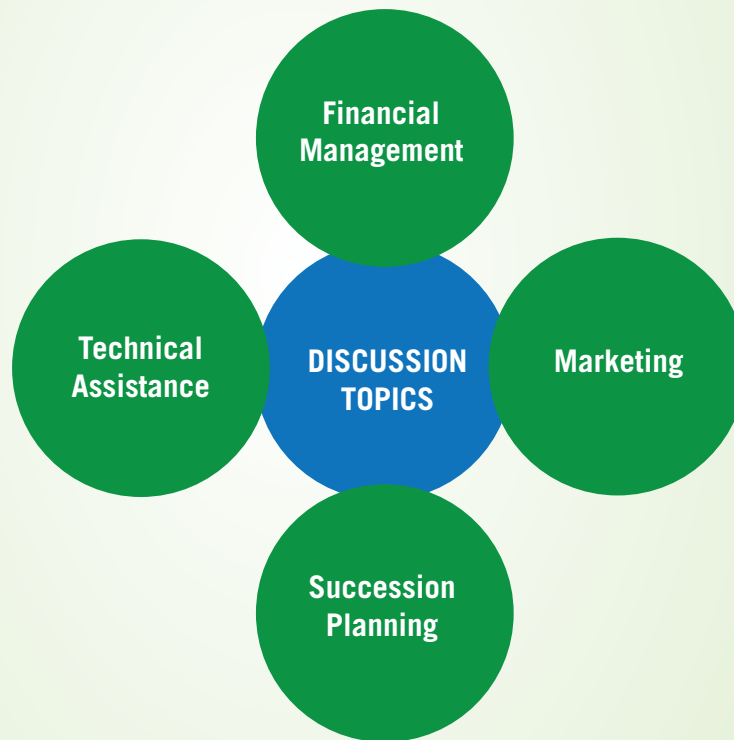


*Minority Landowner
Magazine*
5th Anniversary Conference

CONFERENCE REPORT



Creating the Farm Turnaround Team

February 24-26, 2011
Raleigh Marriott Crabtree Valley
Raleigh, North Carolina

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 5 |
| Financial Management | |
| Top priority issues for Financial Management | 7 |
| Problems & Solutions | 8 |
| Technical Assistance | |
| Top priority issues for Technical Assistance | 19 |
| Problems & Solutions | 20 |
| Marketing | |
| Top priority issues for Marketing | 25 |
| Problems & Solutions | 25 |
| Succession Planning | |
| Top priority issues for Succession Planning | 33 |
| Problems & Solutions | 33 |
| Appendix A – Financial Management | 37 |
| Appendix B – Technical Assistance | 43 |
| Appendix C – Marketing | 49 |
| Appendix D – Succession Planning | 51 |
| Appendix E – 2011 Conference Program | 53 |
| Acknowledgements | 59 |

INTRODUCTION

By Victor L. Harris, publisher and editor, *Minority Landowner*

Minority Landowner magazine has an audience of minority and limited resource farmers, ranchers and forest landowners (hereafter referenced collectively as farmers) across the country. Its mission is to provide information on the people, places, programs and events that can help minority farmers improve the productivity of their land management operation. A more productive operation will lead to a more profitable operation. And a profitable operation is one that is less susceptible to the pressures and stresses that lead to land loss.

On February 24-26, 2011, *Minority Landowner* celebrated its fifth anniversary by hosting a conference in Raleigh, North Carolina for farmers across the country. Over 250 farmers and resource professionals attended the event, representing 16 states. The conference theme was “Creating the Farm Turnaround Team.”

The Process

Farming is a business, and we stressed the importance of farmers recognizing that operating a farm means they are operating a business. Although many factors play a role in the success or failure of a business, the conference focused on four issues that can hinder a farmer’s ability to be successful. They are financial management, technical assistance, marketing, and succession planning.

Rather than use the traditional conference format of having professional experts stand in front of the farmers and tell them “these are the problems you have and this is how you should fix them,” we wanted to hear what the farmers had to say. Farmers live with challenges every day, and they probably have a pretty good idea on how to solve many of these issues.

Upon registration, attendees were divided into four groups, representing each of the four issues to be addressed. During the course of the 3-day conference, participants rotated with their assigned team through the four breakout sessions: Financial Management, Technical Assistance, Marketing, and Succession Planning.

Trained facilitators were present in each breakout session to guide participants through the **problem identification** and **solution generation** phases of discussion. Within the four groups, facilitators divided each team into smaller roundtables of 10-15. Recorders were present at each table to collect the issues and solutions generated during the discussion.

The first question posed was, “What are the issues relative to ‘this topic’ that hinder your ability to be successful?” For 90 minutes, “issues” were discussed and recorded at each roundtable, followed by each roundtable prioritizing the top five issues from their list.

Following a break, each roundtable spent the next 90 minutes discussing solutions to their top five problems. The question asked was, “You’ve said these are the issues that hinder your ability to be successful. How do we solve these issues?”

The issues and solutions generated in the breakout sessions comprise this report, and are the foundation for creating the Farm Turnaround Team.

The Farm Turnaround Team

Resource agencies and professionals do a great job generating information that can improve the opportunities of success for minority and limited resource farmers. Often it’s not a matter of available resources, it is more a matter of interpretation, access and delivery of that information to the farmer.

The Farm Turnaround Team will consist of resource professionals representing each of the four areas of financial management, technical assistance, marketing and succession planning. The Team will be available to farmers who request their service, at no charge. The Team will be comprised of individuals representing state and federal agencies, private enterprises, and the nonprofit sector.

The idea of providing this expertise to farmers is not new. For example, a state forestry agency will provide detailed technical assistance to a farmer and provide guidance in managing their forestland. However, that forester does not provide guidance on financial management or succession planning. Nor should they be expected to do so. A loan manager may suggest improved methods for financial recordkeeping, but he or she is not expected to recommend appropriate nutrient levels in soils.

The Farm Turnaround Team takes assistance that is currently provided in isolation, and creates a process to better serve the farmer by providing that assistance in a comprehensive manner.

And, the Team doesn’t ask the farmer to come to them, the Team goes down to the family farm, sits at the kitchen table, conducts a comprehensive assessment of the farm family enterprise, identifies deficiencies and inefficiencies in the operation, and provides a comprehensive strategy for turning things around. What happens in one area can affect what happens in another area. The Team approach to supporting farmers helps eliminate the voids that can occur when decisions and recommendations are made in isolation. Follow up with the farmer will be built into the process, but farmer access to the Team will be available whenever needed.

During the conference, several farmers expressed interest in the Farm Turnaround Team coming out to their farm to assist them in turning things around. And, several resource professionals expressed interest in bringing the Farm Turnaround Team concept to their states.

The Farm Turnaround Team will be piloted in North Carolina, and then developed in other states across the country.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

In this breakout session, farmers were divided into small groups of 10-15 to generate a list of problems/challenges/issues they face relative to financial management that hinder their ability to be successful. Below is a comprehensive list of the priority issues that all four teams identified. Following this list are the solutions farmers generated to address these priority issues. See Appendix A for a complete list of issues related to financial management.

TOP PRIORITY ISSUES FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. Training and education
2. Lack of knowledge by landowners and decision makers; limited access to information
3. Lack of networking and cooperation; many farmers don't network and work cooperatively to increase their capacity
4. Farmers are not aware of opportunities through grants (federal, state, local) and through technology (programs, tools)
5. Not knowing of available financial assistance and if they qualify for certain loans and cost-sharing programs
6. Issues of tradition
7. Many farmers don't understand the value of including the whole family in the business; lack of understanding and value of family structure and input
8. Bookkeeping/Accounting deficiencies; lack of organizational skills; ineffective recordkeeping
9. Farming is a business (some farmers don't treat their farms as businesses, so they make business errors - like mixing business finances with personal finances)
10. Poor income generation; lower income expectations
11. Limited ability to manage capital
12. Lack of collateral and equity
13. Limited knowledge of the market value of the land
14. Not having a business plan
15. Not having a financial plan
16. Not expensing own labor
17. Many farmers lack understanding of the purposes and value of insurance
18. Lack of affordable crop insurance
19. Lack of crop diversity
20. Lack of marketing skill and knowledge of the target audience
21. Because of scale issues, buying power drops for smaller farmers
22. It is difficult for small landowners to deal with an uncertain market
23. Issues around contracting crops
24. Credit, debt, and tax trouble (Many farmers lack necessary credit to handle their purchasing needs)
25. High start-up and maintenance costs

26. Operational expenses and input costs are too high (supplies, labor, etc.)
27. Lack of labor
28. Farmers breaking even financially annually
29. Small farmers can't meet government regulations and policies
30. Not knowing how/when to provide input to the Farm Bill
31. Lack of easy access to operating capital
32. Not enough funding for small farmers
33. Discrimination in lending
34. The need for simpler loan processes and addressing over-collateralization
35. Applying for grants and loans: Knowing how to apply and the limitations of the grant
36. No mini-grants available

PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

1. Training and education

- Connect landowners to the Cooperative Extension Service for computer programs and applications. Recognize that some landowners (or their parents) have trust issues with Cooperative Extension and may be wary of using their services. This may require using a new entity to do the outreach to landowners that Cooperative Extension traditionally does
- Connect landowners to FSA programs
- Establish relevant Congressional contacts
- Find an entity or an opportunity to hold a session to address rural issues with legislative aides
- Create opportunities for new farmers to shadow seasoned farmers
- Encourage landowners to be self-learners
- Create a beginning farm and farmer manual (hard copies and via the web)
- Provide a seminar for farmers and a Farmer's Field Day (training outside) to teach the community and emerging farmers
- Encourage farmers to understand the value of attending trainings and meetings, even if it means not working in the field
- Conduct workshops directly on the farm, in local agencies, through conferences, USDA land-grant universities, community centers, community colleges, and through social networking
- Provide training on risk management, cost-shares, and USDA programs
- Provide subsidies for farmers to attend training
- Need training on cash flow, tax laws, and grant writing. Integrate them into conference more intensively and specifically

2. Lack of knowledge by landowners and decision makers; limited access to information

- Encourage more networking, communication, and collaboration among individual landowners
- Encourage the greater use of the Internet and technology by landowners

