



FACT SHEET #9

Presenting, Implementing, and Monitoring Your Business Plan

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You can pull together all of the components of your business plan into a usable document that will facilitate implementing your plan and presenting your plan to others. You must organize the components of your business plan in a way that makes the most sense to you and anyone else who might read it.

The Small Farm Business Plan Outline

This should consist of the following components:

- Cover
- Executive Summary
- Table of Contents
- Business Mission
- History and Current Situation
- Vision and Goals
- Marketing Strategy
- Operations Strategy
- Management and Human Resources Strategy
- Financial Strategy
- Projected Income
- Appendices with Relevant Information

Variations on the Small Farm Business Plan

You will have a lot of useful information once you put all of these elements together into your small farm business plan. However, you can use abbreviated versions of this business plan to provide information on your farm to other people. They may not need all of this information. Here are several alternate versions for different audiences.

For Lenders or Other Investors

- Cover
- Executive Summary
- Farm Description
- Strategic Plan
- Production and Operations Plan
- Marketing Plan
- Human Resources Plan
- Financial Plan

For Family Members

- Cover
- Mission
- Values
- Vision
- Goals
- History and Current Situation
- Whole Farm Business Strategy
- Human Resources Plan
- Contingency Plan
- Monitoring Checkpoints
- Timeline and To-Do List

Plan for New or Alternate Product

- Cover
- Executive Summary
- Statement of Goals and Objectives
- Background of Proposed Business Idea
- Technical Description of Product
- Description of Industry and Competition
- Marketing Analysis and Strategy
- Operations Analysis and Strategy
- Human Resources Analysis and Strategy
- Financial Analysis and Strategy
- Supporting Data and Assumptions
- Conclusions and Summary
- Appendices

Plan for Cooperative or Other Collaborative Marketing Group

- Cover
- Mission Statement
- Executive Summary
- Management Team
- Market Description
- Product Description
- Business Strategy
- Financial Plan
- Appendices

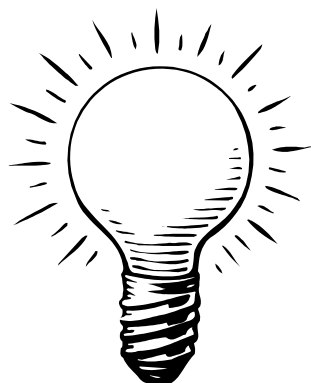
Plan for Beginning Farmers or Start-Up Businesses

- Cover
- Mission Statement
- Executive Summary
- Management Team
- Market Description
- Product Description
- Business Strategy
- Financial Plan
- Appendices

Presentation Pitfalls

You can use any of these business plans to present information to your audience in a way that is meaningful and relevant to them. However, there are several presentation mistakes of which you should be aware.

- Do not present your audience with too much detail. Too much information can overwhelm your reader and make it hard for them to find the material that they need to know.
- Do not overuse graphics. Use graphics such as tables, charts, or pictures to supplement your writing, not replace it.
- Include an executive summary. If you do not have one of the documents, you may lose the interest of any audience.
- Use good communication skills. Try to make your business as usable and understandable as possible. Make multiple drafts and have people read over your plan to make sure it is clear and logical.
- Stay focused on the marketing plan. Do not get carried away with your great ideas for your farm – stayed grounded in reality.
- When making sales estimates, focus on potential sales rather than production estimates. Remember, you have to sell what you produce.
- Make reasonable and realistic financial projections. People will not take you seriously if they think your financial projections are unrealistic.
- You will need to be aware of technical language, acronyms, or other language that others will not understand. You may even want to create a list of definitions for your reader.



Record Keeping



You can also use your business plan to serve as a framework for record keeping. Small farmers often forget how important record keeping is when planning and maintaining a small farm business. Here are a few ideas to consider for your small farm records. There are many more options out there, so don't forget to use your business plan to guide this process.

Marketing

- Track customer purchases, feedback, and locations
- Keep contact information such as mailing or email addresses

Operations

- Track productivity through rates of gain or yields
- Record pasture compositions, soil test results, protein content of feed, etc
- Wildlife populations on your farm

Human Resources

- Track your own, as well as others', time spent working

Finances

- Use accounting sheet or software to keep track of annual income, monthly cash flow, enterprise cost/profit, and financial ration summary

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