

How Do You Know What You Don't Know ?



Maine AgrAbility supports farmers, and farm workers who experience barriers to employment such as aging, injury, or chronic illness.

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Learning objectives for this session

1. What are my questions?
1. Where do I find answers?
1. AgrAbility Factsheet Working Group



Credit: Remsburg

*Assumptions

How Do You Know What You Don't Know?



Finding the answers to the right questions can help you or your client on the path to success.

Farm culture

If you don't understand what a farmer does, you may not be capable of supporting their needs.

How would you describe farm culture?

Use the chat box to comment



Credit: Carlson

Preparing for Worksite Assessments



Preparing for Agricultural Worksite Assessments

What to Wear

Prepare to be outdoors, in an agricultural setting, in and near equipment and buildings.

- Wear clothes that you do not mind getting dirty.
- Wear closed-toe shoes or boots. Boots which can be washed off are preferred.
- Dress for the weather- may include hats, gloves, rain coats, sunscreen, etc.
- Be prepared to use personal protective equipment if needed.
- Bring a spare change of clothes and shoes.

What to Expect

Each assessment is unique, but on average prepare for:

- A 2 to 3-hour visit
- Informal, yet detailed evaluation
- Majority of time spent outdoors or in farm buildings
- May walk through mud, manure and over rough terrain
- May be near equipment or livestock
- Agricultural worker may continue performing work-related tasks during the visit
- 'Rain or shine' weather conditions

If you have accessibility concerns, please contact our staff ahead of time.

Personal Safety at the Worksite

Assessments occur in active worksites that may include livestock and equipment in operation. If you are not the farmer or farm worker:

- Stay away from all running equipment
- Ask before approaching or touching livestock
- Be alert when walking on various surfaces to avoid possible slip and trip hazards
- Thoroughly wash your hands and footwear after the worksite visit
- Use hand sanitizer while on farm if water and soap are not available
- **If you feel unsafe, speak up!**

If you have specific safety concerns, please contact our staff ahead of time.



What are my questions?

- What questions do we ask?

Use the chat box to answer



Credit: Carlson

Worksite Assessment Tool



Conducting Agricultural Worksite Assessments – A User’s Guide for Professionals Assisting Farmers and Ranchers with Physical Disabilities

What are my questions?

- What questions do farmers ask?

Use the chat box to answer



Targeted farmer questions



Checklist for Veterans Who are Farming (or Want to Farm)

Become familiar with these informational resources/agencies/organizations in Maine.

University of Maine Cooperative Extension www.extension.maine.edu 1.800.287.0274

- Identify the County Extension agriculturist in your county and arrange a meeting. Extension staff include professionals, educators, and specialists. www.extension.maine.edu/county-offices/all/
- Visit the Beginning Farmer Resource Network website to view information and all of the agencies that assist farmers in Maine. www.extension.maine.edu/beginning-farmer-resource-network/
- If you have a physical or cognitive disability (or limitation), consider connecting with UMaine Extension's AgrAbility program. www.extension.maine.edu/agrability/ 207.944.1533

USDA Service Center for your county

- Farm Service Agency (FSA) assistance and loan programs 207.990.9100 Ext 2
<https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=me&agency=fsa>
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to learn about their programs for farmers and landowners
www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/me/contact/local/ 207.990.9100 Ext 3

Farm Credit East for agricultural loans, leasing, tax services, accounting, and crop insurance.

- www.farmcrediteast.com, Presque Isle 1.800.831.4650 or Auburn 1.800.831.4230

TO DO:

- Assemble a list of questions you may have about farming.
- Identify the Extension agriculturist in your county.
- Contact that Extension staff member and request a farm visit.
- Ask about Extension mailing lists that fit your locale or interests.

Make a list of the skills and knowledge you want to learn.

Think about what type of farm you want to work on.

beef dairy bees goat poultry rabbit sheep swine

berries/small fruit tree fruit vegetables nuts grain herbs flowers hemp

hay maple hop Christmas trees forestry other _____

Contact UMaine Cooperative Extension in your county. www.extension.maine.edu/county-offices/a

Ask to speak with the staff member who is the agriculturist.

Develop a short list of questions you may have about farm work.

Ask the Extension staff person for help in answering your questions about farm work.

Determine if you want to full-time, part-time, or seasonal work.