- Provide training on effective recordkeeping
 - Provide training on various computer programs
 - Encourage landowners to attend conferences and meetings about land/farm/forest issues
 - Connect landowners to local agriculture agencies about their needs
 - Provide trainings to landowners on new trends, creative crops, production to stay current, and other ideas to stay ahead of the curve
- 3. Lack of networking and cooperation; many farmers don't network and work cooperatively to increase their capacity**
- Look for farm Service Center, Cooperative Extension, local universities—get on mailing lists
 - Get educated: inform farmers of benefits of networking
 - Identify business and individual agencies
 - Attend night school
- 4. Farmers are not aware of opportunities through grants (federal, state, local) and through technology (programs, tools)**
- Promote Agency outreach in communities to small farmers through churches & other community-based organizations
 - Help farmers fill out paperwork
 - Reach out to grantors/1890 institution program managers
 - Use Internet resources (e.g. USDA website)
 - Attend farmers' meetings (CSAs, cooperatives)
 - "Education" at USDA.gov
 - Look at FSA, local, and state grants
 - Visit FSA and NRCS offices
 - Form community network, share what you learn with others, do farmer-to-farmer outreach
- 5. Not knowing of available financial assistance and if they qualify for certain loans and cost-sharing programs**
- Visit FSA and NRCS and establish relationship
 - Know what/who/how to ask. Talk with those who have previously used the agency
 - Agency publications need to be simplified, should inform, and assist with application preparation
 - Agencies need to hold more public forums to meet and assist those they serve
 - Landowner incentive with agencies—be an informed participant, be persistent!
- 6. Issues of tradition**
- Encourage landowners to become educated on available resources as if they were beginning farmers
 - Help farmers conduct market assessments of traditional family crops

- Assist landowners in doing estate planning
 - Help landowners separate homesteads from production lands
 - Get seasoned farmers to mentor younger and newer farmers, showing them their mistakes and educating them on issues and innovations
7. **Many farmers don't understand the value of including the whole family in the business; lack of understanding and value of family structure and input**
- Identify talents and interests of family members and plug them in as appropriate. Provide education on farm value, consequences, projected outcomes to show results
 - Bring in children and spouse with better handle on technology. Make them feel a part of the farm enterprise
8. **Bookkeeping/Accounting deficiencies; lack of organizational skills; ineffective recordkeeping**
- Encourage landowners to check with the Cooperative Extension Service to see if classes on recordkeeping are available
 - Solicit university interns and retirees to assist landowners with recordkeeping
 - Encourage landowners to take ownership around their recordkeeping while helping them understand the value of maintaining good records
 - Work with established grassroots groups and other local entities where trust with landowners is already established
 - Get family members (children, spouse, grandchildren) involved in business
 - Use free classes offered by 1890s and other land grant institutions for business owners (e.g., QuickBooks). Ask for 1890 program manager
 - Be current with recordkeeping. Use receipt books to track sales. Learn to balance records and checkbooks
 - Simply start with records, develop an orderly system. Learn to analyze records
 - Maintain responsible use of credit cards
 - Get training in personal financial planning (e.g., Dave Ramsey, financial planner/talk show host)
 - Establish better relationship with your accountant. Use professional accountant/bookkeeping services who have agriculture background
 - Attend recordkeeping training workshops
 - Create budget on spreadsheet and then computerize it to help maintain and balance budgets
 - Use 1040; put it on spreadsheet. Include total for taxes for produce
9. **Farming is a business (some farmers don't treat their farms as businesses, so they make business errors - like mixing business finances with personal finances)**
- Encourage farmers to pay themselves first
 - Encourage farmers to invest in a tax preparer or CPA
 - Assist farmers to monitor profit gains and losses regularly
 - Assist farmers to invest in certified seeds

- Encourage farmers to buy in bulk
- Assist farmers to “lock-in” prices that have been quoted. Get contracts on prices when they are established
- Encourage farmers to take soil samples
- Form LLC so farm is separate from personal in order to reduce risk to personal assets. Family reunions can be a business expense—travel can be a write-off
- Transition from only identifying farming as an identity and passion; describe the farm as an entrepreneurial enterprise
- Share the financial value of the farm with family; be honest with yourself about it
- Make sure that the family is involved in the process; delegate responsibilities to youth such as computer research, Internet-related work. Share the vision; get buy-in from family members
- Manage risk
- Get a tax consultant, CPA
- Have a financial plan

10. Poor income generation; lower income expectations

- Encourage good recordkeeping and research by farm owners on their products
- Reduce the production risk for farmers by encouraging drip irrigation, black plastic or row covers, crop insurance, soil tests, and pest control efforts
- Create business plans, written as road map
- Critique and adjust as you move forward
- Start small and expand as your income allows
- Don't over extend financially

11. Limited ability to manage capital

- Learn how to interpret financial data and use computer software
- Consult with experts in the area (accountants and attorneys)
- Be able to research and locate best practices
- Establish internal controls (have several people who handle the finances)
- Risk management

12. Lack of collateral and equity

- Being careful about what is being used as collateral
- Look for programs that offer affordable loans and require less collateral
- Clean your credit

13. Limited knowledge of the market value of the land

- Seek services of local foresters
- Get a forestry management plan
- Hire a professional broker
- Find out who your local tax assessor is. Check the local millage rate and know what the property is valued at

14. Not having a business plan

- Review existing plans for other operations
- Make time for it! Sometimes it's better to make money outside the tractor seat than in it
- Know who will help with development of management plan (farm management specialist)
- Invite representative to your property (this will help to include expert input)
- Go to 1890 or 1862 colleges, nonprofits and for-profit organizations for referrals and resources
- Know location, accessibility, safety of farm
- Know local and state ordinances & zoning
- Utilize Internet and library to find out how to build the plan
- Write a business plan or get a professional who knows how to write it for you. Include a budget
- Know how to do your business projection
- Include a contingency plan
- Support programs, organizations, and individuals that help landowners create realistic and constantly up-to-date business plans
- Take workshops/classes at community colleges
- Learn to pay for professional services. Invest in your business
- Build relationships with grant officers
- In November/December, check your financial situation in relation to taxes

15. Not having a financial plan

- Utilize 1890 institutions, universities (services through Ag Dept.), 4H, FFA
- Utilize Cooperative Extension for help with farms and planning, farm management agents
- Contact an accountant or consultant for farm financials
- Need back up plans, insurance, incorporation, LLCs, tax wisdom

16. Not expensing own labor

- Cost out owner's labor, either hourly or salary. Include this amount in the budget along with social security, health care, and life insurance
- Have a life insurance policy large enough to cover farm debt and take care of the family

17. Many farmers lack understanding of the purposes and value of insurance

- Get education on the benefits of insurance
- Identify all resources in community for mutual benefit
- Get involved in group or co-op to ensure proper size

18. Lack of affordable crop insurance

- It is essential to the start of any production. Include in budget—require it!

19. Lack of crop diversity

- Encourage farmers to recognize the supply and demand issues related to crop diversity through training and coaching
- Encourage farmers to look to row crops, truck crops, forestry, and meats as potential markets
- Support assessments by farmers of demographics and target audiences for potential crops
- Help farmers conduct assessments of their current equipment and how it might support potential crops
- Help farmers evaluate the potential of renting row crop space

20. Lack of marketing skill and knowledge of the target audience

- Start Community Supported Agriculture organizations (CSAs)
- Help farmers have on-farm storage, such as cold storage, grain bins, etc.
- Help farmers better time when to plant their products
- Use cooperatives to help market individual farm products
- Help landowners use the DTN marketing computer
- Help landowners use Internet-based marketing
- Utilize NC A&T, Cooperative Extension, and NC State University as resources
- Check stock markets for commodity pricing (need computer access)
- Develop and foster relationships with other business owners who do the same or similar kind of farming
- Use census bureau to define audience
- Know your radius and your limitations
- Understand need for flexible supply due to demand

21. Because of scale issues, buying power drops for smaller farmers

- Establish relationships with other farmers
- Take advantage of early purchasing discounts
- Develop cooperative buying and then buy in bulk

22. It is difficult for small landowners to deal with an uncertain market

- Use of contracts and insurance
- Diversify commodities
- Establish co-ops and pools
- Minimize risk (be aware of trends, external forces); have insurance
- Understand the global market and influences of world weather, prices, etc.
- Stay ahead of the game

23. Issues around contracting crops

- Ensure enough product to cover contract (don't underestimate yourself)
- Study market before booking (stock market, product need or demand)
- Personal order and contract (pre-contracting): restaurants, hotels
- Use Internet to channel other markets

24. Credit, debt, and tax trouble (many farmers lack necessary credit to handle their purchasing needs)

- Provide training to landowners on how to better understand and manage their credit, debt load, and tax situation
- Keep and update regular finance reports
- Provide training on budgeting; if you can't pay for it, do without it
- Start establishing credit as early as possible
- Assess who you owe and how much
- Be responsible and willing to go broke (and be broke)
- Consider leasing vs. buying

25. High start-up and maintenance costs

- Encourage better financial planning and recordkeeping
- Create a manageable workload
- Provide mentoring
- Support Farm Start programs
- Provide training on money management and price setting versus price taking
- Help individual farmers to share equipment and network with other farmers
- Help farmers to use the Internet to shop for used equipment
- Train landowners to custom hire expertise if they don't have the required equipment or expertise themselves
- Help individual landowners form a cooperative or belong to a co-op (borrow money from within, land is collateral)
- Establish a credit source
- Seek family investments
- Contractor sales
- Apply for grants (e.g., SARE, RAFI)
- Enroll in existing programs (FSA, NRCS, USDA)

26. Operational expenses and input costs are too high (supplies, labor, etc.)

- Use of cooperatives & group purchases
- Use of alternative financial agencies
- Use the Internet
- Convert farmland into real estate for collateral
- Market cropping
 - Co-op of multiple farmers invest in capital, share equipment and major capital product and machinery, pay fee which is used for maintenance
 - Leasing or buying machinery which turns over depreciated value (tax break)
- Fertilizer and seeds: buy early (discounted) and off-season
- Buy used equipment
- Conserve and maintain equipment

