

# **Helping Producers Build Labor Management Know-How**

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The University of Vermont

# Today's Presenters & Facilitators



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**More information about our team at:**

**[www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard/partners](http://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard/partners)**

# Today's Session

- Background
- Tour of the Dashboard Tools
- Resource Library
- Q&A
- Discussion

[www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard](http://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard)

The Farm Labor Dashboard

About Events Partners Resources Tools

Tips, Tools, and Techniques  
to effectively recruit, hire, train and retain workers

Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment

Employee Cost Estimator

Job Description Generator

Personnel Policy Generator

Resources





## Why focus on labor?

Please share in the chat box!

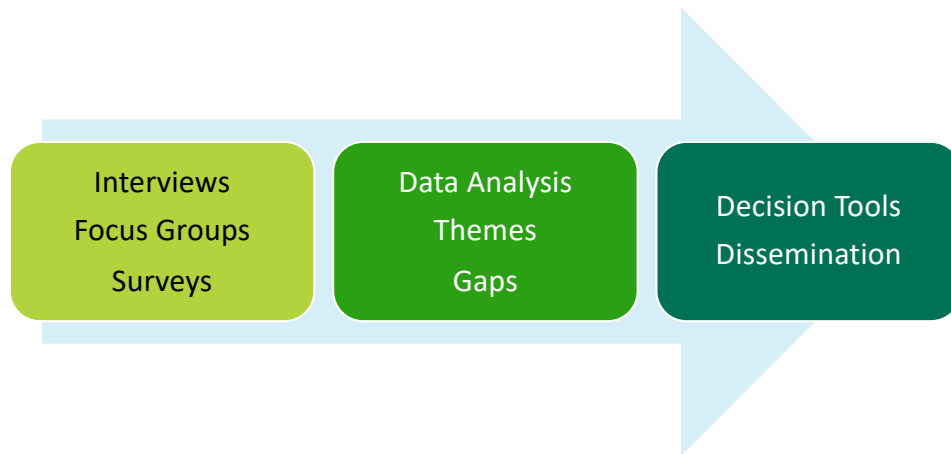
## Our team's assessment:

- Significant expense
- Impacts farm scale and farmer roles, satisfaction
- Scarce labor pool & seasonal nature of the work
- Regulatory challenges
- Farmers say they need to boost their labor management skills



# Background:

## Approach and methods



Two multi-state integrated research and Extension projects focusing on small & mid-sized farms.

### **Research goals:**

Increase understanding of labor decision-making in the context of management styles, demographics, and tradeoffs with mechanization and technology;

### **Extension Goals:**

Develop & share new training and resources to help them be more effective labor managers.

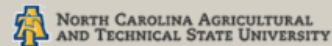
# Partners & Funding

<https://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard/partners>

THE FARM LABOR DASHBOARD IS HOSTED BY:

