IDENTIFYING FARMER & RANCHER SUCCESS:
How Programs Contribute and Example Definitions

This diagram identifies many of the primary elements that are necessary for new farmer and rancher success, particularly those where organizations provide support. It also identifies several different definitions of success that might be utilized in an evaluation.

Use this diagram to help orient an evaluation focused on farmer success. Identify what key activities your organization contributes to farmer success. Then consider which aspects of farmer success are generally most relevant to your organization, funders and farmers/ranchers you serve.

- FARMING & RANCHING SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE
  - Agronomy & horticulture management
  - Animal husbandry/ranching
  - Marketing
  - Business and financial planning
  - Mechanical
  - Safety

- RESOURCES/ASSETS
  - Land
  - Capital
  - Labor

- PERSONAL SKILLS & ATTITUDES
  - Problem solving abilities
  - Adaptable
  - Time management
  - Interpersonal/social
  - Ability to learn
  - Innovative
  - Perseverance
  - Leadership

- QUALITY OF LIFE
  - Lifestyle—work/life balance, life long learning
  - Personal satisfaction
  - Well-being—physical/emotional health food security, cultural/spiritual practices

- SOCIAL
  - Belief or cause—further sustainability, preserve breeds
  - Community—build relationships, provide healthy food

- FINANCIAL
  - Solvency—making a living, farm in business
  - Profitability—increase in income, increase in capacity for production

- OPERATIONAL
  - Production—high quality, efficiency
  - Marketing—customer satisfaction

- SUPPORT/COMMUNITY
  - Learning network
  - Mentorship (farm/non-farm)
  - Community relationships/civic engagement

- STRUCTURAL SUPPORTS
  - Markets/distribution channels
  - Federal/state programs (USDA programs, etc.)
  - Federal program availability
  - Policies/legal structures
  - Training programs
  - Meat processing infrastructure

* The majority of these farmer success characteristics were used, with permission, from: Kristen Pool. 2014. Farmer Perspectives on Success and Challenges: A Study of Small Farms in Oregon’s Willamette Valley. M.S. Thesis., p. 70.