



LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

LEWISTON OFFICE
180 E Main Street, Box 130
Lewiston, MN 55952
Phone: 507-523-3366

landstewardshipproject.org

AM I READY?/ ARE WE READY?

*Starter questions to help surface needed thought and discussion
before and during planning for a farm transition*

Questions Established Farmers Need to Ask Themselves Before Seeking a Next Generation Farmer Relationship:

1. What are our goals for our future years? Are both partners on the same page?
 - a. What specific activities will we do?
 - b. Where will we live?
2. What are our long- term goals for the land? What legacy do we want to leave?
3. Is your farm in good economic health (profitable and with sound cash flow) to ensure a positive and lasting transfer? What steps need to be taken to ensure that the next generation/owner is inheriting a financially solid business? What “financial baggage” might you be passing along with the farm and farm business?
4. What income sources do we have to support our interests for our future years?
5. How much do we want to be involved in the farming operation? Physically? Managerially? Financially? Advisory?
6. How comfortable are we with change?
7. Are we able to envision an identity beyond being a farmer?
8. Do we have solid communication skills to work through planning, disagreements and conflict?

Questions Established Farmers Need to Ask Next Generation Farmers:

1. What are your short- term and long- term goals- personally and professionally?
2. What is your business plan? (they should have something on paper) Including plans A, B, C and D...
3. What experience do you have in this enterprise? What management experience do you have in this enterprise?
4. What resources, people, organizations, publications do you use for information?
5. Describe a situation where you had to sacrifice- what did that look like and how did you handle it?
6. What is your experience living in a rural area?
7. What skills do you have beyond farming? (ie. Plumbing, welding, mechanical...)
8. Ask for references that speaks to character, farming experience, managerial experience
9. Visit the current farm they are at (if applicable)

Questions Next Generation Farmers Need to Ask/Do Themselves Before Seeking an Established Farmer Relationship:

1. Am I committed to what it takes to make farming a career?
2. Do I have the experience necessary to farm? Do I have the managerial skills necessary to run the farm?
3. Have a solid business plan for the specific farm you are looking at.
4. Have contingency plans if plan A doesn't work out? Plans B, C and D?
5. Do both in a couple want to farm? (Even if one person is the farmer, is the other partner willing to enter into rural living and the realities that go with farming?)
6. Are we willing to make the sacrifices necessary to make the farm operation viable? Time, money etc.
7. Do we have solid communication skills to work through planning, differences of opinions and conflict?
8. Do I have the personality/patience, etc to go into a relationship with an established farmer or might it suit me better to have a simpler arrangement (such as just buying a farm without trying to have an ongoing relationship)?

Questions Next Generation Farmers Need to Ask Established Farmers:

1. What role(s) do you see yourselves playing in the next 5, 10, 15 years?
2. If you are working into an existing operation- what are the financials for that operation? Can the existing operation support two families?
3. If you are taking over an existing operation- make a careful analysis of the financials. The numbers will be different because your skills and resources are different.
4. What are your thoughts about adding additional enterprises?
5. What does the housing situation look like- if two families will be farming together?
6. If you are not related, how does the established farmer's family play into the picture?
7. Visit the farm and talk with the farm family multiple times. Find ways to work with the farm family.
8. How do you communicate? How can we set up a communication plan?

For further information see Land Stewardship Project's Farm Transition Tools online at:

<http://landstewardshipproject.org/morefarmers/farmtransitiontools>

Or contact Karen Stettler at 507-523-3366 or stettler@landstewardshipproject.org