



# Evaluation/Impacts

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NORTH CENTRAL  
EXTENSION  
RISK  
MANAGEMENT  
EDUCATION

Adapted from the Extension Risk  
Management Education Grants  
Program Team Presentation




United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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## ERME Mission

Educating America’s farmers and  
ranchers to manage the unique risks of  
producing food for the world’s table

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# Return on Investment

- ERME grants are an investment in agricultural producer education
- If the risk management outcomes that producers achieve are the return on investment in funded projects...
- Then measuring producer outcomes is paramount to demonstrating the return on investment and should be an integral component of program planning and design, not an afterthought!

# Evaluation Methodology

## Outcomes

“Begin with the end in mind”\*  
or  
“plan backward, implement forward”\*\*



\* Stephen Covey (2004). The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People  
\*\* Jon Newkirk, Former Director, WSU Western Center  
Beverly Anderson Parsons, WKKF Cluster Evaluator



# A Word on Outcomes

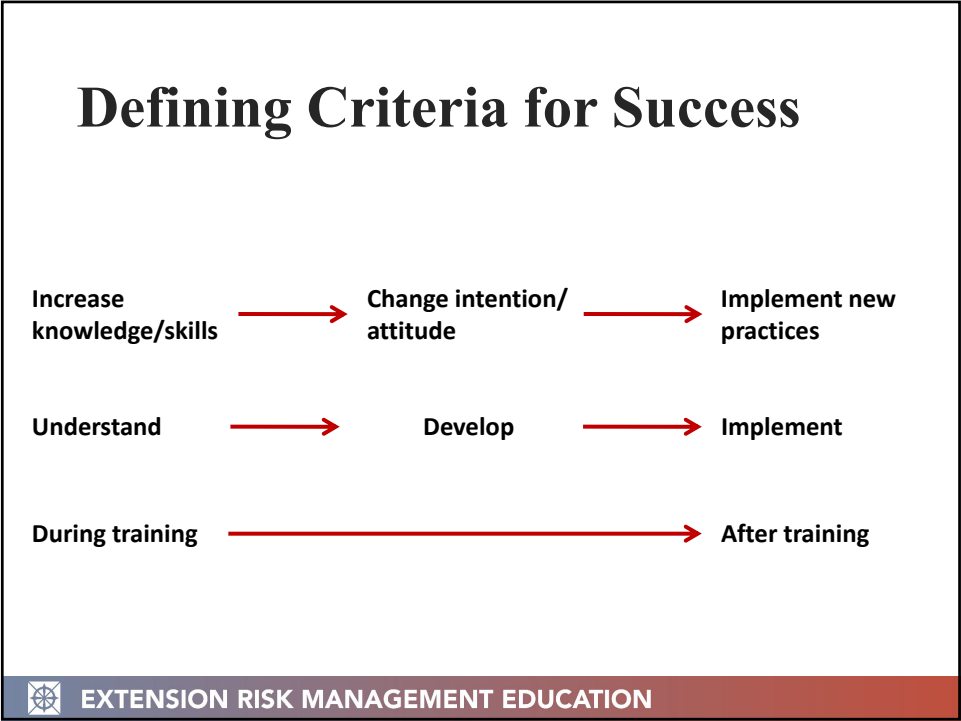
- Focus on producer outcomes
  - Change in knowledge → understanding
  - Change in action → development and implementation
  - Change in condition → impact
- Proposed outcomes should drive program planning
  - What are the resources, inputs, steps, and outputs needed to help producers achieve outcomes?
  - Are the outcomes measurable?
- Outcomes, not outputs
  - Meetings and participants are steps and outputs - the measurable outcome should be focused on what producers achieve
  - Curriculum, tools, papers, etc. are outputs, not outcomes – the outcome is what producers achieve by using the outputs



