



New Farmer/Producer Questionnaire

For use when meeting one-on-one with your local Extension staff person.

General Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Farm Location/Name: _____

Why do you want to farm?

What is your experience in commercial agriculture?

Will you farm full-time? Part-time?

Are you willing to attend workshops and trainings to stay current in the industry (production techniques, regulations, trends, etc.)?

Are you a military veteran?

Business Considerations

Do you know how much income you need to cover household expenses and maintain your lifestyle?

Do you have a market for your products? How do you know?

How will you finance your new farm?

Do you have a business plan for your farm?

Do you plan to retail, wholesale, or both?

Do you know what you will charge for your products? How will you set your prices? Is it competitive with other local producers?

How much do you need to sell to maintain your income?

Do you have enough land/greenhouse space to produce your products?

How do you plan to manage risk (market, production, etc.)? Or, what if your crop fails, if you get sick, or a hurricane knocks down your greenhouse? What if the economy is such that no one buys your products in a given year?

If you will be maintaining off-farm employment, will you have enough time to devote to your business?

Who will be the bookkeeper? What format will you use (Paper ledger, Quickbooks, Excel, etc.)?

Will you need to construct any buildings? Are you familiar with the zoning laws in your town? Are you able to subdivide? Are there any conservation easements, wetlands, etc. that would prevent you from building as you wish?

Production Plans

What do you want to grow/produce?

Do you know what it will cost to produce your products (seed, fertility, pesticide, labor, etc.)?

When do you want to start?

Do you already own the equipment you need? Who will maintain your equipment?

What is your water (irrigation) source? (farm pond, well, town water)

Do you have pest management plans for all of your crops (weeds, insects, diseases, animals) and/or knowledge of livestock health issues (parasites, diseases, vaccines, biosecurity, a local veterinarian)?

Do you have a pesticide applicator's license?

Do you want to be certified organic? Certified naturally grown?

Have you done soil tests of your fields?

Do you know a local, successful farmer producing the same type of products you are interested in?

Are you involved in any of the commodity organizations for your industry, ie. SWOAM, MOFGA, MeLNA, MSFVGA?

Labor Considerations

Who will work on the farm?

Do you know how much will you pay them/yourself?

Are you familiar with the regulations and tax implications of hiring employees?
Will you incorporate or operate as a sole proprietor?

Do you plan to have a pick-your-own operation?

Do you have enough liability insurance for people to come to your farm?

If you are planning some type of agri-tourism (PYO, corn maze, etc.), will you have restrooms, running water, etc. for your customers?

Are you familiar with GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) and FSMA (The Food Safety Modernization Act)? Does your buyer require GAP, HAACP, USDA Inspection or some other 3rd party certification?

If you plan to produce meat or meat products, have you identified a slaughter and processing facility to take your animals to? Do you know what level of inspection you will need for your intended markets?

Will you be providing health coverage to yourself and/or your employees?