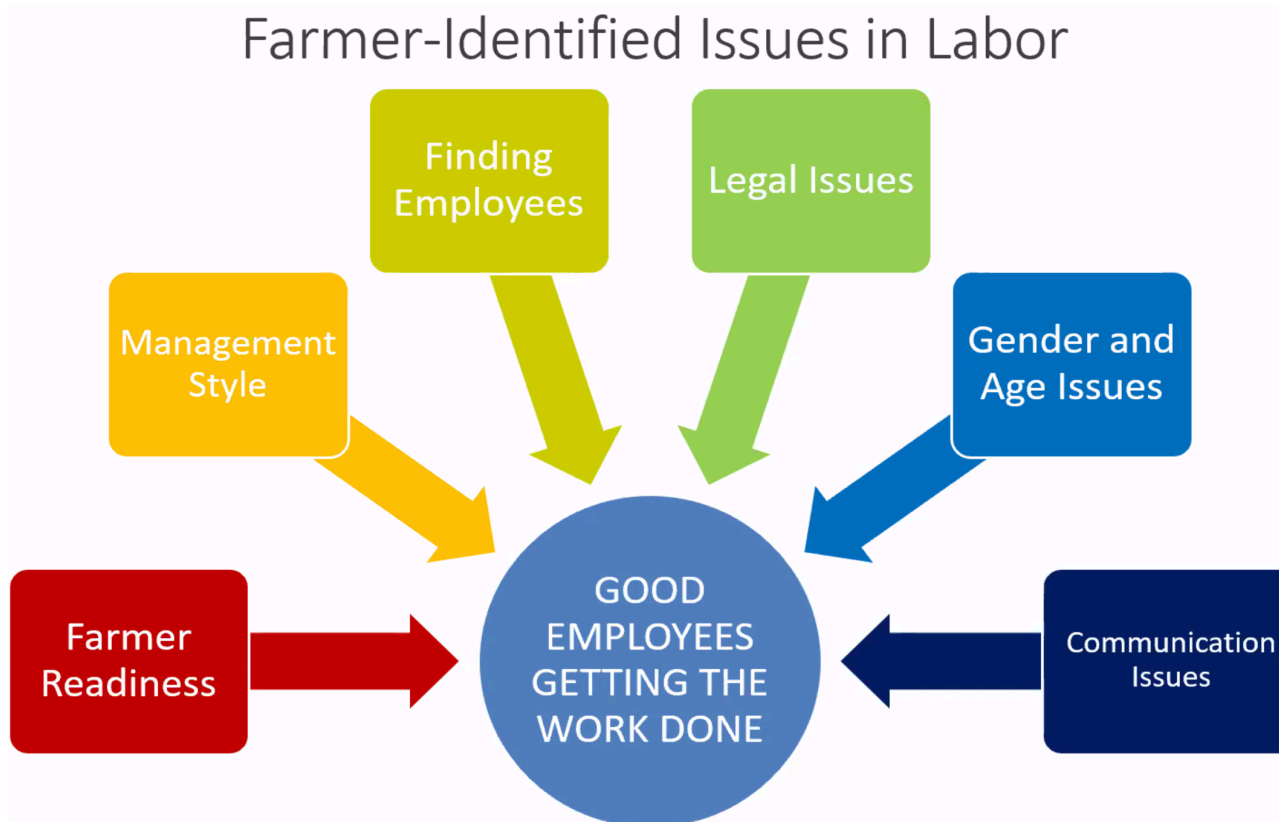


COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:



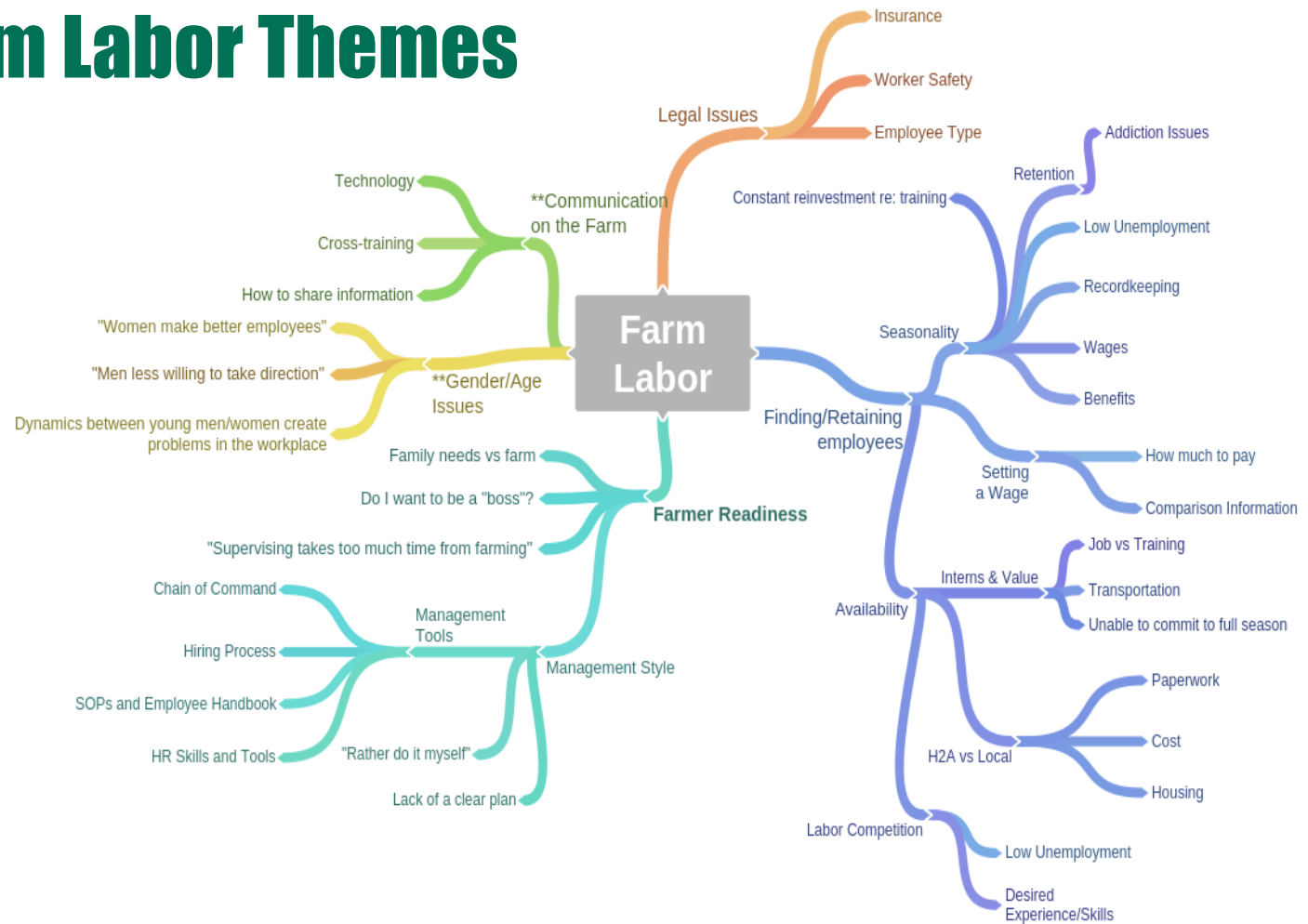
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# Farmer-Identified Issues in Labor