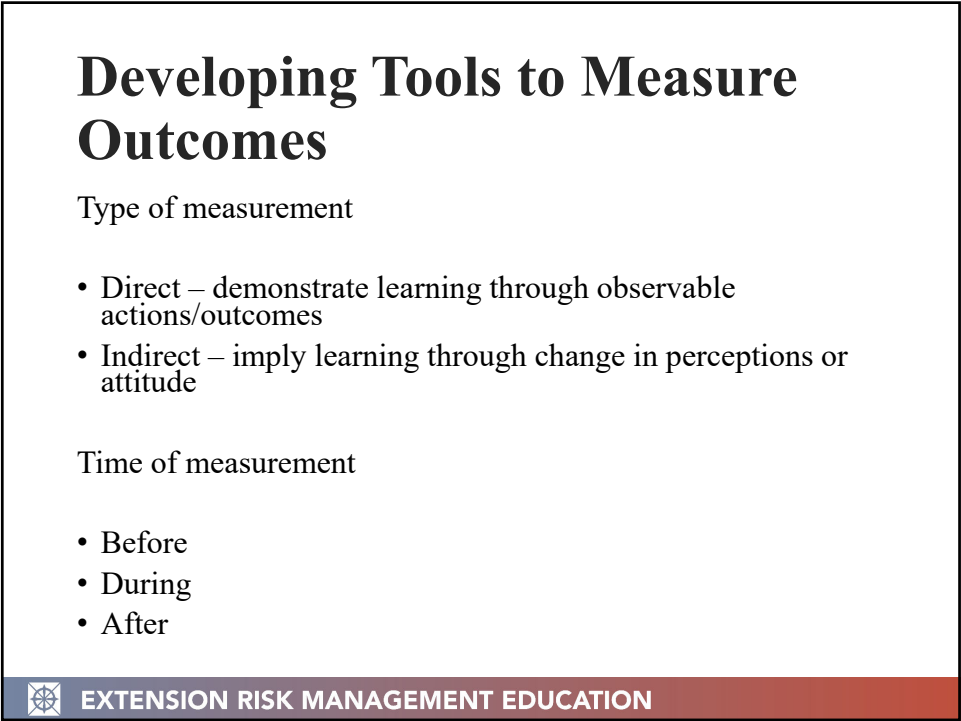
# Evaluation Methodology

## Measuring Outcomes





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# Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

Method of measurement

- Observation (draft business plan, permit; application)
- Peer assessment of product or skill
- Self-assessment of a product or skill
- Photos, screen capture, video (before/after)
- Questionnaire/survey
- Interview (individual, group)
- Submitted/approved document (application, permit, report)
- Test
- Testimonial
- Logs, records
- Other


# Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

When writing questions, think about:

- How the information gathered will be used
- The way you ask a question will influence how participants respond
- When you ask a question will influence how participants respond

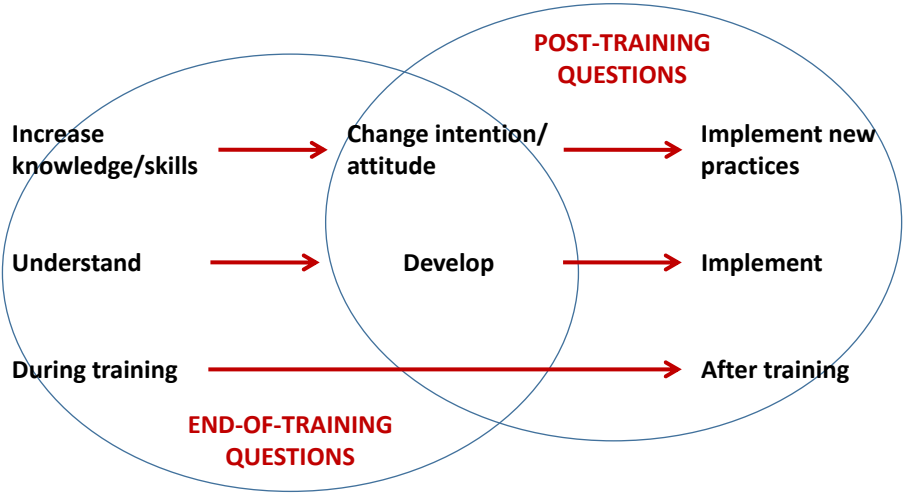
## Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

- End-of-training questions
  - Knowledge gained/skills learned
  - Intentions to change behavior/change in attitudes
- Post-training questions
  - Actual implementation of new practices/changes in behavior
  - Lasting knowledge gains

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## Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes




**During training** (Left Circle - END-OF-TRAINING QUESTIONS):

- Increase knowledge/skills
- Understand
- Develop

**After training** (Right Circle - POST-TRAINING QUESTIONS):

- Change intention/ attitude
- Implement new practices
- Implement

Flow: Increase knowledge/skills → Change intention/ attitude → Implement new practices; Understand → Develop → Implement; During training → After training.

