

WHOLE FARM MANAGEMENT: FROM START-UP TO SUSTAINABILITY PDF, EPUB, EBOOK



Garry Stephenson | 288 pages | 01 Dec 2019 | Storey Publishing LLC | 9781635860740 | English | North Adams, United States

Whole Farm Management - Storey Publishing

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It is mandatory to know the wattage of the device in order to choose the appropriate power converter. Recommended power converters Buy Now. Product Details []. Drawings on the experience and insights of 12 contributing authors and 16 farmers from across North America, it offers a holistic approach to farm management, addressing the interconnected elements of the farm system and emphasizing sustainable, organic methods. No question and answer found. This empowers anyone to start planting seeds for a future farm business. Whole Farm Management is an indispensable resource. It has just as much value for the beginning farmer learning how to produce a crop at profit as it does for the journey person who is already in business, looking to avoid burnout.

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The emphasis throughout is on using sustainable agricultural systems and managing the whole farm, whether raising grass-based livestock, perennial food crops, or annual crops such as flowers. Case studies of successful farms, along with guidance and solutions to common problems from long-time farmers, round out this essential handbook. Whole Farm Management will be your one-stop shop for everything you need to know to start your farm.

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Managing: Whole farm management provides the framework for developing a successful farm or ranch business. **Learning:** Farmers just starting out go through four predictable stages of development, and the stage individual farmers are in affects how and what and when they learn. **Succeeding:** Small farmers define success in many different ways and find fulfillment in all the opportunities a farm provides. Whole farm management is a holistic and progressive approach to farm management. The basic premise is that you can make better decisions when you look at the whole farm. From this perspective, farmers take into account all the different components within the farm system and how they interact.

Physical resources: Soil, water, and climate resources that are the physical base of the farm, plus the compatible infrastructure added in terms of farm equipment, irrigation, and so on. **Biological resources:** Soil organisms, beneficial insects, wildlife, crops, livestock, pests, and more. **Financial resources:** Business planning, markets and marketing, accounting systems, liability, profitability, and more.

Human resources: The household or human dimension of the farm, the package of skills and source of labor, and the desire for work that is satisfying and fulfilling. Decisions in one part of the farm affect other parts of the farm directly or indirectly. This dynamic plays out in pragmatic issues, such as matching the correct size main line pipe to an irrigation pump so all the peppers can be irrigated during a hot spell right after planting. Growing is where it starts. You have to know you can grow something before you can figure out how to sell it. But once you grow it, you have to figure out how to market. It also plays out in market and production issues.

For example, if you plan to increase production to meet market demand, it is crucial to consider the impact on other parts of the farm system — the whole farm. Will increasing production lead to overgrazing pastures? Will it shorten rotations and intensify vegetable pest management and soil health problems? Does the farm have the capacity in terms of processing, wash and pack, cooler space, labor, and other infrastructure to support increasing production? If the answers are yes, then the whole farm is ready, and increasing production will benefit the whole farm. We have been working with beginning farmers and ranchers for more than 20 years. Training new farmers and helping them launch their businesses has long been a national priority, and both federal and state public agencies have dedicated programs and funding to make this happen.

Yet, even with a successful start, we also see many beginning farmers decide to leave farming within their first 10 years. Certainly, this is true for many career paths: even when people are successful in a career, many decide to change direction and do something new. From our research, we have learned that farmers and their farm businesses tend to move through four fairly predictable stages of development during those first 10 or so years.

This matters because farmers are ready for different information at different times. Education and training programs need to meet new farmers where they are on their path. How do we know this? After so many years of working with farmers, we decided to step back and study how farmers develop over time. We engaged with experienced and beginning farmers over the course of three years with surveys, focus groups, and interviews. When we analyzed all of the data, we found a clear pattern see Beginning Farmer Stages of Development table. Farmers vary in how many years they spend at each stage, but they go through the stages in order.