# Map of Farm Labor Themes



# Farm Labor Dashboard

## Farmer-oriented tools and resources

- Suite of 4 interactive tools
- Resource library
- More tools and resources coming in the next phase (through 2022)
- Online – available 24/7

[www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard](http://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard)

The Farm Labor Dashboard

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# Content Focus:

## Helping farmers:

- Build key skills & knowledge
- Adopt effective protocols & procedures
- Address barriers to recruiting and retaining good farm labor



[www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard](http://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard)



## Multiple Uses:

- Farmers – can access the tools and resources 24/7
- Educators – can incorporate in education/outreach
  - farm viability/business management
  - risk management
- Business advisors - can integrate tools and resources into individual consultations



[www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard](http://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard)

# Dashboard Tool 1: Labor Readiness Self Assessment

## The Farm Labor Dashboard

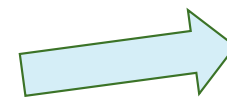
MENU

## Labor Readiness Assessment

This tool will help you assess your readiness to hire employees. Based on your answers to 21 questions, the self assessment will generate a graphic representation of how your answers match up to the knowledge and skills our research found is critical to being an effective farm employer.

+ [First time using this tool? Read this before you begin.](#)

[Proceed to Tool >](#)



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 1: Labor Readiness Self Assessment

- Helps people assess their readiness to hire, train, manage employees, and manage record keeping, tax and insurance aspects of being an employer.
- 21 Questions
- Six critical areas:
  - Planning
  - Record keeping, taxes & insurance
  - Recruiting and hiring
  - Training and supervision
  - Performance review
  - Ending employment



Are You  
Ready to  
Hire? Self  
Assessment



Employee  
Cost  
Estimator



Job  
Description  
Generator



Personnel  
Policy  
Generator



# Dashboard Tool 1: Labor Readiness Self Assessment

## Examples of Questions

### We have completed a cash flow projection for the coming season \*

- No – We don't know what this is or how to do it
- No – We haven't started yet
- Just starting
- In process
- Complete

### We have calculated the full cost of the employees we want to hire \*

- No – We don't know what this is or how to do it
- No – We haven't started yet
- Just starting
- In process
- Complete

### We have considered the ways that hiring employees will change our roles on the farm \*

- No
- We need more information to do this
- Just starting
- In process
- Yes

### We understand the legal requirements of being an employer \*

- No
- We have some knowledge, but need to learn more
- We could use a refresher to make sure our practices match current regulations
- We are knowledgeable and in the process of updating our practices
- We are knowledgeable and up to date

### We use a standard orientation process to introduce new employees to the farm, our policies, our expectations & safety procedures \*

- No
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Most of the time
- Always

### We have an up-to-date farm personnel policy manual, which is given to and signed by every employee \*

- No – We don't know how to create a policy manual
- No – We haven't done this yet
- Just starting
- In process
- Complete



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



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# Dashboard Tool 1: Labor Readiness Self Assessment

## Result: “Self Portrait”

- Farmers get a visual representation of their relative strengths as labor manager and areas where additional knowledge and skill could be helpful.

## & Recommendations

- Based on their answers, farmers get recommendations for resources to gain build knowledge to more effectively manage labor

### Labor Readiness Assessment

✓ Labor Readiness Assessment *Labor Readiness Assessment* has been created.



#### YOU'RE DOING GREAT IN THESE AREAS:

Training and Supervision  
Recordkeeping, Taxes and Insurance

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 1: Labor Readiness Self Assessment

## Example

We have considered the ways that hiring employees will change our roles on the farm \*

- No
- We need more information to do this
- Just starting
- In process
- Yes

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

**PLANNING** Many people go into farming because they like the work of farming. Once you have employees, however, a significant portion of your time will be spent managing the work of others. Learn more about [your role as an employee manager](#).



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator



# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator

## The Farm Labor Dashboard

MENU

## Employee Cost Estimator

This tool is designed to help farmers estimate the total cost of employees. It is intended to assist first time employers with understanding and calculating the complete cost of employees, including federal and state payroll taxes, workers compensation, unemployment taxes, as well as any benefits a grower offers to employees beyond their regular hourly wage.

