



This material is based upon work that is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under award number 2019-38640-29878 through the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program under subaward number LS20-327. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Choosing Your Crops Planning Guide

- 1) **What space do you have in your existing operation setup or schedule? Write down the time windows where you can imagine adding another enterprise.**

For example: Are there fields that are being underutilized? Is there a time of year when you aren't as busy?

- 2) **What goal(s) would growing grain help you accomplish for your whole farm?**

For example: Would you like to extend your crop rotation? Would you like to get a little more money for the grain you already grow? Would you like to feed your family grain you've grown yourself?



- 3) Who are the potential buyers in your area and which crops do they buy?
Use our Buyers Handout to help you.

- 4) Now, use your answers and the Choosing Your Crops Handout to try to generate a list of candidate crops.

Deciding Your Scale and Market

- 1) How much land is available for actively growing grain in each season?
*<1 acre = garden scale; 1-10 acres = small scale; 11-100 acres = mid scale;
>100 acres = large scale*
- 2) What equipment do you / will you have available on your farm and in your community for preparing fields, planting, cultivating, harvesting, drying, and storing grain?
Use our Equipment Handout to help you.
- 3) Based on your answers, which markets can you target?
Use our Buyer Handout to help you.



- 4) Compare the markets with your list of candidate crops from the “Choosing your crops” worksheet. Which crops seem like a good place to start?



Post-Session Survey

1) What is your background?

- Beginning Farmer
- Experienced Livestock Farmer
- Experienced Row Crop Farmer
- Experienced Vegetable Farmer
- Other: _____

2) How effective was this session in improving your grain-growing knowledge?

- 5. I learned a ton
- 4.
- 3.
- 2.
- 1. I didn't really learn much

3) As a result of this session, how likely are you to try growing grain for the local market in the upcoming season?

- 5. I'm totally going to try it!
- 4. I am pretty sure I want to do it, but I need to check some things.
- 3. I might give it a go, but I need more information.
- 2. I am considering it but it is unlikely this year.
- 1. I'm not going to try it.

4) If you answered 3 or less in question (3), what additional information would you need to increase the likelihood of you adding grain to your operation?

5) Please provide your name and email so that we can follow up with resources related to this session.

Name: _____

Email: _____

- Yes! Please add me to the monthly Common Grain Alliance newsletter so that I can learn about additional educational resources and events.