Creating a Farm Business Mission Statement

What is a mission statement?

- A good mission statement succinctly defines a person or an organization
- It describes what they are trying to accomplish and what they value
- It explains “who we are, what we do, where we’re headed”
- Think of it as the elevator pitch for your business.

Ways to use a mission statement:

- Display in your business to guide family, employees, and customers
- Use on business cards and other promotional materials
- Part of a business plan that gives quick sense of owner and business

Characteristics of a good mission statement:

- Brief – one or two sentences
- Quickly tells what you do, what you sell, and a quick sense of your values
- Clear, concise, informative
- It is not a “to do” list for your business

Examples of Mission Statements:

Snowdrift Farm

It is our mission at Snowdrift Farm to cultivate an organic community that encourages the creation and use of handcrafted soaps and body care products, and other handmade and small batch products. We strive to operate our company honorably, with creativity and profitability, and with the utmost respect for those our products and services touch.

___ Like ___ Dislike Why?_____

Red Fire Farm

The mission of Red Fire Farm is to be a year-round local source for high quality food and ornamental crops grown at our farm using organic principles that result in safe food and a healthy environment.

___ Like ___ Dislike Why?_____

MBC Farms

MBC Farms is a producer of grains, oilseeds, specialty crops, and milk. Our mission is to be recognized by our business associates and competitors as one of the top producers in our area and to make sure that productivity translates into prosperity and growth for everyone involved with our farm.

___ Like ___ Dislike Why?_____

Sunrise Farms

Sunrise Farms' mission is to provide customers with the best pastured poultry and honey we can produce through wise land stewardship and animal husbandry.

___ Like ___ Dislike Why?_____

Nugget Nursery

Nugget Nursery is a wholesale ornamental nursery stock producer striving to add life to a concrete world through the use of plant material and cultivated minds.

___ Like ___ Dislike Why?_____

Getting Your Mission Statement on Paper

1. Let's start by defining what type of farm business you have. These are some examples – use a word or phrase that fits YOUR business.

● Livestock (species) ● Forage or hay ● Vegetables ● Nursery ● Greenhouse ● Berries ● Mushrooms	• Orchard • Dairy • Cut flowers • Agritourism • Bees • Medicinal Herbs • Diversified operation (describe)

2. For this question, think about what makes your products better or more desirable than your competition's. Again, these are just examples. Use your own words. If you grow commodity crops, this may not apply to you.

• Availability • Size • Quality • Fresh • Product mix • Raw farm product	• Pasture raised • Taste • Market locations • Value-added • Branded • Others – specific to your business

3. What benefits to the customer make your product unique or better? Consider intangibles too, like your farm identity or story. Is there something about your or your farm that will give your customers perceived value when buying from you? (5^{th} generation farmer, veteran, woman-owned business, etc.)
    - Fresh (long-lasting)
    - Healthy
    - Taste
    - Farm Story

4. Next, write down a few words that describe your farming practices. Yours may not be listed here and you might also use more than one practice.

• Conventional • Organic • Sustainable • Hormone-free • Grass-fed • Silvopasture	• Biodynamic • Regenerative • No-till • Permaculture • Hydroponic • Others?

5. Write down words or phrases that best describe values or principles that guide your choice of farming practice. Here are a few examples:

• Sustainable • Local • Environmental stewardship • Profitable • Fresh	• Healthy • Community involvement • Quality • Natural • Rural heritage • Efficient

6. Write down how you sell your products & services. Maybe others, may be more than one.

• CSA • On-farm retail sales • Wholesale • Farmers market	• U-Pick • Experiential (agritourism) • Direct sales to restaurants • E-commerce (online)

7. Words that describe your customer base:

• Local consumers • Retail outlets • Restaurants • Tourists • Other (describe)

8. Words or phrases you want your farm to be known for:

• Family atmosphere • Freshness • Humane • Friendly service • Superior quality • Restorative	• Honesty • Integrity • Progressive • Welcoming • Picturesque • Conservation

9. If you haven't captured it already, what makes your farm unique? _____

10. Using the answers you provided in the previous questions, make a 1-2 sentence draft of your mission statement. Remember, *clear, concise,* and *informative*.

After you have a draft mission statement, you can ask others to review it and continue refining it until you're satisfied.