+ [First time using this tool? Read this before you begin.](#)

Proceed to Tool >



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator

## Calculating the “full cost” of employees

Wages

+ payroll taxes

+ insurance

+ tools & equipment

+ food & housing

+ bonuses/incentives

---

**TOTAL COST OF EMPLOYEES**



Are You  
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# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator

## Calculate Estimated Cost of Labor

Name of Report

 *Optionally provide a name for reference (useful if you plan to do multiple reports for comparison)*


### EMPLOYEE 1

 *You can add multiple employees via the button below. Be sure to include information on both **Hours** and **Wages & Benefits** by clicking on both tabs. You will need to do this for each employee.*

Employee's Title \*

Hours \*

Wages & Benefits \*

 *Enter the total hours a potential employee might work as you plan for the coming season. For example, you might hire a person part time in early spring and then shift them to full time later in the year. Some employees might work for you for 3 months while others work for you for 5 months. Enter 0 for a month when the employee will not be working.*

January \*

February \*

March \*

April \*



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# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator

Employee's Title \*

e.g. Barn Manager

Hours \*

Wages & Benefits \*

? Enter the employee's hourly wage and the annual value of any benefits you provide. Payroll taxes will be factored in below.

## HOURLY WAGE

Pay Rate Per Hour \*

\$

## ANNUAL BENEFITS

Food

\$

Employee Housing

\$

Visa H2A Expense

\$

Health & Other Personal Insurance

\$

Retirement Plan

\$

Worker Bonuses/Gifts

\$

Other Benefits

\$



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator

Add another employee

## PAYROLL TAXES

? You will need to look up information for your state to ensure the rates for workers compensation (if applicable) and your State Unemployment Tax are correct for your farm location. The complete cost of all your employees will then be calculated when you click Submit.

### FICA - Social Security \*

7.65 %

### Worker's Comp \*

6 %

### FUTA - Federal Unemployment \*

6 %

### SUTA - State Unemployment

0.4 %

SUBMIT



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 2: Employee Cost Estimator

Employee	Field Crew
Hours Worked in Year	1280
Pay Rate Per Hour	\$10.00
Wages	\$12,800.00
<b>BENEFITS</b>	
Food	\$500.00
Employee Housing	\$0.00
Visa H2A Expense	\$0.00
Health & Other Personal Insurance	\$0.00
Retirement Plan	\$0.00
Worker Bonuses/Gifts	\$500.00
Other Benefits	\$0.00
<b>PAYROLL TAXES</b>	
FICA - Social Security	\$979.20
Worker's Comp	\$768.00
FUTA - Federal Unemployment	\$420.00
SUTA - State Unemployment	\$51.20
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	
Total Cost of Employee	\$16,018.40
Labor Cost Per Hour	\$12.51



Are You  
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Employee  
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Job  
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Generator



Personnel  
Policy  
Generator

# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Six Basic Steps

1. Describe the position's overall role in the farm business.
2. Summarize the major responsibilities of the position.
3. Select primary tasks. Add as many as you like.
4. List required qualifications, skills and experience.
5. List wages and benefits. Identify who the position will report to
6. Download and print



Are You  
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# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Step #1:

Describe the position's overall role in the farm business.


## Generate Job Description

### Job Title \*

 Keep the job title short but accurate (e.g. Field Crew; Field Crew Manager; Farm Mechanic; Bookkeeper)

### Farm Summary

e.g.: ABC Farm is a family-owned diversified farm. We grow small fruits and vegetables which we market through several wholesale accounts and an on-farm market stand.

 Include a brief description of your farm -- the size, what types of markets you sell to, what you grow.



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Step #2:

Summarize the major responsibilities of the position.

### Position Summary

e.g. Field crew employees are seasonal positions from early May to mid-November. We have both full-time and part-time positions. Examples of what our crew members might be expected to do include: Manually plant, cultivate, and harvest vegetables, fruits, and field crops. Use hand tools, such as shovels, trowels, hoes, shears, and knives. Tilling soil and applying fertilizers; transplanting, weeding, thinning, or pruning crops; applying pesticides; cleaning, packing, and loading harvested products. Construct trellises, repair fences and farm buildings, or participate in irrigation activities. Employees may be asked to help in the farm market during busy periods.

**?** Include a brief overview of your farm. Summarize the major responsibilities of the position. **TIP:** You might want to complete the sections below and then come back and complete this summary to make sure it matches what you have included below.



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Step #3:

Select primary tasks. Add as many as you like.

### Primary Responsibilities

? Select a task and provide the approximate percentage of total work time spent. Add as many tasks as you'd like.

