

SUCCESS in NEBRASKA & BEYOND

The Power of Negotiation and Open Conversation: A Hybrid Leasing Educational Series for Midwestern Farm Women

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*"I learned enough to be dangerous as I embark on the path to negotiation of land and pasture leases. Thank you for all of the email communications and for the time that you put into making this such a successful program. What a wonderful first impression along with such a positive experience."
- Participant*

Situation: The Power of Negotiation and Open Conversation was a collaborative effort between the Women in Agriculture Programs in Indiana, Kansas, and Nebraska. The project focused on agricultural lease agreements, landlord-tenant relationships, negotiations, and conservation. It highlighted three unique landownership challenges.

- **Indiana:** An absentee landowner sought to better understand her leases and land management options.
- **Kansas:** A generational ranching family recognized the need for formal lease agreements as they worked with distant landlords.
- **Nebraska:** A future landowner prepared to manage family farmland while navigating limited transparency and urban development pressures.

Outcomes: This program series empowered participants by increasing their knowledge and confidence in land management and lease agreements. In Indiana: The landowner gained awareness of available resources, different lease types, and how to better manage her property. In Kansas, the participant recognized the need for formal business practices, understanding the risks of handshake agreements and the importance of landlord-tenant communication. In Nebraska on the other hand, the future landowner learned about farmland rental arrangements, conservation clauses, and established a valuable network for future support. Overall, the project engaged 589 participants across 15 states, offering both in-person and remote participation. Over 75% of respondents reported increased awareness of local land values and rental rates. Over 90% gained a better understanding of written leases and key inclusions, with 66% feeling more confident in lease negotiations. Additionally, over 70% learned strategies to improve landlord-tenant relationships, and 60% became more aware of available conservation programs.

Impacts: The program led to significant changes in land management and lease agreements. In Indiana, a landowner developed a forage lease, conducted soil tests, and used Ag Lease 101 to improve crop and hunting leases. In Kansas, a participant adopted formal written leases, even with family, emphasizing the importance of clear terms to protect relationships. In Nebraska, a family reviewed an estate plan, appraised property, and ensured

the land remained in agricultural production rather than being sold for development.

A 3-month follow-up survey assessed the program's impact, recognizing that many leases for 2023 had already been negotiated. Among 157 respondents, 107 reviewed their lease, 65 improved their landlord-tenant relationship, 33 adopted a written lease, and 46 sought more information on conservation programs—25 of whom implemented a new conservation practice. The results highlight the program's impact on both production and legal risk management.

In conclusion, the program empowered women to take proactive steps, strengthen lease agreements, and make informed choices to safeguard their land and family relationships.

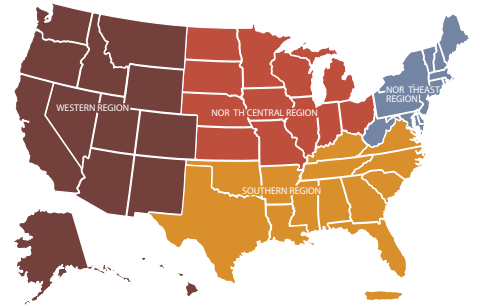
SUCCESS in EVERY STATE

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