



Michigan

Coaching Farm Families to a Solid Farm Transition Plan

The increased use of computer technology on the farm has caused educators to re-think their methods of program delivery and become more innovative in their curriculum development. This combined with the importance of farm transition and estate planning is the focus of this 2015 project which involved farmers and their adult children, committed to formalizing a farm enterprise transition plan.

These producers and their families received valuable information via Skype or phone conferencing. This allowed the farm family members not only in Michigan, but in Iowa and Indiana to take part face-to-face virtually, to discuss business planning and take part in the Transitions platform. This project addressed the risk management topics of human risk and legal risk.

The outcomes were very positive for the program. Project Director Kristine Ranger reported that for several families at least one generation, if not

more, were not comfortable using computers. As a result there was a large learning curve for these folks as they worked through the on-line transition planning tool. Other families were reluctant to record their working information on-line as they moved forward with their planning, because they just didn't feel safe doing so. Because of this, project personnel put more emphasis on actual farm visits to assist these families towards their final goals. In fact, these personal visits were critical as planning continued because they helped to establish trust and credibility between farm families and business coaches.

Even though the funding for this project is completed, several business coaches have continued working with the families to assist them as they finish implementing their transition and succession plans. These 41 families now have the tools to keep their transition plan updated as their family business relationships and goals change in the years to come.

One family noted that "The information on transferring land, livestock, recording financials, and taxes was especially helpful and gave us the basis for completing our transition plan."



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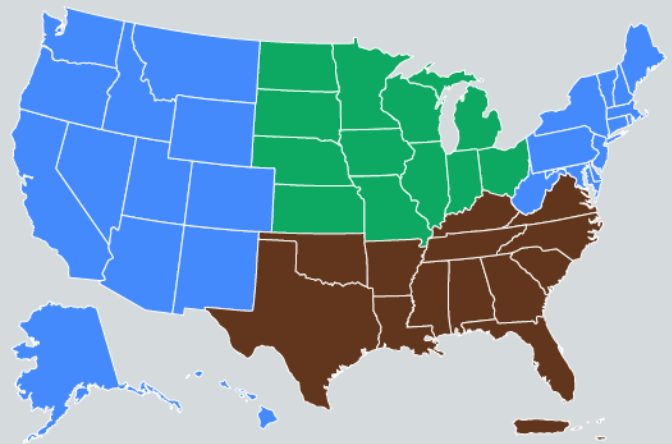
National Institute
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**“Educating America’s farmers and ranchers
to manage the unique risks of producing food
for the world’s table.”**

Extension Risk Management Education (ERME) is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Projects are producer-focused, results-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted results that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those results.

Extension Risk Management Education has funded innovative programs that have generated tangible results for producers in every state. ERME is committed to funding results, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration. View the accomplishments of all funded projects on our website.
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