27. Lack of labor

- Build relationships with colleges and high schools
- Empower younger people with different incentives (percentages over salaries)
- Work with internship programs
- Have clubs visit farms
- Create better marketing and branding
- Establish labor standards
- Consider family, unemployed, and H2A workers
- Consider wages, benefits, and ability to provide transportation
- Consider retirees, high school, middle school, and college interns

28. Farmers breaking even financially annually

- Encourage farmers and landowners to:
 - Create annual budgets
 - Keep appropriate records
 - Diversify their crops
- Encourage assessments of target audiences, consumers, and product appeal
- Encourage identification of problem areas and target them
- Support greater communication between farmers with financial issues and others who can support her/him
- Provide training on how to buy when the market is low and sell when the market is high, as well as training on international trade issues

29. Small farmers can't meet government regulations and policies

- Get regulations changed to reflect small farmer needs
- Educate consumers to get more consumer support
- Farmers must get more involved in political process
- Get more people to vote. Educate people because these policies affect everyone
- Form coalitions
- Must lobby to make sure political officials support a small farmer agenda
- Do our part; take responsibility!
- Contact elected officials; be vocal
- Tell everyone to buy local

30. Not knowing how/when to provide input to the Farm Bill

- Access this excellent website for information: www.ruralco.com
- Continue to encourage farmers to attend their local listening sessions
- Maintain a relationship with local 1890 land-grant institution
- Get to know your extension agents
- Vote for someone who has your concerns in mind
- Make sure you are talking to your fellow farmers and neighbors
- Make sure you get counted in your agriculture census
- Make an appointment to visit with your elected officials. Get to know them

- Be aware of when the listening sessions will take place. Assign a spokesperson for your group at the listening session. Make a list of your issues in advance
- Ask your elected official to hold a mini listening session for your local area
- Make sure your crop or activity is listed as a commodity with FSA

31. Lack of easy access to operating capital

- Encourage early planning for operating capital
- Include this concern in a business plan
- Train and coach farmers to know how to transition their land for their own needs
- Support farmers who conduct resource assessments; connect their business plans accordingly
- Have a business or management plan
- Establish credit
- Get grant writing training
- Know where to go to get funding; know what is required up front
- Piggy back on community colleges—allow them to help
- Clean your credit!
- Do not co-sign
- Develop a relationship with your bank/credit union (government secured programs)
- Research non-profits that have loan programs
- Get familiar with all government programs that fit your business
- Identify non-traditional lenders
- Barter services
- Conservation programs
- Develop partnerships with family members

32. Not enough funding for small farmers

- Evaluate the spectrum of USDA programs that might fit
- Evaluate the possibility of implementing cost-share programs for vegetable producers
- Direct farmers to contact the state commission of agriculture for sources of funding
- Direct farmers to contact schools of agriculture for knowledge about funding for small farmers
- Get lending institutions to meet with farmers
- Need information about who to go to for funding
- Create an agreement about what is going to be done as far as the farm's financial situation
- Create an alternative to farm planning
- Create an understanding of the process of how to receive lower interest rates
- Create an understanding of how important credit is
- Hold a farm lender meeting to help farmers better understand debt, credit, taxes, and financial management
- Create better farmer/lender communications
- USDA should create an agency to help farmers get out of debt

33. Discrimination in lending

- “Can’t get molasses if you ain’t got no lasses!”
- Bring lending agency representatives to a conference to be sensitized on diversity and race relations
- Use minority advisors; nominate collectively
- Make sure our forms and paperwork are up to standard (use an accountant)
- More co-ops to organize our power on a regional, district, and area basis
- Study completed applications. Learn from rejection and then reapply
- Start our own lending institution. Support lending institutions that support minority landowners

34. The need for simpler loan processes and addressing over-collateralization

- Work with landowners to change loan requirements through policy involvement
- Create a faster application process
- Make the ratio for collateralization 1:1
- Farmers need an actual understanding of the lending practices, what falls under collateral
- Loan applications need to be simplified
- Establish a co-op for smaller loans
- Utilize a line of credit instead of a loan

35. Applying for grants and loans: Knowing how to apply and the limitations of the grant

- Make sure the farm applicant has a good understanding of what you can and cannot use the money for
- Do research before writing and requesting grant funds
- Keep organized records. Have your cash flow statements and budgets prepared
- Work closely with grantors
- Develop relationships with different organizations
- Serve on grant review panels of different agencies
- Have grant recipients mentor farmers who are looking for grants
- Use local university students for business planning and writing grants/loans
- Find a mentor or support system (people who have already gone through process); start a pay it forward program
- USDA should eliminate being rejected by two lenders for socially disadvantaged farmers for guaranteed loans (lend money directly)
- Register on Grants.gov to get information
- Establish a local clearing house
- Plan a town hall meeting where agency representatives come out and talk about grant opportunities
- Talk to your Extension agents
- Go online to the program that has a list of foundation grant information (foundationcenter.org). Check with your local library for information
- Use social media to get information out to farmers

36. No mini-grants available

- Establish a line of credit for smaller amounts instead of a loan
- Borrow from a family member
- Use a non-profit organization to act as the lender
- Create a co-op that would request the loan, then co-op members can borrow from that loan
- Lease equipment instead of purchase
- Develop a business and financial plan; know all of the variables in your operation (cost of operation plus revenue from operation)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In this breakout session, farmers were divided into small groups of 10-15 to generate a list of problems/challenges/issues they face relative to technical assistance that hinder their ability to be successful. Below is a comprehensive list of the priority issues that all four teams identified. Following this list are the solutions farmers generated to address these priority issues. See Appendix B for a complete list of issues related to technical assistance.

TOP PRIORITY ISSUES FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. Need Agency representatives in each county that are more specialized
2. Office employees have no knowledge or insufficient knowledge; minority farmers not given the whole truth; farmers experience racial discrimination and lack of diversity within the offices
3. Racial intolerance and discrimination
4. Lack of finance due to credit problems and limited access
5. Government assistance and lack of follow up
6. Small farmers not engaging in the political process
7. Small farmers are not combining together to vote for committee/board seats
8. Lack of balance between technical support and large industry
9. Private company ownership of seed
10. Information not being given out; you have to know what to ask the agent
11. Need information about what the up and coming crops are before the market is flooded
12. EQIP requires land to be taken out of production. If it had already been taken out of production, you can't benefit from the program even though you are providing habitat. There has to be a recorded history of farming; a farmer may have been farming but not recording
13. Information is getting out to a small number of people
14. Discrimination in dissemination of information
15. There is lots of information on the Internet, but not everybody is on the Internet. It is either not accessible (especially in remote areas), or people are not computer literate
16. Stubbornness of the farmer
17. Every farm is unique, needs farm specific plans, needs one-on-one assistance
18. Lack of oversight to ensure that policies are implemented fairly. Lack of an audit program for accountability. Lack of a database that shows when farmers are notified
19. Local voice does not represent the minority farmer
20. Sometimes it is who you know that causes results
21. Constant change in government regulation
22. Next generation farm workers
23. Getting on the Internet/access
24. Technical assistance with farm equipment use

PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

1. **Need Agency representatives in each county that are more specialized**
 - Contact NC A&T SU and let them know that more technical and specialized agents are needed
 - Talk with SPC about what you need
 - Go to www.ag.ncat.edu link to Cooperative Extension
 - Talk to county commissioners
 - Contact non-profits
 - Staff should be required to receive certification in USDA programs; basic competencies of agency staff should be in place at all levels
 - Increase collaboration across agencies
 - One stop shop for all needs
 - Agencies listed that offer grants for start-ups

2. **Office employees have no knowledge or insufficient knowledge; minority farmers not given the whole truth; farmers experience racial discrimination and lack of diversity within the offices**
 - Request that agency employee seek out the information, follow-up with the farmer, then keep the information handy for next time; agent has pamphlets readily available
 - Increase diversity in the office, have an actual farmer staff the office on a part-time basis (paid position) to provide answers and assistance to other farmers
 - Create a diverse advisory committee
 - Get involved, get your voice heard
 - Cross coordination between different offices
 - Have a comment/suggestion box in each office

3. **Racial intolerance and discrimination**
 - Stop accepting it and follow through with complaint process (go to the top if necessary)
 - Be more vocal about injustices
 - Have functions and invite them
 - Document everything!
 - Be well informed (know your laws and rights)
 - Minorities need to work and go together
 - Empower one's self, have correct attitude. Realize the strong impact of attire and image

4. **Lack of finance due to credit problems and limited access**
 - Be honest with yourself
 - Get a CPA!
 - Keep up with credit reports
 - Establish relationship with a banker, at Farm Credit, and other financial institutions
 - Self-educate (learn tax laws and deductibles)
 - Look at alternative funding (private investors, grants, niche grants)
 - Educate the youth on financing

5. Government assistance and lack of follow up

- Be persistent, follow up yourself (keep calling)
- Write letters
- Stand up for you rights, do not be afraid
- Lack of progression from conferences (funds can be used on other things)
- More hands on at conferences (go out in the field, have conventions on a farm)

6. Small farmers not engaging in the political process

- Get involved in county committees
- Organization of farmers need to meet with their congressional delegations
- Know what your county planning boards are doing
- Work together as a group, don't go it alone
- Educate farmers on the need to voice their concerns
- Show the effects of the economic/political process
- Farmers need to talk to other farmers and share their experiences
- Develop more small farm organizations
- Agencies should work to bring small farmers together. Look at other state models for examples

7. Small farmers are not combining together to vote for committee/board seats

- Redraw district boundaries to show better representation
- Get more small farmers on the mailing list
- Change the small farmers perspective about the agencies
- Every farmer will have to make a decision to better themself
- Get more members in county interested. Get behind one person and vote for them for a board seat
- Educate small farmers on the benefits of board seats
- Look at models that have brought about change
- Sometimes it is not the message, but the messenger

8. Lack of balance between technical support and large industry

- Encourage subsidized training, provide a floater agent who can go from location to location sharing their specialized experience with the farmer
- Small farmer needs to communicate to the agent what their specific problems are
- When developing agency programs, talk to the farmer first, get the farmers' input at the program planning stage
- Listen to the farmers who are not in the co-ops as they make up the majority

9. Private company ownership of seed

- Create a public seed bank at land grant institutions
- Make seeds available to the public, don't make it about the money
- Return research to the universities
- Use co-ops to fund research instead of private company funds

