UVM Extension Farm Viability

UVM Extension Farm Viability offers business planning and technical assistance services to all qualifying Vermont farmers, as part of a statewide effort to improve the economic viability of Vermont agriculture. Once enrolled, all farms meet and work with a “lead” farm business planner usually over a 4 – 12 month basis to produce a written business plan and/or complete other business analysis projects. In the second year, farmers who have completed a full business plan or farm transfer/succession plan are provided with ongoing technical assistance to monitor their progress in implementing their plan.

The program has the following eligibility requirements: a) participant is a Vermont resident, b) participant has 3 years of experience working and managing farm operations and c) the farm business generated at least $15,000 of gross sales in the previous year. UVM Extension Farm Viability provides assistance referring all applicants that do not meet eligibility criteria to other programs and services available to them. Waivers from the eligibility requirements may be requested and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

UVM Extension Farm Viability partners closely with the Vermont Farm and Forestry Program based at the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). Farms that complete a business plan meeting VHCB guidelines will be eligible for future VHCB grants towards capital expenses or technical assistance essential to implementing their completed business plans. Please indicate in your application if you would like to be eligible for these grants.

Farmer Application

Applications are accepted at any time and enrollment decisions are made generally within 30 days. The attached application will provide us with essential information that will enable us to better understand how best to assist you and your farm. This includes an assessment of your level of interest and ability to commit the necessary time and effort required for successful program participation and eventual implementation of recommended practices. You may attach additional information/materials to the application if desired. If you have any questions while completing the application, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address or telephone number listed below.

UVM Extension strives to enroll all eligible farm applicants into our program. At times however, funding restrictions require us to limit enrollment requests. Should we not be able to enroll your farm in the program, we will return your enrollment fee and advise you on the best steps to enroll in the future.

Enrollment Fee

There is a $75 fee to enroll in UVM Extension Farm Viability. Aside from this enrollment fee, all business planning and technical assistance will be provided free of charge up to a certain level. Please submit a check with your application. We will return your check if we are not able to enroll you in the program at this time.

INSTRUCTIONS

1) Complete the attached application form,
2) Enclose a $75 check or money order made out to UVM Extension, and
3) Mail to: UVM Extension Farm Viability Program
Attention: Christi Sherlock
327 US Route 302, Suite 1
Barre VT 05641

Please contact Christi Sherlock, at 866-860-1382 or with any questions.

This program is funded by UVM Extension, USDA Risk Management Agency, The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Northeast Center for Risk Management Education and Private Donors
Farm Viability Program

APPLICATION
(Please Type or Print)

Name(s) of farmer applicant(s) ___________________________________________

Mailing address (street) ___________________________________________________

Town ____________________________ VT Zip __________ Telephone ___________________

Farm Name __________________________ Email __________________________

YOUR FARM INFORMATION

Please answer each question:
1. Are you a year-round Vermont resident?    Yes □ No □
2. Do you own or rent by written lease at least one parcel of Vermont farmland?  Yes □ No □
3. Do you have 3 years experience managing or working on a farm? Yes □ No □
4. Did your farm produce $15,000 of gross farm income in the most recent tax year? Yes □ No □
5. In the next 12 months do you again plan to engage in the business of farming on this land?  Yes □ No □

PLEASE NOTE: If you answered NO to any of these questions, you should contact the Farm Viability program office at 866-860-1382 before submitting your application.

6. I (we) own the farm as a: □ sole proprietorship. □ partnership. □ corporation. □ other ownership arrangement (specify). ____________________________________

□ I (we) lease the farm from someone else

7. How did you hear about the program? □ from a friend / other farmer
□ from the internet/website, which one? __________
□ at an event, program or conference
□ from a publication, which one? __________
□ from a service provider or consultant, which one? __________

□ Other: ____________________________

Please give acres of:

Total owned _______ Total rented _______ Forage crops (hay, corn, etc.) _______
Pasture _______ Vegetables or berries _______ Ornaments _______
Tree fruits _______ Sugarbush (# of Taps) _______ Food Grains _______
Other (specify) _______ Please give numbers of:

Mature dairy cows _______ Young dairy cattle _______ Dairy goats _______
Dairy sheep _______ Other sheep _______ Beef cattle _______
Hogs _______ Poultry _______ Horses _______
Other (specify) _______ Please check if your farm:

Gross farm income for most recent tax year _______ Net farm income for most recent tax year _______ Off farm income for most recent tax year _______

Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □

□ Yes □ No □
PLEASE DESCRIBE THE TYPE(S) OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE YOU ARE REQUESTING

Please attach a one-page description of your ideas for changing or improving your farm enterprise. Please address the following:

• A brief description of your farm business
• Your ideas and plans for the future
• What you hope to get out of enrolling in the VT Farm Viability Program
• What technical assistance you are already receiving or actively seeking

Please check the program options you are applying for (we can discuss these options further upon enrollment)

☐ Full Business Plan  ☐ Enterprise Analysis  ☐ Farm Transfer Plan
☐ Cash Flow Planning or Financial Analysis  ☐ Dairy Management  ☐ Follow-Up Services (for farms that have already completed plans through the program)

Please check your top priorities for specific technical assistance you might be interested in receiving (up to 8 boxes):

☐ Business plan  ☐ Farm transfer/sale  ☐ Health insurance  ☐ Animal health/nutrition
☐ Budgets/financial planning  ☐ Personal/family stress  ☐ Marketing plan  ☐ Wholesale markets
☐ Farming with disabilities  ☐ Enterprise analysis  ☐ Energy Efficiency  ☐ Environmental concerns
☐ Community supported ag. (CSA)  ☐ Labor management  ☐ Expansion planning  ☐ Forage crops
☐ Accounting and record keeping systems  ☐ Agri-tourism  ☐ Composting
☐ Value-added processing  ☐ On-farm sales  ☐ Pasture management  ☐ Manure management
☐ Retirement/estate planning  ☐ Organic production  ☐ Borrowing capacity

Please answer the following questions:

Would you like to be eligible for future grants for participants that successfully complete business plans? Yes  No
Is your farm currently under foreclosure or is your farm business currently in a bankruptcy proceeding? Yes  No
Is your farm enrolled in a financial record-keeping program? _________
Do you have detailed balance sheets and income statements for the last two years? __________
Is your farm enrolled in production record keeping such as DHIA or crop enterprise reporting? _________
How many years have you managed a farm? __________
Do you have any formal education in farm management? __________
Please list any awards the farm has received under your management: ________________________________

Are you willing to set aside significant time (minimum 6-8 hrs) to meet at your farm with a business planner and/or complete activities associated with your project technical assistance providers? Yes  No
Are you considering transferring the farm (sale or lease) to another farmer in the immediate future? Yes  No
Is the farm enrolled in VT Use Value Appraisal/Current Use? __
Is the farm protected by a conservation easement? _________

The information given in this application is true to the best of my (our) knowledge.

Signature(s) ________________________________ _________________ Date _________________
Use this space for a one-page description of your ideas for business planning. You may attach additional paper if needed. This should include plans for changing or improving your farm enterprise. Please address the four bulleted statements on page two of the application.

Return application to:  
UVM Extension Farm Viability Program  
Attention: Christi Sherlock  
327 US Route 302, Suite 1  
Barre VT 05641  

UVM Office Use  
Fee Collected: Yes ☐ No ☐  
Check # ___________  
Date Received: ___________  
Lead Provider  
☐ Cannella ☐ Kauppila  
☐ Kitsos ☐ Paddock  
☐ Dolce ☐ Miller  
☐ Ghia ☐ Other ________