

ACTION PLAN

Have you ever been to a meeting where people say they will do certain things, and the next time, and the next time, they are still undone? Or plan to do something only to find you don't have the resources you need, or an unanticipated challenge presents itself? Or maybe you need a system to implement, track, and evaluate progress.

The Importance Of Action Planning

An action plan is a document that lists what steps must be taken in order to achieve a specific goal. It supports clear communication and expectations, implementation and accountability. It is also a useful place to prioritize, evaluate, and can serve as a checklist for completion.

For example, you might use it at your winter planning sessions to organize "to-dos" for your farm. Listing each task and identifying "who" will be in charge, "when" it needs to be completed, what "resources" of time and or purchased materials are needed can help you to prioritize these projects and generate a project list for the season. Scheduling a "next meeting" can help to ensure everyone remains motivated and focused on desired outcomes.

There is an action plan template for your use on the next page. The example action plan below includes:

Action: A specific description of what will be done.

Who: Who is responsible to oversee this? Are there are others involved as well?

When: When will it begin and when will it be completed.

Resources: What additional resources are needed? These might include financial resources or supplies.

Challenges: What challenges or barriers might there be? Identifying these in advance can help things go more smoothly.

Rank: Prioritize based on urgency and importance. 1 for things to do first, 3 to do after 1 and 2.

Next Meeting Check-in: Create accountability. At the next meeting, review the actions listed and check off if they are done, or if not, when they will be. Sometimes things aren't done because something has changed, or new information is in and the action should be canceled.

Evaluate: Did this action accomplish what you wanted?

Action	Who	When	Resources	Potential Challenges	RANK	Next Meeting Check-In			Evaluate
					1-3	Done	Will By	Cancel	
Move the cattle fence to the property line on the east side of W40	Sue is lead. The crew will help.	When fields are too wet for fieldwork. No later than July 1	Pick up 10 cedar posts from fleet farm	Neighbor Bill is worried about property lines. Talk to him in advance with survey in hand so he isn't surprised.	2	√			Perfect! Talking to Bill in advance made a big difference.

Action	Who	When	Resources	Potential Challenges	RANK	Next Meeting Check-In			Evaluate
					1-3	Done	Will By	Cancel	