirement, so they had to sell the farm slowly, over time to the junior generation.

Farm Background

The Owen farm was established in the early 1900s by Dave Owen's grandfather. The sign on the barn says it was built in 1914. Dave's father, Howard, took over the farm from his father and operated it for more than 50 years.

The farm consists of 430 acres (200 tillable and 25 pasture). The original herd was Ayrshire. The barn contains 42 stalls and a loose housing section was added in the mid-1980s that was used for dry cows and later converted for milking cows.

Dave returned to the farm after graduating from high school in 1978 and, except for a two-year interval, has been there since. During Dave's years of working on the farm, he gradually assumed management of the cattle and crops. Dave's parents, Howard and Helen Owen, kept the income in their name, retained the bookkeeping and made the financial decisions.

The Transfer

Howard decided at age 77 it was time to turn over ownership of the farm to Dave, who had been supplying most of the labor and making many of the day-to-day management decisions. The goal was to keep the farm in the family and provide for Howard's and Helen's retirement. Howard remained active on the farm until his death in 1999 at age 80, at which time Dave's wife, Pat, increased her labor contribution.

The Owens knew cow numbers had to be increased to make the farm transfer cash flow. The decision was made to expand the farm in stages. Starting in 1996, every heifer calf was kept for expansion, then a new barn was built, and, finally, a parlor. This required moving cows between barns to be milked.

Financial methods

The farm transfer process began in 1996 with Howard and Helen gifting half of the cattle to Dave and Pat and selling the remainder to them on a three-year contract. The gifting of the cattle gave Dave something for his “sweat equity” in the farm and made the cattle payments affordable. He had worked for a wage during his years on the farm and owned no farm assets. Dave’s parents wanted to structure the payments so the farm would survive the transfer. In 1999, after the cattle were paid for, Dave and Pat began paying for the equipment on a three-year contract. This year, (2003) the real estate will be transferred through a mortgage held by Helen, with Helen retaining lifetime use of the house.

Howard and Helen had no retirement funds other than Social Security and needed the farm payments for living expenses. At the same time they wanted Dave to succeed, so part of the transfer plan was to find a way to accomplish both. This was done by not charging interest on the cattle and equipment contracts. In addition, no rent for real estate and equipment was charged, and the parents paid the school and property taxes. Interest on the real estate mortgage will be gifted back to Dave and Pat. This arrangement has allowed new buildings to be constructed, equipment to be improved, and cattle numbers to be increased since 1996.

Legal methods

The Owens used three legal methods used during the transfer process. There were sales contracts for the cattle and equipment and a mortgage for the land. Helen’s will states that if she dies before the mortgage is paid, Dave will settle the balance with his sisters. Finally, Helen has appointed one of Dave’s sisters as a durable power of attorney. Dave’s sisters had no input into the farm transfer; only some knowledge of how it was structured.

The transfer team

Dave and Pat had an attorney draw up the bill of sale, the power of attorney, and the individual wills. They felt putting more in writing would prevent problems later. They consulted with Cornell Cooperative Extension prior to and during the transfer process. New York FarmNet did a financial analysis of the farm and estimated that the cash needed for family expenses would be limited, even with the proposed expansion. In spite of this, the Owens decided to commence the farm transfer and do without some family expenses, like health insurance.

Another goal was to reduce the cost of the transfer. By keeping the financing within the family there were no “bank” costs, and by spreading income over several years there were minimum tax consequences for Howard and Helen. The attorney fees were the only cost. When the mortgage is finalized, there will be some minimal filing costs.

The Future

Today the herd is one-third Ayrshire and two-thirds Holstein. A Cover-All free stall barn was built in 1999. For three years, cows were walked over to the old barn for milking before a holding area and parlor was constructed in 2002. In 2000, the Owens switched to rotational grazing, building fencing and a pond and installing a water system. Pasture

acreage has been increased, and the neighboring farm rented. At present the Owens are milking 82 cows and have 52 heifers. Dave and Pat provide almost all labor with only minimum part-time help.

They plan to add room for pregnant cows in one section of the old barn and improve their calf raising. A heifer barn also is in their plans. At present, heifers are housed outside. More fencing will be installed. Improving crop yields and quality are a major goal.