- Change the law to prohibit patents on genetics (“life”)
- Make sure small farmers are in the conversation with their congressman about the free trade agreement (NAFTA)

10. Information not being given out; you have to know what to ask the agent

- Train small farmers on how to go into the offices and know what to ask
- Get small farmers to go to the offices more often
- Build a relationship with your county agents
- Better training for county agents to increase their knowledge
- Continue networking and share information with fellow small farmers
- Get your issues on the table
- Drive home the message to agents, continue with the message until they understand
- Continue to coach, support, encourage one another

11. Need information about what the up and coming crops are before the market is flooded

- National Agricultural Statistics Service generates this information; it needs to be distributed widely
- Read farm magazines
- Develop coalitions and disseminate through them. Buy seeds together for the up and coming crops
- Extension agents have that knowledge and should spread it across groups
- Communicate to extension agents about the information you need
- Agents need to work on developing trust so they are more approachable

12. EQIP requires land to be taken out of production. If it had already been taken out of production, you can't benefit from the program even though you are providing habitat. There has to be a recorded history of farming; a farmer may have been farming but not recording

- With CRP, for example, if you don't have recorded history, neighbors can verify. EQIP might use that approach
- Tax breaks for maintaining land/history/culture
- If EQIP is not going to cover, others should cover

13. Information is getting out to a small number of people

- Get more articles out to local papers in a timely fashion (not in the classifieds)
- Use broadcast news media
- FSA newsletters should be sent to all landowners, tenants, and operators even if that means sending them out less often
- Use Internet
- Networking; share information among each other
- Develop trust among farmers. In some ways they are in competition, but in some ways they can help each other

- When agriculture vendors are having a meeting, agencies need to get the word out to minority farmers
- Work through minority churches and organizations (such as NAACP)

14. Discrimination in dissemination of information

- 4-H clubs are not in all areas. It's important to develop trust and relationships with agents
- Regarding age and disability discrimination, agencies used to be in every county; not now, making it difficult for people to get to offices. Put people in those offices a couple of days per week as a way of reducing cost rather than closing offices
- At least have a phone line by county so calls can be returned and information provided from other offices
- Develop coalitions to buy in volume so vendors don't discriminate (cater to) large volume buyers who may come along after smaller growers

15. There is lots of information on the Internet, but not everybody is on the Internet. It is either not accessible (especially in remote areas), or people are not computer literate

- Farmers attend night courses. FACTS or others (Extension) offer courses
- Those who can retrieve information, share it
- Younger, more computer savvy family members share/teach those less savvy in computer use

16. Stubbornness of the farmer

- Compromise is essential
- Exposure is important for farmer's growth
- Their interests must be broadened

17. Every farm is unique, needs farm specific plans, needs one-on-one assistance

- Build relationships to form the one-on-one assistance
- Request conservation plans from the agent

18. Lack of oversight to ensure that policies are implemented fairly. Lack of an audit program for accountability. Lack of a database that shows when farmers are notified

- Create a database to gather farmer's information and to contact farmers through mass mailings or email (list serves, email mailing lists)
- Give farmers the option to receive information through email or newsletter

19. Local voice does not represent the minority farmer

- Farmers need to get involved more on local boards
- Find a way to get local groups together to create a unified voice
- Create co-ops in your area if they do not exist
- Build relationships, focus on commonality

- Form a media outlet for farmers
- Change the public's perception to value the small farmer

20. Sometimes it is who you know that causes results

- Get involved
- Network with your fellow farmers, share the information you know
- Be about it, not talk about it!
- Build relationships

21. Constant change in government regulation

- Understand administration priorities

22. Next generation farm workers

- Start exposing students to agriculture earlier - at age 10 and under
- Provide loans to youth in all counties – outreach; make more people aware
- Provide internship programs for young people interested in farm work
- Establish database of students interested in agriculture
- Establish community gardens
- Hook next generation farmers up with farmers who cannot do the work anymore
- Have agriculture in classrooms (K - 3rd grades)
- Boys and Girls Club, (FSA) farm trip
- Involve youth with Farm Bureaus

23. Getting on the Internet/access

- Different attitude among farmers needed: No more business as usual
- Make sure that farmers have input on policy
- Programs geared specifically toward small farmers
- Getting farmers involved in lobbying to change farm bill
- Not enough money to get program on the farm

24. Technical assistance with farm equipment use

- Free tuition for people 65 & older, free classes for groups of 10 or more, on site equipment training if needed, and free utility cost all from community colleges
- Talk to universities (show interest)
- Contact Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)
- Contact Cooperative Extension offices
- Contact OSHA
- Find local companies to conduct training (through companies such as John Deere)
- Go to www.growingsmallfarms.org and www.ces.ncsu.edu

MARKETING

In this breakout session, farmers were divided into small groups of 10-15 to generate a list of problems/challenges/issues they face relative to marketing that hinder their ability to be successful. Below is a comprehensive list of the priority issues that all four teams identified. Following this list are the solutions farmers generated to address these priority issues. See Appendix C for a complete list of issues related to marketing.

TOP PRIORITY ISSUES FOR MARKETING

1. Need to create new markets
2. Need to understand pricing (when to sell and when to hold)
3. Need ways to reach youth and involve them in farming
4. Need marketing research to determine who the customer is and what they want
5. Need to build a consumer base that values local food
6. Creating niche marketing
7. Tools for marketing
8. Lack of financial resources
9. Not enough networking between farmers
10. Product placement/location of markets
11. Pricing product/booking
12. Advertising and promotion

PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

1. **Need to create new markets**
 - Utilize free sources of information and technical assistance (i.e. NCDA)
 - Work through Cooperative Extension
 - Find non-traditional methods to help with marketing (such as churches and local non-profit agencies)
 - Hold monthly community meetings to organize local farmers
 - Integrate community supported agriculture, such as the 10% campaign: build a contract with local community in which they commit to spending 10% of their income on local food market
 - Work with churches to obtain grants
 - Advertise within your community
 - Tell your story (separate from the large companies)
2. **Need to understand pricing (when to sell and when to hold)**
 - Develop effective marketing cooperatives
 - Develop local markets to reduce travel. Market local food in your local community by building community relations
 - Provide food for seniors using senior coupons, WIC and EBT (electronic benefits transfer – formerly food stamps)

- Storage: Consider storing commodities when demand is low
- Figure out what prices you can control, what prices you can't control
- Educate the consumer about the added value of the product. Teach the nutritional health value of products
- Contract out harvest in advance to reduce risk; purchase crop insurance
- Market to consumers directly to get a higher price, but make sure to include the cost of marketing in the selling price
- Risk management (understand breakeven costs)
- Alternatives/diversify your products. High tunnel/greenhouse production (i.e. tomatoes – early and late season)

3. Need ways to reach youth and involve them in farming

- Outreach via word of mouth (youth to youth)
- Work with incarcerated youth to provide training to help reintroduce them to society
- Help develop love of land in youth
- Find financial incentives for youth to participate in agriculture
- Engage community colleges to help equip high school youth interested in production agriculture
- Hold sessions where older generations and youth come together around a “theme” to discuss ideas, practices, and trends
- Develop small agro-tourism experiences; open local farms up to the community for one day. Promote it by partnering with youth groups and schools. Take care of insurance requirements in the event something unforeseen were to happen
- Partner with elementary schools to organize a speakers bureau that allows producers to explain what they do. Provide youth exposure to possibilities within the agribusiness/agropreneur business that would include farming, but also other capacities
- Give youth a list of things they can do in the field. Let them choose what they want to do and expose them to it
- Get rid of stereotypes and help youth build pride in their heritage: slavery/immigration as early farmers, etc.
- Change the labels from farming to agribusiness or agropreneur to motivate youth to think “big picture” where farming is part of the full business
- Recruit kids using their interests in the full supply chain by starting from the end-product back (start at the market and end in the fields)
- Make farming profitable. Look at farming as a source for tourism
- Help your local school develop a school garden
- Participate in Career Day at schools

4. Need marketing research to determine who the customer is and what they want

- Meet with church and community groups; get word out about what products farmers grow
- Understand what the customer values
- Allow pre-orders to determine crop growth (Community Supported Agriculture)
- Invite public to tour farm at the beginning of production season

- Involve public in production/harvesting and purchasing (i.e. Pick your own, Crop Mobs)
- Conduct research on consumer:
 - Size of family household
 - Use 2010 census information
 - Income bracket (how much of that income is spent on food)
 - Ethnic and cultural background
 - Location of customer
- Get involved with SCORE (retired business executives) who will help develop marketing plans, Sustainable Agriculture Research through universities, Cooperative Extension, Chambers of Commerce, county/city government, and partner with other farmers and agriculture experts
- Conduct on-site survey
- Listen to customers, but be careful!
- Provide free samples of products
- Be aware of the changing diets of people and plan accordingly
- Understand the changing diversity of the population and be prepared to accommodate it with different products and services
- Hispanic/Asian population has increased; be aware of their different needs
- Educate the consumer on your product
- Listen to customer. Give out comment cards to prospective customers and respond when feasible. For example, if a customer wants different flavors of sausage such as “mild Italian” or “hot Italian” and you already produce sausage, you may be able to fairly easily add the different flavors to the type of product you already provide
- Offer good customer service with a smile and positive attitude. Repeat customers can provide the best advertising and helps build a stronger business
- Be a good business person and be clear about your bottom line (can't sell below the cost of production)
- Create trust based on integrity. Develop a trusting bond with your customers, give them a fair price, have products they need and want
- Provide quick and efficient service whenever possible

5. Need to build a consumer base that values local food

- Make a point of selling your products to local educators who might in turn serve as an “ambassador” for fresh, locally grown produce
- Educate community on the value of local food/farm products versus the lower cost items in the big chain stores
- Market to people who have money and can afford your products
- Try to limit your competition as much as possible
- Build a “niche” market for your products – specialty products that people want/need and will pay extra for
- New product “taste test”
- Look for “value added” services (i.e. A baker's dozen eggs)
- Make sure all of your product certification is up to date

- Focus on nutritional value - market this along with your produce/products
- Provide excellent customer service – remember the “Golden Rule”
- Get “testimonials” on the quality of your products/services
- At your “store” have pictures of your farm and include some history of its operations. Tell a good story

6. **Creating niche marketing**

- Develop and use websites
- Offer samples to customers
- Market to different age groups
- Specialty products – grow what other farmers in your community/region don’t grow
- Take advantage of word-of-mouth advertising
- Play to consumer demand of “local foods” and connect to national and state programs that highlight local
- Provide value-added products (i.e. jams, cheese, sausage, pickles, etc.)
- Solicit small, local grocery stores to purchase farm products
- Create a target market for your product that doesn’t compete with big commercial growers (like fresh greens for local restaurants)
- Diversify crops and the method, such as high tunnels, which allow a longer growing season. For example, fresh “local” strawberries grown in high tunnels are ready for the market by Valentine’s Day. It sells well at the local grocery store displayed next to chocolate!
- Agri-tourism –How do we tap into this emerging trend in leisure travel?

