**Writing an Operations/Production Plan for Your Farm**

In your farm **Mission/Vision**, you laid out WHAT you will be producing on your farm.

Now your **Operations/Production Plan** will lay out HOW your farm will produce those products.

There are many different ways to write an operations plan - it’s important that your plan is written in a way that is useful to ***you***.

Here is a potential overview of what your operations plan might look like:

**Operations Plan:**

1. Production Plan
   1. What is your production system
   2. What is your production schedule
2. Regulations that affect your business
3. Resources
   1. Physical Resources
      1. Land
      2. Buildings & Infrastructure
      3. Equipment & Machinery
      4. Supplies
   2. Human Resources

**Writing Your Operations Plan:**

**Production Plan:** For each enterprise on your farm, describe your production plan

For example, if you are a vegetable farmer, describe the following for your farm:

\*Note that this is not a complete list, and questions will vary from farm to farm. Try to think through the entire process of producing your crops for market.

* How/when will you order seeds and supplies?
* How will you produce seedlings?
* How will you prepare garden beds or fields?
* How will you irrigate your crops?
* How will you manage fertility of your soil?
* How will you direct seed and/or transplant your crops?
* How will you weed your crops?
* How will you wash and process your vegetables?
* How will you store your vegetables until they are ready to market?
* How will you transport your vegetables to market?

If you are a livestock farmer, describe the following for your farm:

\*Note that this is not a complete list, and questions will vary from farm to farm. Try to think through the entire process of producing your livestock for market.

* What breed/type of livestock will you raise?
* How many animals will you raise, and at what times throughout the year?
* Will you breed your own livestock? Or purchase animals from a breeder?
* Where will you source animals and how will you transport them to your farm?
* What housing will you need for your animals? Will it vary by season?
* What fencing do you need for your animals?
* How will you maintain pasture fertility and/or how will you handle animal “waste”
* What is your plan for maintaining animal health and treating sickness/injury/etc? Do you have a livestock vet that will come to your farm?
* What abattoir will you use for processing animals?
* How will you transport your animals for processing?
* How will you transport meat from the processor to your farm/storage facility?
* How will you store meat?

**Production Schedule:** What will your production schedule look like for the year?

For example, if you are a vegetable farmer:

* What is your crop plan/schedule? i.e. when will you plant and harvest each crop, how much of each crop will you grow?
* What will be your crop rotation plan during the year, and from year to year?

If you are a livestock farmer:

* What will your yearly production schedule look like? (i.e. when are animals bred? Born? Processed?)
* If grazing animals, what is your grazing plan for the year?

**Regulations:** What regulations affect your business that you will need to comply with?

\*Note that we will be covering this topic in Week 9: Meeting Requirements, so feel free to leave this section incomplete until then.

In the meantime, you can check OMAFRA’s [Legislation and Farming Practices](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/facts/12-027.pdf) Factsheet and/or [Regulations Related to Agriculture](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/valueadd-bib/sec7.htm#marketing) for a list of laws and regulations that may apply to your farm.

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| **Regulation** | **What do you need to do to comply?** |
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**Resources:** What resources do you have/need to produce your farm products?

**Physical Resources:** Whatphysical resources do you currently have for your farm and what do you need to acquire?

For each main enterprise on your farm, write down what you will need in terms of physical resources:

**Enterprise #1:**

**What do you have/need in terms of farm land for this enterprise?**

For example, what size of land? Any other attributes (i.e. soil quality, microclimate, etc)?

What do you currently have?

What will you need in the future?

Are there any gaps you need to fill, or problems you need to solve to meet these needs?

**What do you need in terms of buildings and/or infrastructure for this enterprise?**

For example, hoophouses, barns, processing facilities, etc

What do you currently have?

What will you need in the future?

Are there any gaps you need to fill, or problems you need to solve to meet these needs?

**What do you need in terms of machinery and equipment for this enterprise?**

For example, garden cart, tractor, delivery truck, walk-in cooler, squeeze chute, etc

What do you currently have?

What will you need in the future?

Are there any gaps you need to fill, or problems you need to solve to meet these needs?

**What do you need in terms of supplies for this enterprise?** (“Supplies” are things that get used up regularly, as opposed to “equipment” that last a year or more).

For example, egg cartons, bags/packaging, ear tags, soil amendments

What do you currently have?

What will you need in the future?

Are there any gaps you need to fill, or problems you need to solve to meet these needs?

***\*Complete the above questions for each different enterprise on your farm.***

**Human Resources:** What human resources do you currently have access to, and what will you need to meet your production goals?

**Who will provide the labour on your farm?** (i.e. family, hired staff, etc)

For each person involved in your farm (or for each position you plan to hire) write down what that person will do on the farm, what their skill set is/needs to be, and estimate the hours (and/or seasonality) they will need to work on the farm to meet your production goals.

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| **List all the people involved in your farm below:** | **What will they be responsible for?** | **How much time will they spend working?**  If the amount of time will change with the season, write that down as well. |
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**What tasks must be completed for your farm to function?**

For each enterprise on your farm, write out the main tasks that must be completed, and who will be responsible for them.

**Enterprise #1:**

**Marketing Tasks** (i.e. farmer’s market stall, taking orders, social media, etc)

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| **Task** | **Who?** | **Approx time (hrs)** |
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**Operational Tasks** (i.e. planting, weeding, harvesting, washing, packaging, transporting, etc)

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| **Task** | **Who?** | **Approx time (hrs)** |
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**Management Tasks** (i.e. hiring/training/managing staff, taking training courses, organic certification paperwork, recordkeeping)

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| **Task** | **Who?** | **Approx time (hrs)** |
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**Financial Tasks** (bookkeeping, payroll, taxes)

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| **Task** | **Who?** | **Approx time (hrs)** |
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