#### Task \*

- Plant care and Field Work
- Equipment and Facilities - Operation and Maintenance
- Management and Communication
- Marketing and Sales
- Office and Clerical Tasks
- Other duties as assigned

+ ? Include "other duties as assigned" as a way to incorporate unplanned, but important, duties and responsibilities.

#### Approximate percentage of total work time spent on this task

%

? The percentage of time given to a duty is an estimate. It serves to provide you with a reality check to be sure you aren't "overloading" the position. And it serves to communicate to the employee where their time is likely to be spent.

Remove

Add another item



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Primary Responsibilities

? Select a task and provide the approximate percentage of total work time spent. Add as many tasks as you'd like.

### Task \*

#### Plant care and Field Work

- Record information about crops, such as pesticide use, yields, or costs
- Participate in the inspection, grading, sorting, storage, and post-harvest treatment of crops
- Dig and plant seeds, or transplant seedlings by hand
- Identify plants, pests, and weeds to determine most appropriate management plan
- Load agricultural products into trucks, and drive trucks to market or storage facilities
- Apply pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers to crops
- Harvest fruits and vegetables by hand

#### Equipment and Facilities - Operation and Maintenance

- Repair farm buildings, fences, and other structures
- Repair and maintain farm vehicles, implements, and machinery
- Set up and operate irrigation ditches
- Operate tractors/tractor-drawn or self-propelled plant/cultivate/spray/harvest crops
- Clear and maintain irrigation equipment

#### Management and Communication

- Direct and monitor the work of casual and seasonal help during planting and harvesting
- Organize, plan, prioritize work to achieve objectives
- Communicate with supervisors, peers, and work crews
- Coach, train, evaluate and provide feedback to work crews
- Guide, direct, oversee the work of others
- Inform Farmers or Farm Managers of crop progress

#### Marketing and Sales

- Call, text, fax customers re: product availability, pricing, pickup/delivery, etc.
- Manage sales at farm market
- Total customer purchases, accept cash, make change

#### Office and Clerical Tasks

- Handle phone calls, email requests and correspondence
- Bookkeeping
- Maintain crop records
- Maintain timesheets

#### Other duties as assigned

? Include "other duties as assigned" as a way to incorporate unplanned, but important, duties and responsibilities.



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



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Personnel Policy Generator



# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Step #4:

List required qualifications, skills, experience

### Qualifications/Skills/Experience

- Equipment Operation
- Strong communication skills
- Written recordkeeping
- Prior Farm Work Experience
- Management/training experience
- Retail Sales
- Other

 *Knowledge, Skills & Abilities, Prior Experience, Education & Training, Safety Qualification(s) and any required certifications should be identified here.*

### Work Environment

- Ability to lift, carry, stack boxes
- Ability to work in busy retail environment
- Extended periods of time outside in all weather
- Must be comfortable bending, climbing, or kneeling
- Must have valid driver's license and clean driving record
- Other



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

## Step #5:

List wages and benefits. Identify who the position will report to

### Wages and Benefits

### Type of Position

- Full Time Seasonal
- Full Time Year Round
- Part Time Seasonal
- Part Time Year Round

### This Position Reports to

 Please enter a position rather than a name.

Submit



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

# Dashboard Tool 3: Job Description Generator

**Step #6:** Download and print.

The tool does not store work, so to create a new version you would have to start over.

### Summer Crew

✔ Job Description Summer Crew has been created.

[DOWNLOAD PDF >](#)

[DOWNLOAD DOC >](#)

---

**Farm Summary:**

ABC Farm is a family-owned, diversified produce farm. We grow vegetables and small fruit, selling to wholesale accounts and at our on-farm market stand.

**Position Summary:**

Field crew employees are seasonal positions from early May to mid-November. We have both full time and part time positions. Examples of what crew members might be expected to do include: Manually plant, cultivate, and harvest vegetables and fruit; use hand tools, such as shovels, trowels, hoes, shears and knives; till soil and apply fertilizers; transplant, weed, thin or prune crops; apply pesticides; clean, pack and load harvested products; construct trellises, repair fences, and participate in irrigation activities. Employees may be asked to help in the farm market during busy times.

**Primary Responsibilities (and approximate % of total work time spent on each):**

- Dig and plant seeds, or transplant seedlings by hand (30%)
- Load agricultural products into trucks, and drive trucks to market or storage facilities (20%)
- Harvest fruits and vegetables by hand (30%)

**Minor or Secondary Functions:**

- Apply pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers to crops
- Repair farm buildings, fences, and other structures
- Manage sales at farm market
- Other duties as assigned

**Qualifications/Skills/Experience:**

- Prior Farm Work Experience

**Work Environment:**

- Ability to lift, carry, stack boxes
- Ability to work in busy retail environment
- Extended periods of time outside in all weather
- Must be comfortable bending, climbing, or kneeling

**Wages and Benefits:**

- \$9.50-\$12 per hour, depending on prior experience.