7. **Tools for marketing**

- Risk management
- Word of mouth
- Creative advertising methods
- Try before you buy (samples)
- Call ahead
- Farmers’ markets/roadside stands
- Website development (individual or community). Use of the Internet to get word out and market your product
- Social networking (e.g. Facebook)
- Value-added marketing
- Billboards (through FSA)
- Hands on activities:
 - Cooking classes
 - Face painting or other kids activities to draw families to your stand
- Local farmers market
- Understand the need for specialty products during all the various “holidays” throughout the year
- Understand supply and demand
- Package your product to a desired size and quantity

- Have a wide variety of products
- Diversify your product mix
- Deliver products to customers
- Be aware of the quality and quantity you can deliver
- Provide convenience by having pre-cooked and pre-packaged foods
- Get out of your comfort zone!

Local

- Farm bureaus
- Local or state monthly meetings
- Google co-ops for the area
- Feed store bulletin boards
- Contact church and non-profits (food environmental)
- Contact Extension office in counties
- Community centers - neighborhood district
- Visit some of your neighboring farms (farm visits)
- Committees (international trade, organic farmers, USDA)

National

- Conferences
- Trainings (federal, regional, state)
- USDA websites (information, trends, news)
- Check other state websites to compare best practices
- Facebook - using group pages
- Center for Rural Affairs
- NGOs newsletters; Rural Coalition www.ruralco.org or www.latinofarmers.org
- Membership based organizations
- *Minority Landowner Magazine*

8. Lack of financial resources

- Talk to Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA)
- Obtain university co-op assistance
- Network with other farmers (looking at their past market plans)
- Look into local markets and stores and be persistent
- Seek Consumer Supported Agriculture funding (CSA)
- Go after grant money (specialty grants)
- Seek help through:
 - Word of mouth
 - Courthouse bulletin boards
 - Farmers markets
 - North Carolina A&T State University and community colleges
 - Internet
 - USDA
 - Bulletins and flyers
 - Radio
 - Cooperative Extension (provides information, training and technical assistance)

- Newspapers
- Chambers of Commerce
- Office of Tourism
- Farm Credit
- Banks
- Farmer organizations
- Family investors
- Private lenders
- Federal USDA, AMS, NIFA, FSA, Rural Development, FNS
- CBO: foundations and NGOs
- Academic institutions
- Generate collateral
- Conduct an overall assessment of how much is actually needed
- Reduce regulation
- Other tools:
 - Grants - Make sure to include marketing plans and budgets
 - Loans, guaranteed loans (federal and state credit, need based loans, ag credit)
 - Training (USDA, SBA, Department of Commerce, co-ops, NGO, 1890 universities)
 - Small Biz Admin Center: (Admin centers- Networking, Biz planning)
 - Interns (sustainable biz, students, agro-biz, agro-entrepreneur students)

9. Not enough networking between farmers

- Share equipment, labor, knowledge, and other resources
- Sharing marketing plans with locals (who aren't in same community)
- Share each others contacts
- Participate with Carolina Specialty Organization, university co-op, Young Farmers Association
- Attend conferences
- Customized website for small farmers
- Use of a clearing house
- Attend Extension meetings and inform others of needs or what you have to offer
- Co-op: buy large quantity of seed, share heirloom
- Develop or utilize existing newsletter(s) to share ideas among farmers
- Share tips for keeping produce fresh, ways to reduce cost

10. Product placement/Location of markets

- Know consumers and where they buy at premium price
- Farmer's market (through USDA)
- Approach stores and restaurants
- Go to auctions
- Street sells
- Research and feasibility studies
- Use of the web

- Networking
- Advertisement
- Timely and right placement of products so customers see the products
- Accessible
- Being flexible, have a plan B
- Know and understand the competition
- Target tourist areas
- Situate tailgate market locations at an intersection
- Get invited to a senior citizen neighborhood
- Deliver older customers to the farms/partner with nonprofit organizations that serve seniors
- Hospital packing; sell to employees
- Target organizations/big companies with employee health programs
- Decide if distance to market is worth it

Directly To Consumer

- Know number of people in community
- Understand the interest of the community
- Know cultural and ethnic background
- Use 2010 census as a tool
- Utilize family – apartment complex data available at USDA, and HUD
- Farmers' market

Wholesale - Retail

- Farm for school, casinos, hotels, prison, large organizations, military
- Price products based on location
- Whole Foods, large super markets, Wal-Mart

11. Pricing product/booking

- Use USDA website for assistance
- Call farmer's market vendors
- Study the competition (look in stores markets)
- Listen to radio broadcasts
- Know your edge (what makes your food worth more)
- Help develop actual cost counting (get accountant)
- Book ahead of time
- Markup
- What will the market bear? What will people pay?
- Offer "specials"
- Offer tastings
- Don't display prices - engage customers in conversation
- Incorporate food presentations
- Study wholesale and retail prices
- Understand when to sell and when to hold (use storage to control the price)
- Time planting so that when the product hits the market it is at its highest price

- Include real cost in the price:
 - Transportation
 - Storage
 - Packaging
 - Labor
 - Administrative overhead
 - Marketing
 - Cost of production (raw materials, seeds, fertilizer, tools, technology, etc.)
- Add value to the product by making sauces, jellies, etc.

12. Advertising and promotion

- Give out cards, referral discounts and bonuses, product samples
- Always have pictures of farm and products
- Use free advertising on websites, in penny-saver newspapers and newsletters, on radio stations
- Flyers (post in churches, YMCAs, etc.)
- Human interest stories
- Local advertising through local Chambers of Commerce
- Billboards
- Piggy-back with other producers
- Radio/TV spots
- Word of mouth
- Perception vs. reality; selling an “experience”
- Presentations
- Advanced orders
- Video marketing
- Sell yourself
- Refrigeration
- Tell nutritional value of locally grown and organic foods
- Organic certification
- Flea market
- Health fairs
- Through offering “healthy cooking” classes
- Word of mouth with politicians and community organizations
- Open farm visits (Farm City Week)
- Newspaper/fliers/demonstrations/media (Internet and email lists)
- Existing farmers’ markets and nutrition programs
- Target market to specific population groups
- Signs, brochures, etc. – whatever is visual and gets the customer’s attention
- Quality of product - Use words that reflect customer’s values – such as, “taste the fresh flavor”, healthy, local, all natural, no pesticides
- Note: only use the term, “organic” if your farm is certified. Be prepared to explain why your farm products are what you proclaim
- Offer samples for the customers to taste

SUCCESSION PLANNING

In this breakout session, farmers were divided into small groups of 10-15 to generate a list of problems/challenges/issues they face related to succession planning. Below is a comprehensive list of the priority issues that all four teams identified. Following this list are the solutions farmers generated to address these priority issues. See Appendix D for a complete list of issues related to succession planning.

TOP PRIORITY ISSUES FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING

1. Heir property
2. Family disputes (descendants can't agree)
3. Lack of communication with children/family members
4. Family structure and culture (lack of involvement of wife or other family members in the farming business)
5. Older generation wants descendants "to do better;" not have to work as hard
6. No family interest to carry on and focus on particular crops - specialty or organic
7. No will set up in timely manner
8. Not knowing the viability and economic stability of the farm
9. Minority landowners won't help minority farmers
10. Not knowing legal rights in regards to what the government can do
11. Overhead and operating expenses too high
12. Inability to obtain contracts - supply & demand hindrances
13. Too many laws and regulations for small farmers to be successful (high land taxes; cannot use/own old seeds, must purchase seeds yearly)
14. Unreliable workers. Community and family members not helping each other
15. Lack of money to assist with planning
16. No/limited money/resources in farming
17. Lack of estate planning
18. Lack of education about succession planning

PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

1. Heir Property

- Know who all the players are
- Coordinate with heirs to create one person who will have power of attorney
- Know your legal rights
- Know your land boundaries
- Improve family unity
- Create a land trust
 - Put easement on land, making sure that you can make money on the land with the trust in place
 - Teach family the value of the land trust
 - Increase understanding of the legal process
 - Educate family about how to protect the land

- Establish a Loan Fund to help buy out family who don't want to keep the land
 - Establish detailed will
 - Seek professional guidance for Family Trust Agreements
2. **Family disputes (descendants can't agree)**
 - Call in a mediator
 - Call all the family members together
 - Make sure you have a specific will
 - Talk to children about their intentions (in advance)
 3. **Lack of communications with children/family members**
 - Convince family members that you need to talk about how not to lose the land. Don't wait until there is a crisis
 - Tell them you don't have all the answers yet; need their input and involvement in current farm practices
 - Give all family members a picture of the property
 - Generate wholesome communication
 - Identify family concerns
 - Have regular family meetings
 - Use professional mediators
 - If no resolution, use court as a last option
 4. **Family structure and culture (lack of involvement of wife or other family members in the farming business)**
 - Educate farmers' family members about the need and benefits of their involvement
 - Discuss benefits and consequences of not involving family
 - Plan a family meeting:
 - Plan a retreat
 - Plan a family reunion
 - Stress in advance, the importance of the meeting
 - Have an agenda for the meeting; know what needs to be covered and anticipate questions and objections
 - Provide community workshops on the subject
 - Educate younger generation about the history of the farm
 - Expose youth to the farming operations
 - Exposure to precision farming
 - Promote participation in community-based leadership programs and in 4-H and FFA
 - Establish mentoring programs
 5. **Older generation wants descendants "to do better;" not have to work as hard**
 - Educate older generation, let them know it's not like it use to be
 - Get grandchildren involved
 - Let younger generation have some fun with it; don't work them to the bone; and pay them
 - Lobby for conservation education in school