Dave and Pat feel the transfer will be a success when the mortgage is paid off. Financially, they are better off than before, but at a price. With more cattle and no more labor, they are working longer hours, which decreases the amount of time they can spend with their children.

Learning experiences

Dave would do the transfer again because it kept the farm in the family. Pat says the work is too much and the family is suffering and would not do it again unless some way was found to pay for an employee. As debt is paid down they hope to hire more labor and increase family time. The children have horses and a separate horse barn is being discussed.

Overall the transfer went as expected. But both generations agree that something should have been done sooner to start the farm transfer process. The parents were reluctant to give up control of the finances, and while Dave wanted to do something sooner, he was hesitant to force the issue. As the parents aged, there was concern about what would happen to the farm if either of them had to enter a nursing home. This concern was a major reason for beginning the transfer. But even then, there were issues that had to be worked out, which took some time.

Dave said that having experience with the finances was a problem when he took over. He was aware of the size of the milk checks but had no idea of the amount of the expenses. His advice to anyone considering a transfer is to be involved beforehand in the business end as well as the production end.

Case Study Example:

Matt Sawyer, The Sawyer Farm: Case Profile

Prepared by Steve Richards, Director, NY FarmLink

Matt and Darcy Sawyer have been dairy farming together for 8 years and have used intensive grazing since the beginning. They currently milk about 70 cows on their farm near Locke, New York.

Matt Sawyer started his dairy career as a milk inspector for Sunnydale Farms in 1989. In 1991 Matt met Darcy and they were married in 1992. Darcy was interested in starting a dairy farm, and within two months they started milking cows on a rented farm in Greene, New York. At this location they were milking about 24 cows in a tie stall/stanchion barn with a dump station. The Sawyers quickly decided that this was a lot of work for Darcy, especially with Matt's full-time job at Sunnydale. By early 1993, they had sold the herd of cows and started looking for a new farm site.

In 1994, Matt and Darcy found the ideal site—about 17 acres in Cayuga County. After purchasing the land, they moved a mobile home onto the site and the two set to work building their own freestall barn with a home-made flat barn double 6 parlor. Soon after the barn was completed, Darcy gave birth to their son, Jesse.

As the herd continued to grow, Matt and Darcy built a new double 9 swing parlor in 1998. Matt also decided that he needed to spend more time on the farm and quit his job as a milk inspector in 1999. By 2000, the Sawyers were milking 50 cows on their new farm.

Grazing

The Sawyers started grazing in Greene, New York because their operation was very labor intensive. The farm they had rented had no silo, so all forage harvested had to be dry hay. Being short of help (Matt still had his full time job) and having old equipment, they decided to turn the cows out after the first hay cutting. Although the pastures were large and the grasses native, the cows did relatively well. In fact, the only problem they encountered that first year were deer running through their pasture fences. The pasture system at this first location consisted of a few large paddocks divided with a single wire.

Since moving to their current location in 1994, the Sawyers have intensified their pasture management. Currently, the pasture is divided into several large subdivisions with the cows being given fresh grass each day. Water is provided to the cows in every paddock and the cows are supplemented with a TMR (consisting of corn silage, corn meal, and a protein supplement) as well as free choice dry hay. They keep track of pasture quality through daily visual assessment that is recorded in their feeding records. They are very satisfied with using pasture and feel that it is a key to their farm's profitability. As their farm has expanded, they have needed to alter their pasture management to meet the herd's needs while maintaining high quality forage. However, grazing will certainly be a part of the farm's future.

Management Style

Matt and Darcy's mission is to provide a reasonable living for their family by doing what they enjoy most—farming. They characterize their management style as medium production with low input cost, which includes a very low debt-load. The Sawyers rent most of their land and only own equipment that they use frequently, making use of custom operators for hay and corn harvesting.

Extensive record keeping has allowed the Sawyers to track their progress and make good management decisions. Keeping milk income over feed cost as high as possible is one of their main goals. To achieve this goal, Matt and Darcy record daily milk production and feeding information to calculate their feed costs per hundredweight on a monthly basis. When faced with a management decision, they refer to their records and decide what changes will result in the highest margin possible between milk income and feed costs. While the Sawyers don't find record keeping as one of the most enjoyable aspects of farming, they have found it necessary to make good management decisions.

