Taking the Dys out of Dysfunctional: Developing Functional Farm Meetings

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The Purdue Farm Succession Team is committed to cultivating strong farm families through the succession planning process by providing educational opportunities and current resources.

Mock Farm Meeting

• Watch us in action
• Discuss with your family what are the pitfalls
• Share as a group your ideas

Why Have Farm Meetings

• To openly discuss issues related to the farming operation
• To ensure everyone is on the same page
• To ensure records are kept up-to-date

Who’s at the Table and When?

Current Farm Owners:
Starting point – establish planning goals, identify concerns

2nd Tier Participants:
Children/next generation owners – refining concerns/mechanics

3rd Tier Participants:
Spouses/extended family/all tangential ownership interests – plan development & execution

How to Get Started

• Have ground rules
• Develop an agenda
• Avoid having the meeting at the kitchen table
• Allow each person to share their opinion
• Respect each other’s time
• Decide and talk about how decisions are going to be made
Common Farm Meeting Pitfalls
- Not having meetings
- Not having timely regular meetings
- Dominate stakeholder
- Generational differences
- Never taking a break from the meeting
- Not understanding nonverbal communication

Interpreting Non-Verbal Communication

Tips for Maximizing Each Generation

Baby Boomers
- Allow them to ruminate on any new idea or proposed change before implementation
- Communicate needs for time off, flexibility, and family obligations

Generation X
- Communicate with them, and give them opportunities to express concerns!
- Allow them opportunities for professional development
- Encourage them use their technology savvy to improve your operation, or any other skill they have!

Millennials
- Have regular staff meetings, and ask for their input.
- Allow them opportunities to learn, on-the-job and from outside sources.
- Don’t talk down to them, allow them to work regularly in teams, with you!
- Give them as much flexibility as possible with work schedules, attire, environments, and tasks.

Mock Farm Meeting
- Watch us in action
- Discuss with your family what went right
- Share as a group your ideas
3 Different Types of Meetings

• Day to Day Meetings
  • Focusing on the daily operations that need to take place
• Strategic Planning
  • Regular scheduled meetings that focus on long range activities
• Annual Business Meeting
  • Focuses on estate/succession planning