

WORKSHEET #1

FARMING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISES*

Sections I and II of this exercise are adapted from guidelines proposed by experienced on-farm mentors to help you complete a self-evaluation prior to elective peer (i.e., mentor-to-mentor) review. It is designed to assist aspiring and practicing mentors in a process of candid self-evaluation. Place a "✓" in the box that most accurately represents your response to each question, with **1= strongly agree** and **5= strongly disagree**. Then total the number of checks you have made in each column. High numbers in Columns 4 and 5 suggest that planning for improvement is a good idea. *Section III* includes additional questions developed by an experienced on-farm mentor. Use *Section IV* to create a summary statement of what these exercises have taught you. Keep a record of the results on file and use the outcome to guide your steps toward improvement in deficient areas.

I. Farming Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment

AGREE → DISAGREE

1	2	3	4	5	
					Other farmers often ask me for advice.
					I produce healthy crops and/or healthy animals.
					I have a fertility plan and conduct regular soil tests, etc.
					I participate in on-farm research projects.
					I have improved in one or more important areas over the last year. (Make a note of these areas.)
					I have improved in one or more important areas over the last five years. (Make a note of these areas.)
					I keep up with current research relevant to my farm.
					I have access to appropriate technology for the scale/type of my farm operation.
					I am conscientious about maintaining and repairing equipment.
					All in all, I feel confident about my technical farming knowledge and skills.
					Total

* Note: You may decide to use the self-evaluation worksheets in this guide to create your own evaluation forms and/or an evaluation form that your trainees may use.

FARMING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISES (CONT'D)

II. Farm Management Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment (CONT'D)

AGREE → DISAGREE

1	2	3	4	5	
					I have a business plan.
					I have a whole farm plan.
					I have a marketing plan.
					I am conscientious about keeping good records.
					I am an effective time manager.
					My paperwork and routine jobs are done in a timely fashion.
					I am rarely behind in one or more management areas.
					I am an effective personnel manager.
					The rate of my employee turnover is ok.
					I provide proper employee compensation and adhere to the terms of employee agreements and contracts.
					I provide employees and others with a clear work schedule.
					I manage my farm business in compliance with state, local, and federal laws and regulations.
					My farm has a good safety record.
					The general appearance of my farm reflects good management.
					I carry necessary insurance in sufficient amounts.
					My farm is achieving annual increases in sales.
					My farm does business based on fair contracts.
					There is good evidence that my customers are well satisfied. If, for example, my farm is a CSA, the rate of membership turnover is acceptable.
					My farm serves a diversity of markets.
					I can effectively manage and/or am free from debt.
					If I rent or lease farmland, I have a good relationship with the owners.
					All in all, I feel confident about my farm management knowledge and skills.
					Total