- Encourage 4-H and FFA programs
 - Educate old and young on new commodities; show them that there is money to be made
 - Bring young farmers to talk to youth
- 6. No family interest to carry on and focus on particular crops - specialty or organic**
- Stress cultural ties to the land
 - Provide educational incentives that relate to land or that come from agriculture even if it is to support students' plan to pursue other careers. Stress the need to keep the farm whether it is used for livestock or row crop
 - Establish a will specifying who will get the land and what will happen to the land
 - Conservation measures – eligible land can receive annual payments (10-15 years) through CREP; State contract – 30 years
 - Sign farms up in program that allow land to be used for agriculture forever
 - Get children involved in 4-H & Future Farmers of America (FFA)
 - Assign farm chores to children
- 7. No will set up in timely manner**
- Set up will (including property boundaries)
 - Communicate with family, determine executor
 - Retain a property lawyer
 - Take classes and training in estate planning/wills, property appraisal
- 8. Not knowing the viability and economic stability of the farm**
- Learn the value (including land value and family legacy)
 - Know alternative uses for land other than farming
 - Research resource alternatives (i.e. federal and state programs, and funding)
 - Use the Internet to find funding sources and other opportunities (e.g. how to grow tomatoes)
 - Connect with college students/interns who can assist farmers in understanding technology and computer advancements
- 9. Minority landowners won't help minority farmers**
- Take time to build trusting relationship with landowners
 - Draw up specific lease
 - Educate landowners (try to change their mindset)
- 10. Not knowing legal rights in regards to what the government can do**
- Talk to Farm Bureau
 - Talk to lawyer who is good with property law
 - Search the Internet (mainly government websites)
 - Talk to other farmers who have been through the same thing
 - Do research through courthouse documents
 - Talk to civic organizations; conduct library research
 - Contact conservation easement organizations for information

11. Overhead and operating expenses too high

- Utilize resources – FSA loans for beginning farmers to purchase land and for operating
- Target family money and use as investment in the farm
- Farm families working together to keep cost down
- Different equipment purchased and then swapped with other farmers

12. Inability to obtain contracts - supply & demand hindrances

- Cooperative system needs to be strong if producers cannot get contracts
- Roadside markets, farm tours useful

13. Too many laws and regulations for small farmers to be successful (high land taxes; cannot use/own old seeds, must purchase seeds yearly)

- Get up a petition and present it to local representatives (small farmers cannot afford a lobbyist like the big companies)
- Use estate planning to save taxes
- Apply the farm-use tax for advantages

14. Unreliable workers. Community and family members not helping each other

- Wage war on drugs– potential workers are lured by fast drug money and will not work
- Families and communities must work closer together to help each other
- Seasonal workers available. Minimum wage must be paid for certain amount of time
- Set aside money for workers – make a list of what should be done

15. Lack of money to assist with planning

- Register your property as a farm and know your tax ID and premise # to access resources you are eligible to receive from government agencies
- Take classes and workshops

16. No/limited money/resource in farming

- Network as groups/cooperatives
- Alternative marketing
- Value added/added value
- Seek alternative funding sources

17. Lack of estate planning

- Education – emphasize value and provide resources to help with estate planning
- Involve family in direction and planning
- Identify expertise in estate planning

18. Lack of education about succession planning

- Seek out workshops
- Reach out to community and family members

APPENDIX A – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Below is a non-prioritized list of all problem statements generated by farmers and landowners from the four breakout sessions. Attempts were made to present this list as close to the voice of the farmers as possible. The question asked was: What are the issues relative to financial management that hinder your ability to be successful?

1. Recordkeeping is difficult for landowners
2. There is a lack of education for landowners on key issues, innovation, and opportunities, and a lack of education for policymakers on minority landowner issues
3. Farming is not seen as a business
4. There is a lack of business planning
5. Need access to information about new trends
6. The lack of knowledge by land and farm owners around key issues, technology, and opportunities and the lack of knowledge by decision makers of farm owner issues
7. The lack of access to technology for older farmers who are unfamiliar and/or uncomfortable with it
8. The lack of crop diversity in farming
9. The lack of availability of funds for small farmers
10. Issues of tradition, particularly when land is inherited without a current financial or business plan for the land

11. Unknown or expensive startup costs
12. The need for simpler loan processes and over-collateralized land owners
13. The need for help to better market farm products
14. Issues of income expectations with unrealistic income to debt ratios
15. The lack of access to needed information
16. There is not enough money given to farmers from lending institutions
17. There are credit and debt issues and trouble paying taxes
18. There is no easy access to operating capital
19. New farmers don't know the true cost of starting a business
20. It is difficult to market our goods and we need training and help

21. The lack of reliable labor
22. Training and education issues
23. Credit and debt issues
24. Startup and maintenance costs
25. Greater collaboration with cooperatives and other organizations
26. No management plan for finances
27. Knowing criteria to develop financial plan
28. Access to capital (limited money)
29. Not knowing your audience (Who are the customers? What service will you provide?)
30. No records (no knowledge of input costs)

31. Recordkeeping, knowing what records to keep
32. Grant writing workshop needed
33. Lack of understanding of limitations of grants (having to pay more out of pocket than you expected)
34. Small farmers can't meet government regulations and policies
35. Government policies don't help small farmers
36. Discrimination in lending
37. Recordkeeping/accounting
38. Applying for grants and loans
39. Expensing your own labor
40. Lack of business plan, lack of organization

41. Lack of grant information in a timely manner
42. Farmers do not have a lot of input on the Farm Bill
43. Farmers do not know how/when to get involved in developing the Farm Bill
44. Have to use all of your collateral for a loan
45. No mini grants or micro loans available to the farmer
46. There is a lack in the use of technology
47. There is a lack of networking
48. There is a lack of collaboration
49. There is a lack of idea exchanges
50. The lack of long-term planning

51. The lack of financial management information for landowners
52. Public discrimination issues with small landowners, particularly minority landowners
53. The lack of policy involvement by grassroots farmers and landowners, particularly around land use
54. The lack of the availability of financial resources for landowners
55. The lack of crop diversification and income
56. The lack of education for farmers and lenders
57. There is concern around collaboration because of the history of having ideas stolen
58. Farmers are only breaking even annually and therefore always starting in the hole
59. High taxes are hurting small farms
60. Farmers are not getting enough information on their tax statements

61. The paperwork for applications is complicated
62. Local farmers are redlined outside the market in favor of external farmers, making it difficult for local farmers to participate
63. There are discrimination issues facing small farms and favoring large farms
64. There is difficulty maintaining farmland in agricultural status
65. Uncontrolled risk factors
66. Competition with large markets
67. Land rental fees

68. Interest rates
69. Building relationships with financial organizations
70. Lack of local farm organizations for networking, learning

71. Excessive collateral for loans
72. Lack of trust in labor
73. Many farmers are isolated and lack ability to network and share resources
74. Difficulty of finding suppliers
75. Farmers do not have information on multiple ways to make money, harvest, taxes, programs
76. Resistance to change in older generation
77. Ongoing low cash flow prevents farmers from prospering
78. Many farmers have a lack of familiarity with technology
79. Lack of computer knowledge and dealing with financial software
80. Understanding how to interpret the data

81. Inadequate recordkeeping and data
82. Not having a budget
83. No access to land
84. Trying to find a good market or demand
85. Not bringing in needed professionals (or not having good professionals)
86. Commingling of dollars: separating the personal from the business
87. Checking behind your professional: also being able to understand what he is doing
88. Location (certain products, transportation)
89. Knowing your product and production cost
90. Insurance risk

91. Lack of financial knowledge
92. Technology challenges (computer skills and lack of appropriate computer programs)
93. Lack of knowledge of credit history; poor credit history
94. Lack of motivation to learn technology
95. Lack of sources of financial assistance
96. Being denied services for having accumulated too much income (output is not considered)
97. Budgeting and projecting cost
98. Poor credit score
99. Not understanding the qualifications for farm subsidies and sources (conservation, commodity)
100. Lack of and timing of releasing funds from loan

101. Rising cost of inputs (competing product prices)
102. Profit-cost ratio bad; input outweighs profit
103. Pros and cons (having a good understanding)
104. Flexibility to allow for price increases
105. Not utilizing risk management

106. Responsible spending (budgeting)
107. Money spent on items that will never be used
108. Farmers tend to be technical and not financial people (production-oriented)
109. Credit history
110. Having trustworthy source to give constructive criticism in reviewing plan

111. Access to a good model of a financial plan
112. Not having long-term goals
113. Transparency of desired outcomes (what it will take to get where you want to go)
114. Knowledge of costs associated with producing an item
115. Lack of user-friendly and relevant recordkeeping software for small farms
116. Having multiple copies of records
117. More financial resources needed
118. Need for good tax accountants
119. Lack of affordable health care
120. Cost of crop insurance

121. Zoning issues
122. Not attending meetings to fight for farmers' rights
123. Lack of representation
124. Regulation of reserved and unreserved funds for grants
125. Effects of the recession limiting lending by financial institutions
126. Cost of insurance (liability and business), workers comp
127. Being able to choose the best interest rate for borrowing and incorporating it in the cost of your budget
128. Including health insurance, social security
129. Developing a special spending or miscellaneous budget line
130. Lack of \$ and resources

131. Management of cash
132. Timing money flow
133. Taxes—write offs, exceptions, expenses, etc.
134. Financial planning, making the plan
135. Need training on developing an operating budget
136. Not including all your current and future costs (depreciation, inflation, market fluctuation)
137. Separating personal from business finances
138. Source of funding and focus tends to be on new/startup farmers and not on established farmers
139. Start up (operating) money is not available at the right time
140. Too much collateral required for a loan

141. People in the USDA office need to know more about financial management in order to help the farmer
142. Need more lenders who are specialized in agriculture

143. Need more insurance companies who are specialized in agriculture
144. Applications for loans are too complicated
145. Lack of self discipline for recordkeeping
146. Access to funding, grants, programs, and information from NRCS
 - Awareness of certain requirements for getting funding, availability of funding
 - Problems with timeliness of funding notices
147. Keeping personal and business finances separate
148. Keeping good farm records
149. Lack of credit
 - Do not get enough credit
 - Purchase methods (leasing vs. buying)
150. Sharing of information, building better relationships with other farmers

