

Views from VanDeWalle

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Returning to the Farm Planning Program

Since I have been in Extension, a lot of things have changed in production agriculture. New technologies continue to emerge making production agriculture more efficient. Stress from difficult weather, production risks & input prices is constant. One thing that hasn't changed is the need for generations of farm and ranch families to discuss and implement succession plans. Lack of communication between families creates stress and uncertainty which in turn can lead to conflict.

Many in the area know Dr. Ron Hanson, UNL Ag Econ Emeritus. Hanson has worked with farm families over 40 years and reminds farm & ranch families that money, wealth, and property, especially land always put a family's relationship to the test. At the last program he did in 2020, he used shark tank analogies. His analogies to sharks indicate that some families have "predator sharks" that lurk parents' property or belongings, waiting to make a move and take a "bite" into family wealth or estate. An effective management strategy is to put yourself in the shark tank and begin addressing difficult situations and questions that might arise from uncertainties in agriculture. I've heard from other farm family succession planners, coin the term, "waiters". Waiters are people who wait for parents or grandparents to die and then move in on property or land. Too many families are destroyed by not just taking time to sit down and openly and clearly communicate with each other

This doesn't have to be your family. Nebraska Extension can help! Returning to the Farm, Dec. 10 and 11 in Columbus, is for families who are in the transition process of bringing more family members back to the farm. This event will give families the tools and resources to have a successful transition with more family joining the operation.

Bringing a young person into a farm/ranch operation presents challenges. However, the business operation can accomplish numerous goals by:

- Helping the young person get a solid start in the operation
- Keeping the farm or ranch in the family
- Ensuring a comfortable retirement for all

However, success does not come automatically. It requires effort. Blending a variety of talents and personalities into one farming or ranching operation takes planning, communication, and effective management. The Returning to the Farm program is designed to assist families and operations in developing a financial plan and successful working arrangements that will meet the needs of multiple families.

During the program, participants will:

Review financial feasibility and financial tools for success

Identify estate planning issues and develop effective strategies for planning the future



Develop a farm or ranch transition plan

Set both personal and professional goals

Look at the communication process between family members

Students, beginning farmers and established operations — including entire families — are welcome. The workshop fee is \$50 per person. That includes dinner on Dec. 10 and lunch on Dec. 11. It also includes two follow-up meetings, to be held virtually, in the evenings on Jan. 13 and Feb. 10. The Ramada Inn and Conference Center is located at 265 33rd Ave., in Columbus, Neb. Registration does not include reservations at the hotel. To book on your own, their number is [402-835-4350](tel:402-835-4350).

If you have questions, please contact Allan Vyhnalek, Extension Educator, at [402-472-1771](tel:402-472-1771) or avyhnalek@unl.edu.