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Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes


End-of-Training Question Development

Likert Scale Questions

Intentions

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement:

In the next 3 months, I will implement	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
Practice A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes


End-of-Training Question Development

Retrospective Pre-Post Questions

Knowledge/Skills

How much did you / do you now know about these topics?

	BEFORE this program I knew...					NOW I know...				
	Very Little	Little	Some	Much	Very Much	Very Little	Little	Some	Much	Very Much
1. Topic 1	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2. Topic 2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3. Topic 3	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

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## Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

### End-of-Training Question Development

Analyzing Retrospective Pre-post Questions

- Compare percent change in each column
- Calculate average point shift of participants

How much <b>did you/</b> <b>do you now</b> know about these subjects?	Change in what participants indicated they knew after training versus before it.					Average point shift
	Very little	Little	Some	Much	Very much	
Topic 1	0%	-11%	+6%	-3%	+7%	+0.02
Topic 2	-16%	+2%	-29%	+37%	+7%	+1.9
Topic 3	-5%	-9%	-17%	+30%	+1%	+0.55

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## Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

### Post-Training Question Development

Retrospective Pre-Post Questions

Indicate the extent to which you did the following <b>BEFORE</b> the workshop and <b>SINCE</b> the workshop	BEFORE the training, I did...					SINCE the training, I do...				
	Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	Always	Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	Always
Practice A	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Practice B	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Practice C	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

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## **Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes**

### **End of/Post-Training Question Development**

#### **Open-Ended Questions**

- Key to gathering success stories (and other information too)
- Ask for most extreme cases – the best or the most – if you want to identify successes
- Can also have them interview each other
- Can have them indicate on evaluation if they'd be willing to be interviewed later



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## **Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes**

### **End of/Post-Training Question Development**

#### **Open-Ended Questions**

- What is the most useful thing you learned and why?
- Of the practices covered, which one are you most likely to implement in the next 6 months and why?



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Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

Post-Training Question Development

Open-Ended Questions

- In what ways have you applied what you learned in the training to your own work?
- What new practice have you implemented that has been most beneficial? Why?

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Developing Tools to Measure Outcomes

Post-Training Question Development

Yes/No combined with Open-Ended Questions

Since the training, have you done any of the following?	No	Yes	If <b>yes</b> , please describe why you did it and how the practice has impacted your work.
Practice A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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## Evaluation Distribution

### Post-Training Evaluation Formats

Must have participants' contact information!



Formats	+	-
Mail	Reaches audience w/o internet	Costs of mailing surveys and reminders, time required to enter data
Phone	Reaches audience w/o internet, easy analysis, can ask probing questions	Time consuming, need to develop script, participants might be more hesitant to tell truth
Web	Free survey programs available, easy analysis, Can sample everyone	Very easy to ignore

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## Evaluation Methodology

### *Measuring Impacts*



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National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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## Outcome Based Reporting

### Documents

- Producer progress towards achieving goals (short and long term)
- Producer stories and testimonials
- Unexpected results/outcomes

### Provides access to

- RME curriculum and resource materials
  - Training methodologies
  - Evaluation tools



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## Integrating Outcomes into Project Reporting

### Summarizing outcomes

- Project overview
- Actual outcomes
- Comments/stories/examples of success

### Input into other reports



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## Impactful Reporting

- Builds capacity for educators who work directly with farmers and ranchers through...
  - Access to risk management curriculum and resources
  - Access to training methodologies
  - Access to successful evaluation methods and tools
- Creates transparency
- Improves accountability
- Documents in a database format risk management outcomes/impacts for farmers and ranchers.
  - Available to federal and state agencies, government offices such as the GAO and OMB, institutions and other funding partners.
- Keeps moving the bar higher for the effectiveness of risk management education.



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## Measuring Economic Benefit

Increasing focus on the economic benefit

How can we measure?

- Self reporting
  - How much did your income change?
  - Did your income change by? – use ranges
- Participation data plus credible financial data
  - Example project evaluations

**Let your regional ERME Center know if you want to do an economic benefit evaluation**



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## In Summary...

If the “Return on Investment” of grant dollars awarded are the risk management improvements that producers will make...

Then measuring producer outcomes becomes an integral component of program planning and design, not an afterthought!



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