



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## ESTABLISH YOUR VALUES

Strategic Thinking for the Farm Business

Go to [farms.extension.wisc.edu](https://farms.extension.wisc.edu)



### Personal Values Exercise Worksheet

Values establish our purpose and vision for the future, and they shape how we make the day-to-day and long-term decisions that affect our business and our success.

This exercise will lead you through the process of identifying your personal values to help you establish your business' core values. It works best if completed by each member of the farm's leadership and management team. The list below contains a sampling of value words that represent important foundational principles by which decisions are made. Feel free to add and use your own value words that are not listed.

#### Individual Values

Honesty  
Initiative  
Empathy  
Family  
Integrity  
Humility

Determination  
Passion  
Growth  
Creativity  
Faith  
Results oriented

Risk-taking  
Courage  
Honor  
Happiness  
Loyalty  
Harmony

Quality of life  
Humor  
Drive  
Competence  
Organization  
Persistence

Stability  
Traditions  
Wisdom

#### Relationship-Based Values

Team player  
Empathy  
Positive attitude  
Harmony  
Accountability

Communication  
Trust  
Transparent  
Respect  
Mentorship

Fun  
Acknowledgement  
Receptive  
Flexibility  
Support

Friendship  
Relationships  
Solution oriented  
Dedication  
Dependable

Security  
Sincerity  
Uniqueness

#### Business-Oriented Values

Curiosity  
Efficiency  
Initiative  
Change  
Adaptability  
Problem Solving  
Growth  
Creativity

Innovation  
Results oriented  
Responsibility  
Risk-taking  
Loyalty  
Competitive  
People  
Profitability

Planning  
Objective  
Entrepreneurship  
Safety  
Goal-oriented  
Quality of product  
Integrity  
Excellence

Strategic thinking  
Solution oriented  
Respect  
Fairness  
Leadership  
Knowledge  
Calm  
Inquisitive

Organization  
Professionalism  
Prosperity  
Stability  
Uniqueness  
Welcoming  
Wisdom  
Frugal

#### Externally-Focused Values

Community Support  
Environment  
Sustainability

Education  
Customer focused  
Excellence

Service  
Quality of life  
Prosperity

Stewardship  
Health  
Service

Relationships  
Rural Lifestyle



**Step 1:** Have each person individually select their top 3 value words for each category. When choosing values, ask yourself, “Which of these words contributes to my sense of success or achievement?”

Individual	Relationship Based	Business Oriented	Externally Focused

**Step 2:** Choose the top five overall value words from the ones you listed above in step 1. Select one value from each of the four categories, plus an additional value.

Top 5 Values	
<b>Individual:</b>	
<b>Relationship-Based:</b>	
<b>Business-Oriented:</b>	
<b>Externally-Focused:</b>	
<b>Other:</b>	

**Step 3:** Describe or provide an example of what these top five values mean/look like to you.

Value	Definition or Example
<i>ex. Efficiency</i>	<i>Definition: Producing more with less waste. Example: We added 1 lb/cow/day milk production while cutting feed waste by 5% this year.</i>

**Next Steps:** Now that you have identified and defined what your personal values mean to you, the next step is to work with your farm leadership team to agree upon and establish your farm business's values. The “Business Values Exercise Worksheet” can be found on [farms.extension.wisc.edu](https://farms.extension.wisc.edu).