Future Goals

Matt and Darcy are very happy with the way things have progressed. Currently, they are striving to make their herd seasonal. Not only will this provide some time off during the winter, but will allow them to manage the cows and calves more efficiently. As of 2001, they have expanded the herd up to 70 cows and plan to stay at this size for the foreseeable future.

Case Study Questions:

Identify the keys to success for these beginning farmers.

Identify the challenges that this couple will have to address over the next 3-5 years as their farming career progresses.

Gathering Case Profiles: Example of Interview outline and questions

Prepared by Steve Richard, NY FarmLink & Cathy Sheils, NY FarmNet

Business Transfer Case Story Questions

Case Profile Outline: To achieve continuity and consistency of information collected and for booklet design, each farm is asked to answer the provided interview questions outlined within this booklet. Make sure to ask the questions of all the parties involved in the transfer. Some of the questions may seem to pertain to the owner more directly than the younger generation; ask the questions of each unless specifically labeled "Senior" or "Junior" Generation. You are also encouraged to ask additional questions as they come

up throughout the interview. Use the back of the pages for additional notes. The more information collected the better!

Profiles of Innovative Farm Transfers in New York

Project Outcome: A booklet that features a collection of profiles that depict the many facets of farm transfers in New York, compiled and published for use by Cornell University's outreach programs.

Project Audience: The booklet's primary audiences are farm owners or next generation farm owners who are in the pre or early stages of a farm transfer and who are searching for information, ideas, strategies and contacts.

How Project will be completed: CCE Educators and FarmNet Consultants will select members of a farm transfer situation (both generations preferred), conduct a face to face interview with those members and write up a draft profile that depicts a farm transfer situation. *Transfer is defined many ways, but for the purposes of this study the farm transfer scenarios must involve either a complete transfer of management and/or assets. You will have to choose the situation that depicts one of the variety of transfers that are needed to make the booklet as well-rounded as possible.*

Compensation: Each Cooperative Extension Association and FarmNet consultant participating will receive *\$250.00 per interview questionnaire and draft profile completed*. Payments will be made when an invoice with a completed interview questionnaire and draft profile is received. Farm families that participate will receive a small gift.

Timeline: Invoices, questionnaires, and drafts need to be sent to Steve Richards, NY FarmLink at str4@cornell.edu by *January 15, 2003*.

Guidelines for gathering profiles:

Select a farm transfer scenario in your region. Scenario needs to depict a transfer from one generation to the next or between two parties. *The transfer can be between family members, non-family members, owner to lessees, owners to farm managers, owners to farm employees etc. We would prefer to have a good mix of small and large farms as well as products other than dairy. For this study, we are requesting 12 general categories of transfers:*

Farm Transfer Success Scenarios (6)*

- Transfer by Selling/Leasing Assets
- Transfer through Inheritance/Gifting (senior generation may not be around).

- Transfer through an Intermediary (trusts, conservation easements, life insurance, like kind exchanges, etc.)
- Transfer through a business structure (stock in corporations, partnership share in LLC or partnerships).
- Combination of the above methods or “other scenarios” (up to 2 of these scenarios are available for interviewing. Have to be different from one another—will have to coordinate with FarmLink to get the right examples).

****Topics will be available on a first come, first serve basis. Only one topic per association or FarmNet consultant unless there is a shortage of volunteers—then its all fair game***

Farm Transfer Horror Story Scenarios (6)*

* These may involve just one generation or another and may not follow the interview questionnaire exactly.

- Farm transfer gone awry when selling/leasing assets
- Farm transfer gone awry with inheritance transfers
- Farm transfer through an intermediary gone awry
- Farm transfer through a business structure gone awry.
- “Other” horror stories methods (up to 2 of these scenarios are available for interviewing. Have to be different from one another—will have to coordinate with FarmLink to get the right examples).