**Type of Position:**

- Full Time Seasonal

**This Position Reports to:**

- Field manager



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator

## Dashboard Tool 4: Policy Manual Generator

Helps farmers build a policy handbook.

- Provides sample language for typical policies for farm businesses and allows farm operators to adapt the language to their own situation.
- People who use the generator should be sure to consult an attorney or the Department of Labor for the most up-to-date laws and best practices.



Are You  
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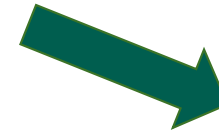
Employee  
Cost  
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Job  
Description  
Generator



Personnel  
Policy  
Generator



# Dashboard Tool 4: Policy Manual Generator

## 12 Topic Areas:


1. About your farm business
2. Introduction
3. Work hours and scheduling
4. Getting paid
5. Paid and unpaid leave
6. Facilities
7. Clothing, cell phones & cameras
8. Safety & equipment
9. Corrective discipline
10. What's not allowed
11. Customer Service
12. End of Employment

Each topic area has several items.

Step 3 of 12: Work Hours and Scheduling


### Working Time and Schedule

Regular hours are 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, which may vary some depending on weather and other factors. We usually take a paid 15-minute break mid-morning, a 15-minute lunch break and a 15-minute break early-afternoon. Whenever possible we combine the lunch break and the afternoon break to create a 30 minute continuous break. There is no set

 Modify the sample statement as desired.


### Overtime

Sometimes we are required to work long hours and we expect that you may be available to work extra hours when asked. We will try to let you know a day in advance but this is not always possible. You will be paid for this time at the regular rate.

 Modify the sample statement as desired.

### Recording Hours

Each employee is responsible for keeping track of his or her time worked daily on a bi-weekly timesheet. The time sheet is set up for tracking the amount of labor devoted to each crop to aid in determining cost and profitability of each crop. If you do not understand the sheet, please ask \_\_\_\_\_ for help.

 Modify the sample statement as desired.

"XXXX" or "\_\_\_\_\_" indicate places where farmers will fill in specifics from their farms.



Are You Ready to Hire? Self Assessment



Employee Cost Estimator



Job Description Generator



Personnel Policy Generator



# Dashboard Tool 4: Policy Manual Generator

**Users need to download and print their work.**

The tool does not store work, so to create a new version you would have to start over.



Are You  
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Employee  
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Estimator



Job  
Description  
Generator



Personnel  
Policy  
Generator

# Resource Library

## Resources

Here you'll find links to articles, fact sheets and other resources related to being a farm employer.

**Please note:** These resources are provided for educational and informational purposes only and are not legal counseling. No attorney-client relationship is created, nor is there any offer to provide legal services by the distribution of these publications. Always consult an attorney before relying on the information in these resources.

Use the filters to narrow your search.

### TOPICS

- Please select -



### MATERIAL TYPES

- Please select -



### LOCATIONS

- Please select -



Employee  
Cost  
Estimator



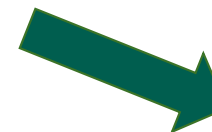
Job  
Description  
Generator



Personnel  
Policy  
Generator




Resources




# Resource Library


Use the filters to narrow your search.

## TOPICS


Managing Employees 

Supervision 

## MATERIAL TYPES

- Please select - 

## LOCATIONS

- Please select - 

## CREATING A PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

A personnel policy manual insures that all employees are aware of the policies and expectations of your business. A manual enhances your professionalism, creates consistency in communications, and protects you from appearing arbitrary in your treatment of employees. Drafting this manual will provide you and your management team the opportunity to think through your policies in advance and create a pleasant, productive work environment. To help you get started, here are links to some policy manual templates: Farm Commons' ... [Read](#)

[More](#)



Employee  
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Personnel  
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Generator



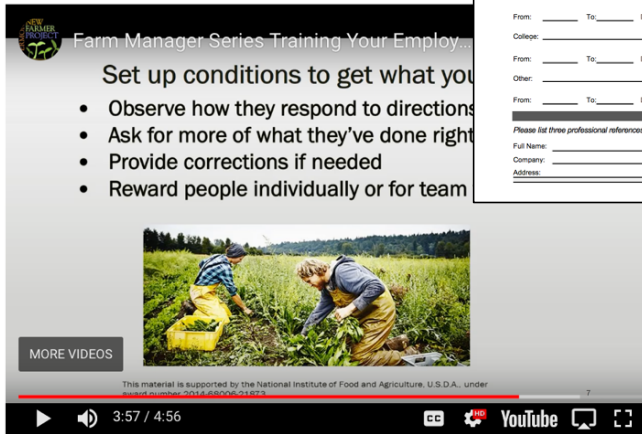
Resources

# Resource Library

## Fact sheets, video tutorials, templates, tools & more

Here are some resources to help you develop cash flow projections:

