The first two sessions have been spent visioning and trying to narrow down what these prospective farmers would like to do. We talk a lot about what not only their businesses might look like but also their lives. The purpose of the farmer presentation in this session is to hear from people who have had to make those decisions first hand. The important thing to remember is not just to give a picture of where you are at now. We are also interested in where you started, how you got to this point, and where you hope to eventually be if it’s different than it is right now. We have also talked with participants how to start planning for production. For example, if they want to have a market garden. A crop plan is one aspect but they’ll need to think of all the other supports to make a crop plan happen. How will they water? What is their weed management strategy? How will they harvest and what will the set up be for post harvest handling?

* Give a brief bio on yourself. How you first got involved in farming and ended up where you are today.

Farm Enterprises

* What are your current major enterprises? Big question is **WHY** those enterprises? Do they make the most money? Are they the one’s you enjoy the most? Did you find property that already had infrastructure to support that enterprise? Chosen because you saw others doing it successfully? Blind luck?
* If you were given a blank slate to start all over again would you choose the same enterprises you currently have?
* What scale is each of your enterprises at? How does this compare to when you started them? Again the WHY questions. Why is your business the scale it is?
* Do you plan to scale up (or down) any of your existing enterprises? Are you done growing as a business?
* Mention any minor ones and if they generate income.
* Do you plan to add any new enterprises?
* Have you had other enterprises in the past that you’ve dropped? If so why were they dropped?
* What is your long term enterprise strategy, specifically as you more towards retirement age (even if it’s 50 years away)?
* Discuss the labour needs of your various enterprises and how you meet them. How have these changed over time?
* Do you feel that your enterprises are complimentary to one another? (their main labour requirements are at different times, they use the same piece of equipment, a waste product from one can be used in the other, etc). The labour part here is especially important.

Production Planning

* What is the process on your farm for building a production plan?
* Is this work you intentionally do ahead of time or do you find yourself making decisions on the fly?
* How do you research new production practices?
* Do you keep notes as you work about what is working and what isn’t?
* What’s the biggest production bottleneck your business currently faces?
* Do you actively look for new tools that you can buy to alleviate bottlenecks? Do you spend time creating DIY solutions to production problems?

Personal Life

* Do you have what you consider to be a healthy work/life balance? Why or why not?
* How much of your business decision making in the beginning was influenced by the type of lifestyle you wanted for yourself/other important people? Were those other important people involved in the decision making?
* Do you have any lifestyle goals you are working towards? (ie. Taking a summer vacation)

Financial

* Do you (or your family) have a source of non-farm income? Is your goal to be a ‘full-time’ farmer at some point?
* If you are comfortable discussing any of the economics around your enterprises that would be great. Mainly the gross/net revenues.

General Questions

* Do you have any really unique ways/ideas/products/services to generate income?
* What do you think is a manageable scale for just one person (with reference to your main enterprise(s))?
* How much time do you spend marketing? (this includes at markets/CSA drops, etc)
* How much time on office ‘stuff’ in general?
* The above questions are looking at a labour budget of sorts. During a typical week, can you break down how much time you spend on various tasks? (ie. X hours at market, X hours in the office, X hours in the field, etc.)
* If you could go back and tell yourself something when you were just getting started what would it be?