151. Input costs
152. Lack of understanding and value of family structure and input
 - Entire family (wife, husband, children) needs to be involved in farm work and decisions
153. Uncertain market
154. Lack of insurance (lack of understanding of its value)
155. Lack of networking and cooperation
156. Not having a financial plan
 - Need back up plans, insurance, incorporation, LLCs, tax wisdom
157. Buying power drops for smaller farms
 - Rent prices are rising and impacts our relationship with larger farmers
158. Ineffective recordkeeping prevents opportunities for federal funding
159. People are not aware of local and state grants and available technology
160. People don't recognize that their farm is a business
 - Farmers sometimes mix business and personal finances
 - Farmers are isolated and find it difficult to network

161. Management of capital—ability to manage capital
162. Collateral and equity
163. Lack of knowledge of the market value of the land
164. Not having a business plan
165. Access to capital
166. Training deficiency
 - Cash flow and expenses
 - Understanding tax laws
167. Bookkeeping/recordkeeping deficiencies, organizational skills
168. Lack of marketing skills/knowledge
169. Income generation from farm operations
170. Lack of startup money and resources

171. Operational expenses
 - Being able to buy and maintain equipment
 - Chemicals
 - Maintenance
172. Contracting crops
 - Booking
 - Not sustaining contract agreement (payback=debt)
173. Operational or startup capital
 - Resource of funds
 - Debt
174. Affordable crop insurance
175. Being aware and able to determine eligibility for financial assistance
 - Loan
 - Cost-sharing programs

APPENDIX B – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Below is a non-prioritized list of all problem statements generated by farmers and landowners from the four breakout sessions. Attempts were made to present this list as close to the voice of the farmers as possible. The question asked was: What are the issues relative to technical assistance that hinder your ability to be successful?

1. Pine tree purchasing from Forestry Department (said they would get back but did not)
2. Government assistance, lack of follow up (FSA, USDA, etc.)
3. Confused about which department is appropriate
4. Lack of finance due to credit and access
5. Not knowing what to ask, apathy from agents
6. Lack of networking between farmers
7. Competition is stopping networking
8. Racial intolerance
9. Better communication from agencies (needed)
10. No consequences for actions against minorities

11. Lack of knowledge of new programs
12. Lack of content in newsletters
13. Lack of timely notice (unless something is required)
14. Lack of minority representation on boards
15. Rural technical access (like high speed Internet)
16. Rural infrastructure
17. Lack of service due to lack of knowledge
18. Availability of services and assistance
19. Farm intimidation and trepidation
20. Lack of progressive thought and encouragement (like organic and sustainable farm practices)

21. Lack of support for emerging markets
22. Lack of farmer education (like organic and sustainable practices)
23. Agent needed in each county who is more specialized
24. Lack of progression from conferences
25. Technical assistance with farm equipment operation
26. Fertilizer cost
27. Money
28. Irrigation: equipment, developing water sources
29. Next generation farm workers
30. Labor shortage

31. Ability to stay current with technology
32. Farm planning/review input
33. Farmers markets
34. Assistance with grant writing
35. Knowledge of grants
36. Outreach: lack of info from NRCS
37. Programs out there not geared toward the small farmer
38. Getting on the Internet/access
39. More customer support – hard to get a human operator
40. Agent access

41. Technical assistance - onsite
42. Justification of equipment purchase
43. Lack of co-op assistance
44. Constant change in government regulation
45. Trained labor
46. Lack of assistance for soil testing- takes too long for results
47. Agency employees do not understand the problems and cannot provide suitable solutions
48. Lack of training for agency employees
49. Retaliation against those who speak out
50. Alternative fuels

51. Communications
52. Outreach programs geared more toward large farms
53. Discrimination
54. Experience
55. Cooperation
56. Loans
57. Money distribution
58. Minority
59. Representation
60. Education

61. Culture
62. Farm plan
63. Sexual orientation
64. Language barriers
65. Lack of help in general
66. Knowledge of matter
67. Availability
68. Size of farms
69. Stubbornness of the farmer
70. Social disadvantage – fund

71. Steps to stop a black farmer
 - No is the answer
 - No experience
 - No credit
 - No money
72. Office employees have no knowledge or insufficient knowledge
 - Farmer not given the whole truth
 - Farmer experiences racial discrimination; lack of diversity in the office
73. Limit to the information being received, information is inconsistent
74. Information is not being implemented on the county level
75. Every farm is unique, need farm specific plans, need one-on-one assistance
76. Guidelines/policy are not flexible enough
77. Lack of follow through from agents
78. Sometimes it is who you know that causes results; inconsistent application of help by office
79. Lack of implementation of policies at the local level
80. Lack of oversight to ensure that policies are implemented fairly
 - Lack of an audit program for accountability
 - Lack of a database that shows when farmers are notified

81. Local voice does not represent the minority farmer
82. Lack of number of personnel in the offices
83. Lack of list of contractors who can help with plan implementation
84. Offices are spread out
 - Information provided is not uniform, consistent
 - One office does not know what the other office can provide (FSA, NRCS, SWCD)
85. Knowledge
86. Education
87. Weather
88. Resources
89. Communication
90. Networking

91. Discrimination
92. Misleading information
93. Interaction
94. Unpleasant environment
95. Sex orientation barrier
96. Discouragement tactics
97. Minority representation
98. Outreach
99. Lack of social network
100. Fear factor for minorities

101. Cultural barriers
102. Cultural transformation
103. Seeking proper assistance
104. Develop a plan
105. Research
106. Large farmers don't want small farmers to succeed
107. Lack of resources
108. Lack of an easy to use computer program for the small farmer
109. Programs not designed for small operations
110. Need more affordable programs

111. Information not being given out without prior knowledge about it; you have to know what to ask the agent
112. Lack of enthusiasm by the agent
113. Lack of support for small farmer
114. Don't know the language or what to specifically ask for
115. Landowners not informed of programs
116. Unable to use your own equipment to implement grant projects
117. Program requirements too restrictive
118. Private company ownership of seed
119. Lack inconsistent message from the agents; information given varies from one person to another
120. Administration needs to tell county agents to do their jobs

121. Lack of sensitivity at the office
122. Commodity strength influences priorities, preferential treatment to large commodity programs
123. Not enough outreach from the conservation district offices
124. Small farmers not engaging in the political process
125. Fear of retaliation of belonging to a co-op from large farmers
126. Small farmers are not working together, they do not feel empowered
127. Small farmers are not combining together to vote for committee/board seats
128. Fear of past problems has influenced current participation
129. Lack of balance between technical support and large industry
130. Lack of hands-on assistance

131. Agencies not educating society and its own employees about issues facing farming, through use of diverse methods
132. Information is getting out to a small number of people
133. The first point of contact is FSA; if they don't know an answer, they need to refer to an agency that can
134. Agencies don't take accountability in presenting information. They don't want to own the answer

135. Quality of the information
136. Need connection between farmers/agencies/vendors
137. Need assistance transitioning to organic (have to let land sit for 3 years)
138. Farmers are secretive, not readily sharing information
139. Need information from people promoting organic, for example. Agencies promote growing certain things a certain way, but then don't provide information. Grants/promotion/information not in same place
140. Need information on what the up and coming crops are before the market is flooded

141. Need information on pestilent wildlife (coyotes, feral pigs). Some of the wildlife is encouraged by some agencies
142. Need laws relating to introduction of wildlife (for hunting) that then roam onto others' land
143. EQIP requires taking land out of production; if had been out of production, you can't benefit from the program even though providing habitat - also, has to be recorded history
144. People don't get the information because they don't go to meetings. Sometimes meetings are in the afternoons when people cannot attend
145. Need to ask for help and be persistent
146. Beavers back up water, creating risk of land reverting - less likely to get help in more remote areas or where there are smaller farmers
147. Need more game wardens
148. People are irrigating and doing it in a way to conserve, which results in increased land leveling. Land leveling results in water running to the other surrounding properties, which tend to be the smaller farmers, and causing problems
149. Discrimination in services
150. Land grant institutions should be a resource; if they don't know, they need to send people who do know

151. Need resources for addressing erosion
152. Assistance can be slow in coming, sometimes too late
153. Clemson programs test land, which affects the value of land, but that information is difficult to access, especially for blacks/other minorities
154. Generally need more access to soil quality work
155. Information (about soil quality) is there, but it is not shared unless you are the owner
156. Discrimination in dissemination of information
157. The traditionally black land grant universities don't have equal funding
158. Problems with giving out information about who is producing what as a source for sharing knowledge because of privacy protection
159. Lots of information on the Internet, but not everyone has access: high speed not available in some rural areas; some people are not computer literate

APPENDIX C – MARKETING

Below is a non-prioritized list of all problem statements generated by farmers and landowners from the four breakout sessions. Attempts were made to present this list as close to the voice of the farmers as possible. The question asked was: What are the issues relative to marketing that hinder your ability to be successful?

1. Finding consumer base
2. Competition from other farmers and stores
3. Advertising and promotion
4. Niche marketing
5. Cultural divide (people will buy but not take you seriously)
6. Not buying locally first
7. Network between farmers
8. Educating the consumers on organics and new products
9. Startup money from season to season
10. Money to expand

11. Time (not enough hours in a day)
12. Downsizing labor contracts (from Latinos)
13. Cost of marketing (websites)
14. System needed to track consumers location and needs
15. Building larger customer base
16. Growing enough of what customers want (meeting consumers' demand)
17. Challenge to find buyers
18. Weather
19. How to use Chicago Board of Trade
20. Need to know the production in relation to price

21. Price to produce
22. Placement
23. Promotion
24. Personnel (labor/good help)
25. Know how to price product
26. Knowing how to market different products
27. Need knowledge of how to book commodities
28. Packaging product
29. Location of markets
30. Building consumer base that values local food/permaculture

31. Educating community to value local versus big chain stores
32. Creating value so that the consumer is willing to pay the true price of a locally grown farm product
33. Availability – location needs to be accessible to target market

34. Transporting product to consumer/target population
35. Partnering between farmers to increase availability of products on a consistent basis
36. Healthy food and price – issue for people with low socio-economic status
37. Marketing to specific target population – know your customer
38. Have the customer come to the farm – especially in rural areas – to save money and time transporting the goods to the market
39. Competing in urban areas that have increased demand in “local” and “organic”
40. Rural areas – how to educate consumers to value “local”, etc.