****Topics will be available on a first come, first serve basis. Only one topic per association or FarmNet consultant unless there is a shortage of volunteers—then its all fair game***

- Contact the potential farmer interviewees and discuss the project and the reason they have been selected to be interviewed. Share with them that the focus of the interview is to gather information related to their farm transfer and that the information collected will be written up as an educational piece to be used by other farmers who have not yet transferred their farm. Make sure the parties know that the interview will be written up in a profile that will be published.
- Check with the parties first about their comfort level with their profile being written up and published. Ideally it is best to be able to use the families name in the published profile, if your first contact is not comfortable with using their name please contact another. If you are finding that the parties you are contacting are uncomfortable with their profiles being written up using their names, then the profile can be written without using their name, although features of the profile may be identifiable to readers. Confidentiality may not be 100%.
- Set up a time to meet with the interviewees at a location convenient for them. You may want to interview the two transfer parties together or separately depending on their preference, timing and compatibility in meeting together.

- ❑ Meet with interviewees. Introduce yourself and the project again. Reassure interviewees that they will be able to review the profile before final printing and that you will make sure to capture their responses as accurately as possible. Thank the interviewees for their time and commitment to the project.
- ❑ You can choose to take hand written notes or tape record the interview. Tape recording assures you capture all of the information, but may be time consuming because the information needs to be transcribed. If you choose to take hand written notes it may be difficult to capture the entire conversation or truly listen to the responses. Another option is to take a colleague along with you for taking notes so you can ask the questions and fully listen to the dialogue. When taking notes please try to capture at least one or two quotes – quotes will be highlighted in the profiles and are very powerful educational statements.
- ❑ As a guide, interview questions have been provided below. Try to ask all of the questions, but use your discretion as to the appropriateness of each question for the situation. Make sure to ask open-ended questions, questions that cannot be answered by a yes or no response. Open-ended questions create more dialogue and will allow you to capture greater responses. Also please ask questions that you may have that are not provided and ask questions during the interview that come up during the conversation. If you are not clear with interviewees responses it is important to check in with the interviewees ie. Have I heard you correctly, is this what you said? I want to make sure I heard you correctly, is this what you said.....?
- ❑ When writing up your draft profile, please follow the study questions provided. The more information you provide the better, all draft profiles will be edited before final printing. You will be sent the edited version so you can have your farmer interviewees review it prior to printing.
- ❑ If you wish to take the farm family's picture, it would greatly help the final publication. If the family agrees to a picture, you will have to have them sign a permission form (available through the FarmNet office).

Case Information Worksheet

Farm Family Contact Information:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Participant
Number

Participants in Transfer/Farm Operation Profiles:

1 Name: _____

Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____

Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

2 Name: _____

Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____

Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

3 Name: _____

Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____
Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

4

Name: _____
Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____
Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

5

Name: _____
Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____
Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

6

Name: _____
Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____
Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

7

Name: _____
Age: _____ Relationship to parties in the business: _____
Years in Farming: _____ Years involved in the operation being transferred: _____

Business History

Past: What is the history of your farm.

Present: Describe the farming operation today.

Future: The vision for the future of the farm.

Farm Transfer Planning

When did the farm transfer process begin? _____

Who/What prompted the farm transfer? _____

Who is the farm being transferred to? _____

Participant
Number

What were your goals for the Farm Transfer? Have they been realized?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Transfer Mechanics: Overview

Describe your farm transfer (how did the entering farmer enter, how did the exiting farmer reduce involvement, what were the reasons you selected the method of farm transfer that you did?):_____

Management Authority:

- Livestock: _____
- Young stock: _____
- Cropping Operations: _____
- Book Keeping and Financial Decisions: _____
- Other: _____

Non-land Assets:

- Livestock: _____
- Young stock: _____
- Equipment: _____
- Buildings/Facilities: _____
- Other (describe): _____

Land/Personal Property:

- Tillable Acreage: _____
- Non-Tillable Acreage: _____
- Farm House: _____
- Other: _____

What was the *order* of transfer?

Management Authority

Livestock: _____
Young stock: _____
Crops: _____
Financial: _____
Other: _____

Non Land Assets

Livestock: _____
Young stock: _____
Equipment: _____
Buildings: _____
Other: _____

Land Assets

Tillable Ac: _____
Non-till Ac: _____
Farm House: _____
Other: _____

Is the Farm Transfer Complete?

YES

NO

What still needs to be transferred OR what will not be transferred? Describe

Management Authority:

- Livestock: _____
- Young stock: _____
- Cropping Operations: _____
- Book Keeping and Financial Decisions: _____
- Other: _____

Non-land assets:

- Livestock: _____
- Young stock: _____
- Equipment: _____
- Buildings/Facilities: _____
- Other (describe): _____

Land/Personal Property:

- Tillable Acreage: _____
- Non-Tillable Acreage: _____
- Farm House: _____
- Other: _____

If there are still items to transfer, what will be the *order* of transfer in the future?