- Understanding Cash Flow Analysis**, is an Iowa State University Extension and Outreach web page that provides a written description of how to construct and use cash flow projections to help manage farm finances. Iowa State's Extension Farm Management team has also created templates (in Microsoft Excel) for creating cash flow budgets. You can choose between the short form [Cash Flow Budget](#), or their more in-depth [Farm Cash Flow](#) decision tool.
- Farm Planning with Cash Flow Statements**, is a 12-minute video tutorial from UVM Extension Farm Business Management Specialist Mark Cannella. It explains the purpose of cash flow statements and the basics of how to construct them using templates (in Microsoft Excel). You can download the templates for [Vegetable or Diversified Farms](#) or [Livestock Farms](#).



**Farm Manager Series Training Your Employees**

### Set up conditions to get what you want

- Observe how they respond to directions
- Ask for more of what they've done right
- Provide corrections if needed
- Reward people individually or for team

MORE VIDEOS

This material is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S.D.A., under award number 2014-68006-21873.

3:57 / 4:56

YOUR LOGO HERE Farm Name

**Employment Application**

**Applicant Information**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment/Unit # \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Available: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No. \_\_\_\_\_ Desired Salary: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a citizen of the United States? YES  NO  If no, are you authorized to work in the U.S.? YES  NO

Have you ever worked for this company? YES  NO  If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? YES  NO

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**Education**

High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_ Did you graduate? YES  NO  Diploma: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_ Did you graduate? YES  NO  Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_ Did you graduate? YES  NO  Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

**References**

Please list three professional references.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Checklist for New Employee Orientation**

**AGRICULTURAL LABOR MANAGEMENT**

Use this sample checklist as a guide to topics to cover during new employee orientations. Please note: You may need to adapt the checklist or add topics based on the specifics of your farm operation.

**Initial welcome**

- Introductions to supervisor(s) and key personnel;
- Clarification of the name the employee prefers to be known by
- Brief history of your farm

**General information and procedures**

- Reference document stating terms of employment, including the nature of the position (fixed term or at-will) and other company information
- Location of restrooms, personal storage areas, bulletin boards, emergency supplies, and phones
- Policy on personal cell phone use, company equipment, and facilities
- Disciplinary, suggestion, and complaint procedures
- Special policies or procedures that are unique to particular positions (for example, rain policy for field crews)
- Performance review and appraisal procedures

**Work time**

- Work days and hours and variability of the schedule
- Meal and break periods
- Means of notification in case of changes
- Call-in procedures when unable to show up for work when expected

(over)

This sample employee orientation checklist is part of a suite of farmer-oriented resources developed through the Improving the Quality of Labor Management Decisions for Small and Medium-Sized Farm Operators project, a multi-state, integrated research and extension project.

Partners include:

- The University of Vermont
- The University of Wisconsin
- The Pennsylvania State University
- University of New Hampshire

Find additional labor management tools and resources at: [www.uvm.edu/iglabor/labboard](http://www.uvm.edu/iglabor/labboard)

This material is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S.D.A., under award number 2014-68006-21873.

# Resource Library

## Sample Interview for Farm Positions



Use this sample interview agenda as a guide to topics to cover during an interview with applicants for farm jobs. Please note: You may need to adapt the agenda or add topics based on the specifics of your farm operation.

**Greeting:** A friendly welcome. Introduce yourself and anyone else present, and clarify your position with the farm. (1 minute)

**Small talk:** Engage in conversation to help put the applicant at ease, and to show personal interest. Offer the applicant coffee or water. (2 minutes)

**Job description:** Clarify what the job entails and how it fits into the organization. (5 minutes)

**Housekeeping details:** Cover basic terms of employment – wages, hours, housing, or other specific conditions. Check to be sure that you have correct contact information. (2 minutes)

**Applicant questions:** Field the candidate's questions. What does he/she want to know about the farm and the position? The questions themselves may reveal important information. (5-10 minutes)

**Questions for the applicant:** Here's where you get to know the applicant's qualifications for the job, with guidance of your prepared question list. (5-20 minutes)

**Continuation or cut-off:** You may choose to continue to "sell" the job if the applicant is of interest. Or, you may decide to bring the interview to a dignified close if the applicant does not appear to be a good fit. Be sure to inform each applicant of the expected decision timeframe or next steps in the process. Thank them for their time and let them know how/when you will follow up. (5-10 minutes)

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## 20 Questions for Any Job Interview



Following are 20 questions that you can use as part of any job interview.