41. Cost of advertising
42. How to diversify marketing options
43. Pricing – know your market/customers - plan your overhead/costs/input to price within range
44. Provide products that your customers want – (i.e., pre-cooked, etc.)
45. Market survey – ask customers to find out what they want
46. Finding markets in rural areas – rethink product to appeal to local community
47. Direct marketing in rural areas (tailgate market) – what is the best spot to attract customers (Note: this is selling, not marketing)
48. Developing innovative ways to create demand and the appeal of the product (display)
49. Rural areas – “off the beaten path – if your farm is 25 miles from the main road, people won’t drive that far. His solution – provide “home-canned goods” to customers at the local farmers’ market
50. Advertising methods – what is the best way for each farmers’ situation? (i.e., rural/urban, etc.)

51. Social media – how to
52. Private label
53. Cost of time and money to process your farm product (i.e. Is there a slaughter facility in your region? Where is the closest commercial-grade kitchen facility for your canned goods?)
54. Value of product that consumer wants
55. Volume of product on consistent basis

APPENDIX D – SUCCESSION PLANNING

Below is a non-prioritized list of all problem statements generated by farmers and landowners from the four breakout sessions. Attempts were made to present this list as close to the voice of the farmers as possible. The question asked was: What are the issues relative to succession planning that hinder your ability to be successful?

1. Heir property issues
2. No one or a shortage of children wanting land or farm
3. Family disputes (descendants can't agree)
4. Know property boundaries
5. New generation does not know the value of land
6. Trust issues
7. Hard to find people to trust and who will take care of your farm
8. Young generation doesn't know about today's farm practices
9. Younger generation is not told the positive things about today's agriculture
10. Not knowing legal rights in regards to what government can do

11. No clear title
12. People who own land won't turn it over to farmers (landowners won't give permission)
13. Lack of power of attorney
14. Minority landowners won't help minority farmers
15. Older generation wants descendants "to do better" (don't want them to work themselves to death farming)
16. Landowners aren't setting up wills
17. How to get youth involved
18. Develop ways to communicate positive messages
19. No wills set up in a timely manner
20. Youth don't always understand what it took to obtain the land

21. Not knowing the viability and economic stability of the farm
22. The youth don't know that farm work can be profitable
23. Need to know the legal aspects and help to pass on the land
24. Develop options for making land profitable other than farming
25. Getting other family members involved
26. Sharing information
27. Many people still believe in "myths"
28. Lack of communications with children/family members
29. Need to know who to contact when there is a problem; such as, a university
30. Need to develop a set time for "farm" training; such as training on how to pick tomatoes
31. Need to know how to work "smarter" without working yourself so hard
32. Need to know what you want before you see a lawyer to develop "will" details
33. Need to make sure we're sending our children to get an Ag education
34. Lack of money to assist with planning

35. Disinterested younger generation
36. Farms too small to make a living
37. Family disagreements
38. No will – lack of probate
39. Communication barriers
40. Untimely property division

41. No legal consultation and professional assistance
42. Tax issues (not paying taxes/tax liens/tax foreclosures/increased taxes)
43. Right of ways & easements
44. Decrease in allotment in farm commodities
45. Lack of knowledge and direction
46. No family interest to carry on - focusing on particular crops specialty or organic
47. Overhead and operating expenses too high
48. Unreliable workers
49. Community and family members not helping each other
50. Too many laws and regulations on small farmers

51. High land taxes
52. Cannot use/own old seeds, must purchase seeds yearly
53. Inability to obtain contracts
54. Season 24/7 weather related
55. Equipment cost/maintenance
56. Barrier – startup cost
57. Supply & demand (hindrance)
58. Land dormant 3 years in preparation for organic farming—wait for certification
59. Organic poultry & livestock – 5 years feeding own corn (susceptible to spray in air from other farms)
60. Landowners sell out to developers because they need money. There needs to be ways of generating financial resources that don't require selling out to developers and result in land loss. Landowners need increased knowledge of resources that are available to them so they don't feel their only option is to sell out to developers

61. No will that identifies clearly who gets the property or how it is to be distributed
62. Not having someone that is interested in taking over
63. No money or resources in farming
64. Kids not interested in coming back
65. Children don't value the land, assets, or property
66. Not having proper business structure in place
67. Taxes – poor management
68. Lack of education
69. Lack of extra income resources
70. Family structure and culture – unwillingness to involve spouse in day to day operations

71. Lack of proper insurance
72. Lake of estate planning

Minority Landowner Magazine 5th Anniversary Conference Program

Thursday, February 24, 2011

12 noon – 1:00 PM

Opening Session – Grand Ballroom

Welcome and Purpose

Victor L. Harris

Publisher and Editor, Minority Landowner

USDA Forest Service

USDA Rural Development

Farm Credit

Donna Taylor Williams

Human Capital Developers

Conference Lead Facilitator

1:00 – 1:30 PM

BREAK – Grand Foyer

1:30 – 3:00 PM

Concurrent Breakout Session 1

Focus on the *Problem*

Team

Golden Tigers

Bulldogs

Thoroughbreds

Blue Tigers

Session

Financial Management

Technical Assistance

Marketing

Succession Planning

Location

Salons ABC

Salons FGH

Wolfpack/Wake Forest

Duke/Tarheel

3:00 – 3:30 PM

BREAK – Grand Foyer

3:30 – 5:00 PM

Concurrent Breakout Session 1
Focus on the *Solution*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Financial Management | Salons ABC |
| Bulldogs | Technical Assistance | Salons FGH |
| Thoroughbreds | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |
| Blue Tigers | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |

5:00 – 6:00 PM

Free time

6:00 – 9:00 PM

Welcome Reception – Crabtree Grill
Sponsored by USDA Rural Development and USDA Forest Service

Friday, February 25, 2011

6:30 – 8:00 AM

Buffet Breakfast – Grand Ballroom

8:00 – 8:20 AM

General Session – Grand Ballroom
Donna Taylor Williams
Process Review and Direction

8:20 – 8:30 AM

Transition Break – Grand Foyer

8:30 – 10:00 AM

Concurrent Breakout Session 2
Focus on the *Problem*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Technical Assistance | Salons FGH |
| Bulldogs | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |
| Thoroughbreds | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |
| Blue Tigers | Financial Management | Salon ABC |

10:00 – 10:20 AM

BREAK – Grand Foyer

10:20 – 11:50 AM

Concurrent Breakout Session 2

Focus on the *Solution*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Technical Assistance | Salons FGH |
| Bulldogs | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |
| Thoroughbreds | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |
| Blue Tigers | Financial Management | Salon ABC |

11:50 AM – 12:15 PM

Transition Break – Grand Foyer

12:15 – 1:30 PM

Buffet Luncheon – Grand Ballroom

Master of Ceremonies, Drenda Williams

*President, National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees
Columbia, Missouri*

Luncheon Speaker, Richard Straight

Lead Agroforester, USDA Forest Service

National Agroforestry Center

Lincoln, Nebraska

1:30 – 1:45 PM

Transition Break – Grand Foyer

1:45 – 3:15 PM

Concurrent Breakout Session 3

Focus on the *Problem*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |
| Bulldogs | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |
| Thoroughbreds | Financial Management | Salon ABC |
| Blue Tigers | Technical Assistance | Salon FGH |

3:15 – 3:45 PM

BREAK – Grand Foyer

3:45 – 5:15 PM

Concurrent Breakout Session 3
Focus on the *Solution*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |
| Bulldogs | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |
| Thoroughbreds | Financial Management | Salon ABC |
| Blue Tigers | Technical Assistance | Salon FGH |

5:15 – 6:00 PM

Free Time

5:30 – 6:30 PM

Hospitality – Grand Foyer

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Minority Landowner Magazine
5th Anniversary Banquet – Grand Ballroom

Introduction of Keynote Speaker
Gwen Lewis, District Conservationist
Macon and Bullock Counties, Alabama
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Walter A. Hill
Dean of the College of Agricultural, Environmental and Natural Sciences
Tuskegee University

Presentations
Victor L. Harris
Minority Landowner

Saturday, February 26, 2011

6:30 – 8:00 AM

Continental Breakfast – Grand Ballroom

8:00 – 8:20 AM

General Session – Grand Ballroom
Donna Taylor Williams
Process Review and Direction

8:20 – 8:30 AM

Transition Break – Grand Foyer

8:30 – 10:00 AM

Concurrent Breakout Session 4

Focus on the *Problem*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |
| Bulldogs | Financial Management | Salon ABC |
| Thoroughbreds | Technical Assistance | Salon FGH |
| Blue Tigers | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |

10:00 – 10:15 AM

BREAK – Grand Foyer

10:15 – 11:45 AM

Concurrent Breakout Session 4

Focus on the *Solution*

| Team | Session | Location |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Golden Tigers | Succession Planning | Duke/Tarheel |
| Bulldogs | Financial Management | Salon ABC |
| Thoroughbreds | Technical Assistance | Salon FGH |
| Blue Tigers | Marketing | Wolfpack/Wake Forest |

11:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Box Lunch

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Master of Ceremonies, James L. Dunn

NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Raleigh, NC

Luncheon Presentation

Estate Planning for Beginners

Dr. John L. Greene, Research Forester

USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station

Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

1:00 – 1:30 PM

Closing Session

Victor L. Harris

Donna Taylor Williams

Adjourn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sponsors

USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry
USDA Rural Development
Farm Credit
USDA Forest Service - Southern Research Station
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program
USDA Forest Service - Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center

Presenters

James L. Dunn
North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Raleigh, NC

Dr. John L. Greene
USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Research Triangle Park, NC

Dr. Walter A. Hill
College of Agricultural, Environmental and Natural Sciences, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, AL

Gwen Lewis
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tuskegee, AL

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Session Recorders

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Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

Sustainable Agriculture
Research and Education
Program



USDA Forest Service
Eastern Forest Environmental
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