



New Farmers, New Generation

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My Farm's Mission Is?

Most farmers operate farms to make money. It's why they're in business, their ultimate mission. So why bother spending the time to define your mission? What's it worth to you? I hope that I can convince you why it's worth the time and energy to make the effort.

Suppose a stranger asks you, "Why are you farming?" In two to three sentences you should be able to tell them why your farm business exists, what you are doing, and the direction in which your business is growing, — in other words, your farm's mission. By definition, that is what a mission statement does, — it indi-

cates to those inside the business as well as to customers the reason for your farm's existence.

An added benefit of a mission statement is that by going through the process of developing one, participating members of your farm need to come to common agreement on the reasons for your farm's existence and its intended direction. To provide good leadership, a mission statement is essential, and it helps to determine and clarify your business goals and objectives.

A good starting point in composing your mission statement is to develop your own personal mission statement. This

statement is unique to you; — it is the values and principles upon which you base your life. It's what's important to you and your family and what you are personally striving to achieve. Your business should reflect your personal goals and aspirations, the reasons why you want to farm. Ask yourself: Do I really want to start or expand a farm business that doesn't reflect what I hold to be personally important?

After you have developed this personal mission statement, it's important to synthesize these concepts into your business mission statement. What are your business values? How will customers, employees, and family be treated? What about honesty and integrity?

When your business values are established, you are ready to look at your vision for the future. Where will your business be in three-five years if things go as you wish? Growth, position, and community are factors you may want to consider in your mission statement.

When writing your mission statement, keep these components in mind: What is the nature

of your farm business, the products or services you provide, the technology or type of farming that generates the products, who your customers are, the scope of the business (for example: farrow-to-finish), the needs of the customer, values and beliefs, and the direction of your farm?

Finally, you want to sum up and reflect the purpose of your farm business in your mission statement. Purpose can be a measure of your own personal success, that is, whether the farm is meeting your own internal needs. And purpose can be used as an external measure of your farm's ability to meet customer needs.

An example of a mission

statement is:

B's Better Beef provides only the highest quality naturally raised beef, free of hormones and antibiotics, to local customers. We work to achieve harmony of nature, family, and community in delivering a product that enhances the health of our customers.

I hope that if you have taken the time to read this article, you will also take the time to put a mission statement into operation on your farm. Need help? Contact Pennsylvania Farm Link at (717) 664-7077 or e-mail us at parfarmlink@redrose.net.

Next time: Tracking your progress.

Bucks County Dairy Promotion Wins Float Contest



Bucks County Dairy Maids, from left, Amanda Symonds, Hannah Smith, Michelle Savage, Kim Bleau, Melissa Boess, and Crystal Moyer entered their "wagon" float in Chalfont's Tri-municipal Fourth of July Parade and won the award for "most original." Not pictured is Dairy Maid Meredith Hopkins (creator of the slogan on the banner). To book the dairy maids at an event or for additional information about the program, contact Ruth Ann Moyer (215) 345-7327.

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