

Business Management Center

At Northwest Farm Credit Services we're firmly committed to sharing our knowledge and experience to help agricultural business owners and their families be successful. That's why we've developed engaging seminars, interactive workshops, and family business facilitation and planning services to help customers improve their management skills and transfer the leadership and management of their businesses to the next generation.

Managing a growing business and planning for the future are significant challenges for any business, particularly for businesses that are family owned and operated. Northwest FCS' Business Management Center helps business owners enhance their knowledge, management practices, communications, and ability to plan for the future.

Learn About Best Management Practices

Business owners often wonder if they're doing the right things to effectively manage their businesses and how what they do compares to others. The BMC has developed the Best Management Practices Assessment to help owners evaluate management areas and how they compare to similar operations. Seminars provide an overview of the best management practices that successful agricultural producers use to run their businesses. In a dynamic learning atmosphere, producers from across the Northwest share their experiences in a facilitated environment supported by research and Northwest FCS' expertise.

What participants say:

"The seminar made me re-think some of my management practices. The group interaction and brain storming helped broaden my toolbox for dealing with communication problems."

"The variety of participants and their backgrounds gave me different perspectives on similar questions and challenges. The seminar helped me realize my situation is not unique."

Understand Financial Statements, Analysis, and Balance Sheet Management

Regardless of experience, most business owners share an interest in learning more about financial management. In a series of interactive, hands on workshops, producers learn about the basics of financial statements, how to analyze their financial position to make critical business decisions, and how to manage their balance sheet to support strategic choices. Sessions focus on the balance sheet, income statement and cash flow budgets, financial benchmarks, risk, and repayment capacity. Insights from case studies illustrate real-world lessons in financial analysis through the experiences of beginning, expanding and transitioning business owners.

What participants say:

"An overall focus on financial management is widely overlooked in most of our operation – we mainly look at costs. I learned the value of knowing and studying the balance sheet and income statement to better understand my financial situation."

"The workshop has me thinking more about how we look financially. Case studies helped me understand how I am looked at by potential lenders. The session was thought provoking and made me realize that I need to put more emphasis on cash flow and all our financial reports in general."

Help for Young and Beginning Producers

Young and beginning producers have a unique need for management basics. The Young and Beginning Producers Conference targets young, beginning, and minority producers. Focusing on management fundamentals and business tools, participants learn how to build a basic business plan, gain a deepened understanding of family business relationships and communications, and develop an appreciation for the core components of financial management. Participants also network and gain insights from their peers through meaningful, engaging discussions.

What participants say:

"My batteries were charged and I was reminded again to focus on the important things. All the speakers were great. The session was energizing, and networking with folks in similar circumstances was a plus."

"I learned about important farm management resources, matched with real world examples for implementation. It was an outstanding conference which greatly added to my professional development."



Business Management Center

Education and Networking for Executive Producers

Tenured, successful producers share an interest in forums to discuss management challenges and creative solutions with other seasoned producers. The Executive Producers Summit brings a select group of Northwest FCS customers together in a dynamic, peer-oriented environment. Producers gain insights and perspectives on the global and national trends impacting agriculture. They also learn about and discuss tools to better manage their businesses. Nationally-recognized consultants and BMC facilitators lead the collaboration and learning process.

What participants say:

"I was challenged to think about where my business is today and where I'd like it to be in the future. The speakers helped supply the tools needed to get us there."

"I enjoyed this whole experience. Peer interaction was great and the speakers are top notch. All the information we learned will be taken back to our day-to-day operation. Well worth my time."

Help for Transitioning Family Business

Many producers recognize the importance of ownership and management transition, yet few know where to start to develop comprehensive plans. Family business succession planning seminars provide information and processes to help families transition the ownership and management of their businesses from one generation to the next. These seminars help families identify their business strengths, challenges and philosophies and explore steps in management succession and asset transition.

What participants say:

"We now have a great start going into our transition. This was the push we needed to communicate, ask the right questions and make decisions."

"The seminar opened up dialogues and stimulated a lot of positive family communication. We can now all go forward with cooperation – not conflict or hesitation."

Advanced education and networking for growing businesses

Businesses that are expanding and diversifying typically need to elevate their accounting and financial systems, develop leadership teams, and implement more effective human resource and management practices. Seminars are offered for owners, key managers, chief financial officers, and human resource managers who want to enhance their ability to manage growing and increasingly complex businesses.

What participants say:

"Being surrounded by so many smart people with the opportunity to share and discuss what we have in common is extremely beneficial."

"I learned some great techniques to help our supervisors coach employees to solve problems without being negative."

Facilitation and Strategic Planning Services for Family Businesses

Many family-owned businesses find it valuable to use a neutral facilitator to help them better communicate and develop plans for the future. The BMC offers facilitation and strategic planning services, tailored to the unique needs of family businesses. These services focus on: communications and group culture, organizational management, succession planning, strategic planning, and special topics. Successful planning sessions result in consensus-based decisions, accountability and purposeful action.

What participants say:

"Without question this is an excellent facilitation and planning service. We really valued having a neutral, caring, third-party facilitator in our family discussions."

"It was exactly what we were looking for as a guide to take our informal approach to the next level. Our facilitator was easy to talk to and was a pleasure to work with. He made this exciting and accountable. I really feel like this will work, and our facilitator has given us the tools to do so."

For more program details and to receive a copy of our program catalog:

- Contact your local Northwest FCS representative
- Call toll free: 866-552-9193
- Email: bmc@northwestfcs.com
- Visit us at: northwestfcs.com/resources



Business Management Center