Management Authority

Livestock: _____
Young stock: _____
Crops: _____
Financial: _____
Other: _____

Non Land Assets

Livestock: _____
Young stock: _____
Equipment: _____
Buildings: _____
Other: _____

Land Assets

Tillable Ac: _____
Non-till Ac: _____
Farm House: _____
Other: _____

Transfer Mechanics: Financial

What were your main financial concerns going into the transfer? _____

Which financial methods were used to transfer the business? Check all that apply

- Sale of assets
- Leasing of assets
- Gifting of assets
- Assets will be transferred through inheritance (will/estate plan)
- Transfer of assets through an intermediary device:
 - Tax Savings Trusts
 - Property Control Trusts
 - Life Insurance Tools
 - Conservation Easements
 - Other (Like Kind exchanges, Medicaid trusts, etc.)

Was a financial analysis completed to determine farm viability? _____

Who completed the analysis? _____

What was each party's financial standing prior to the transfer? Describe

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6

7

Senior Generation: Were retirement issues addressed before the transfer? _____
Should retirement have been addressed sooner? _____

Senior Generation: Do you have an outside source of funds for retirement? _____

- IRA, 401K, SEP, etc.
- Spouse's Retirement Plan
- Other: _____

Senior Generation: What are some concerns you still have about retirement?

What was your strategy, if any, to minimize taxes (due to farm transfer)? _____

Did you have an accountant review your farm transfer plans? _____

Did you have trouble cash-flowing the farm transfer? _____ **Explain:** _____

Did you have to expand in order to transfer the business? _____ **Explain:** _____

What were the key financial pitfalls encountered during the transfer?

- Taxes: _____
- Cash-flow: _____
- Expansion: _____
- Who owned the assets: _____
- Retirement: _____
- Junior needed more \$\$: _____
- Inheritance of other siblings: _____
- Other

Transfer Mechanics: Legal

What were your main legal concerns going into the transfer? _____

Which legal methods were used to transfer the business? Check all that apply

- Sales contracts
- Lease agreements
- Wills/Estate Plans
- Formation of Trusts
- A New Business Entity Formation (**what was it before?** _____)
 - Partnership
 - Limited Liability Company (LLC)
 - C Corporation
 - S Corporation
- Buy/Sell Agreement
- Operating Agreement

Which methods were used to plan for the incapacity/death of a business owner?

- Designated a durable Power of Attorney for finances/health care
- Designated beneficiaries on payable on death accounts
- An up to date will
- Life Insurance

- Long Term Care Insurance
- A living trust or other means to avoid probate

Did you put all your business transfer agreements in writing? _____ How much was based on trust? _____

Did you have an attorney review your business transfer plans? _____

Do you wish that you had used an attorney or a different attorney? _____

Transfer Mechanics: Relationships

Senior Generation: What were the key considerations in giving up control of the farm? _____

Junior Generation: What were the key considerations in gaining management or equity in the farm business? _____

How did the transfer affect your working relationships? _____

How did the transfer affect your family relationships? _____

Did conflict arise during the farm transfer process? _____ What were the conflicts and how did you deal with them? _____

How did you involve your family members in the farm transfer process? _____

How well did you communicate with your family members about the transfer? _____

Did you have help facilitating family discussions? _____ Who? _____

Do you wish you did? _____

Advice to Other Farm Businesses

Could you have been better prepared before the transfer? _____

What resources have you found helpful during your farm transfer? _____

What other programs or resources would be helpful in assisting in farm transfers?

Did the transfer go differently than you expected it to go? _____ Was it more difficult than you expected? _____.

What aspects of the business transfer were the most difficult? _____

If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently (same)? _____

What aspects of the business transfer were critical to the success of the transfer?

How will/do you know that your farm transfer is successful? _____

Senior Generation: What would you like to share with other farm owners who are considering transferring the farm to a younger generation? _____

Younger Generation: What would you like to share with other young people who are considering working into a farm transfer arrangement? _____

Would you be willing to speak with other farmers who have questions related to transferring the farm? _____.