### Getting started

1. Your application looks interesting. Would you bring me up-to-date on your background related to possible employment here?

**Applicant's view of personal fit with this job**

2. What is your understanding about the nature of this job?

3. What abilities do you feel are most crucial for success in this job?

4. What parts of this job do you think would be most enjoyable for you?

5. What parts of this job would be least enjoyable?

6. How well does your background prepare you for this job?

7. Which aspects of this job do you think you would need, or appreciate additional supervision, training, or patience from us?

### More about the applicant's situation and future, not specific to this job

8. How do you like to learn new things? Are you more comfortable reading about something, watching someone else do it, or trying to do it yourself?

9. What do you see as particular strong points in your character or personality?

10. What limitations or weaknesses may you need to overcome?

11. If someone who knows you well wanted to describe you as accurately as possible in one minute, what words would they use?

12. At this point in your life, what goals are you aiming for?

13. If you could create your ideal job, what would it be? How would you spend your time?

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# Resource Library

## Sample Checklist for New Employee Orientation



Use this sample checklist as a guide to topics to cover during new employee orientations. Please note: You may need to adapt the checklist or add topics based on the specifics of your farm operation.

### Initial welcome

- Introductions to supervisor(s) and key personnel;
- Clarification of the name the employee prefers to be known by
- Brief history of your farm

### General information and procedures

- Reference document stating terms of employment, including the nature of the position (fixed term or at-will) and other company information
- Location of restrooms, personal storage areas, bulletin boards, emergency supplies, and phones
- Policy on personal cell phone use, company equipment, and facilities
- Disciplinary, suggestion, and complaint procedures
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### Work time

- Work days and hours and variability of the schedule
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# Resource Library



## Sample Employee Manual for a Farm

LAST UPDATED:  
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**By: Rachel Armstrong**

Executive Director and Attorney, Farm Commons  
rachel@farmcommons.org

[www.farmcommons.org](http://www.farmcommons.org)

**DISCLAIMER:** This guide does not provide legal advice or establish an attorney-client relationship between the reader and author. Always consult an attorney regarding your specific situation.



## Farm Employment Law: Know the Basics and Make Them Work for Your Farm

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**By: Rachel Armstrong and Laura Fisher**

[info@farmcommons.org](mailto:info@farmcommons.org)  
[www.farmcommons.org](http://www.farmcommons.org)

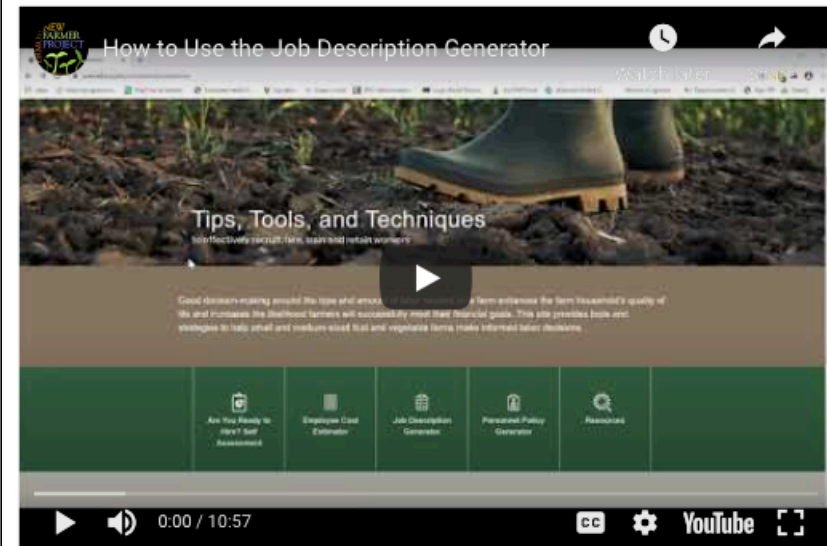
**DISCLAIMER:** This guide does not provide legal advice or establish an attorney-client relationship between the reader and author. Always consult an attorney regarding your specific situation.

# Takeaways: Tips to Using the Dashboard Tools

1. Use the instructional information provided with each tool.
2. Adapt sample language to your situation
3. Be sure to download your work to your own computer where you can further edit or print.
4. We are continuing to build the resource library. Suggestions for farmer-ready resources are welcome!

+ [First time using this tool? Read this before you begin.](#)

**Need more help?** View this short video tutorial to get step-by-step instructions on how to use the Job Description Generator.



[www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard](http://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard)

## Next Phase of Our work

- Labor / Mechanization Decisions
- Pairing Farms with Workers Analysis
- **Farmer Education:** Instructor-led workshops, self-study opportunities, & peer learning circles planned for late 2021 and early 2022.
- **Dashboard:** Continue developing and testing research-based tools to guide labor-related decisions.





# Questions?