As they pass through these stages, farmers confront how to produce crops, assess markets, plan and improve infrastructure, hire and manage labor, establish and use increasingly complex accounting systems, balance family and farm demands, and much more. Again, their need for information and training on these topics is to a large degree determined by their stage of development as farmers and business operators. Why all

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Lifestyle: Farmers strive for work-life balance, physical and emotional health, and being at home with their family. Financial: Farmers set the predominant goal to be financially viable and cover household needs but not to maximize income at the expense of their values. In this chapter, you will consider the values that you bring to the business, build a vision and mission for your ideal farm, and create a foundation to move forward by setting some goals. If you do not yet own or lease a farm, this chapter is a first step in organizing your thoughts around what you need or want in a farm before you buy — such as soils, water, and climate — and in beginning to create a plan for your future farm business. This chapter is designed to help you think through the aspects of your farm that make it work for you and help you reach your goals.

Do It will help you develop a holistic view of your farm operations and how to put resources to work: the practical aspects of equipment and infrastructure, irrigation, labor management, and farm energy. This chapter is based on the idea that before deciding what you want to grow on your farm, you need to know if and how you can sell it. You will be introduced to some basic marketing concepts and learn about the most common marketing channels used by small farms in the United States. Your mission statement, vision and values, and the other assessments you worked on in Dream It will play a major role in developing your marketing strategy. Sound business management is essential to the success of your small farm business. Business management does not need to be intimidating or overly complicated. With some training and practice, all farmers can adopt successful business management practices.

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The 16 farmers featured in this book represent 9 farms from across the United States, producing a variety of crop and livestock products. As you will discover, each has a unique story in terms of how he or she has developed the farm business. As you learn from them, keep in mind that their comments are from the moment in time when we interviewed them.

These snapshots provide a rich picture of the challenges and rewards of starting a farm business. All the farmers included here continue to evolve and adapt with changing circumstances — developing new approaches to farming, changing the size of the farm, and finding new markets. One of them has transitioned out of farming, while another has developed a farming consulting business. Throughout this book, you will learn about how they got started and what drives them. Here is a quick introduction: Operators: Melanie Kuegler and Chris Jagger. Products: organic vegetables. Size: 67 acres. See profile. Operators: Beth Hoinacki and Adam Ryan. Products: organic and biodynamic vegetables and blueberries. Several business structures are compared, along with possible interpersonal dynamics. Planning for the long term future includes handing on the farm to the next farmers, whether those are family members or not.

Licenses and certifications need to be attended to, and the farmers in this book explain how they tackle those regulations and use them to distinguish the quality of their business and farm products. The text ends with a short section of challenges and advice from seven of the farms. Whole Farm Management is a valuable book to make farming sustainable for the farmers, who can then provide good food for people, and contribute to a better world. Nov 01, Phillip Cole rated it it was amazing. Though farms are not as widespread as the once were, they are still vital the country.

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The information is clear and concise with easy to follow advice and guidelines. To help explain things, there are case studies of farms that help you see what they did and experienced, and worksheets are provided for you to use as you make your plans. I received a complimentary copy from the publisher through NetGalley. All opinions are my own. Aug 08, Josh rated it it was amazing Shelves: business , farming. Fantastic resource! Thorough and expansive in its presentation of knowledge. As someone who dreams and plays around with the idea of one day farming, reading the book opened my eyes to a lot of challenges and obstacles I could face if I ever go down that path.

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This chapter includes cycles of energy flow, nitrogen, carbon, water, all to help us come up with strong integrated production strategies. Reading the accounts of how various farmers dealt with problems and adjusted their plan contains food for thought for all of us. The last chapter is guidance on keeping the farm over the long haul. Risk Management is exactly as it sounds. In farming there is always risk. Also the skill to mitigate the impact of things we cannot control but may be able to change a bit. This chapter helps us understand business opportunities, legal requirements and options, and the challenges and rewards of farming. It helps us identify steps to address risk. Several business structures are compared, along with possible interpersonal dynamics. Planning for the long term future includes handing on the farm to the next farmers, whether those are family members or not. Licenses and certifications need to be attended to, and the farmers in this book explain how they tackle those regulations and use them to distinguish the quality of their business and farm products.

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