If you have a physical or cognitive disability (or limitation), consider contacting UMaine Extension's AgrAbility program. www.extension.maine.edu/agrability/



Where to find answers?

- Who are your 'go-to' resources for reliable answers and information?

Use the chat box to answer



Credit: Carlson

Now what?

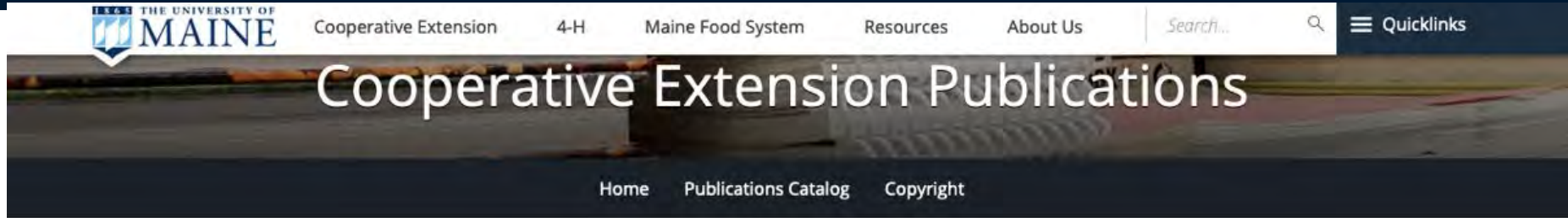
Are we expected to know everything about everything?

NO, but we should know what questions to ask, and who to ask for answers.



Credit: Brzozowski

Finding information



Agriculture



General Ag



Blueberries



Commercial Horticulture



Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklists



Forages and Pastures



Fruit



Grains and Oilseeds



Maine Farm Safety Program



Potatoes



Vegetables

Farmer Skills & Knowledge Checklists

- [Bulletin #1040, Farmer Skills and Knowledge List: Sustainable Sheep Production](#)
- [Bulletin #1045, Getting Ready for the Shearer: A Checklist for Maine Sheep and Wool Producers](#)
- [Bulletin #1047, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist for Calf Care and Calf Rearing](#)
- [Bulletin #1055, Checklist of Steps for A Prospective High Tunnel Grower](#)
- [Bulletin #1057, Skill and Knowledge Checklist for Greenhouse Growers](#)
- [Bulletin #1060, Orienting New Farm Employees in Maine: A Checklist for Maine Agricultural Employers](#)
- [Bulletin #1117, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist for Rabbits](#)
- [Bulletin #1201, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Beef Production](#)
- [Bulletin #1202, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Poultry — Meat Production](#)
- [Bulletin #1203, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Poultry — Egg Production](#)
- [Bulletin #1208, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Swine Production](#)
- [Bulletin #1209, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Safe Tractor and Implement Operation](#)
- [Bulletin #1210, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Goat Producers](#)
- [Bulletin #1212, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist for Hay and Haylage Makers in Maine](#)
- [Bulletin #1213, Using Checklists to Increase Productivity on the Farm](#)
- [Bulletin #2035 Farmer Skill & Knowledge List for Tree Fruit Growers in Maine](#)
- [Bulletin #2036, Farmer Skill & Knowledge Checklist for Small Fruit Growers in Maine](#)
- [Bulletin #2037, Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist for Vegetable Growers in Maine](#)
- [Bulletin #5120 Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: What Maine Farmers Need to Know about Pesticides](#)



Farmer Skill and
Knowledge
Checklists

Farmer Skills & Knowledge Checklists

Circle your current and desired (target) competence using this scale:

1=No knowledge/skill

2=Some knowledge/skill

3=Well-informed/experienced

Recommended knowledge	My current level			My target level		
Vegetable Crop Planning						
Know the basic families of vegetables for crop planning and rotation purposes.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to plan for successive crops for market.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to select and order vegetable varieties for planting.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with reputable seed sources for vegetable crops.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to prepare land for production at least one year before planting.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to select cover crops to improve soil conditions before planting.	1	2	3	1	2	3



Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklists

Farmer Skills & Knowledge Checklists

Tools and Equipment						
Have a good basic mechanical aptitude.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to safely operate walk-behind power equipment.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with small engine preventative maintenance.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to safely operate a farm tractor.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to perform a pre-operational check of a farm tractor.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to check fluid levels of a farm tractor.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to attach an implement to the 3-point hitch of a tractor.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to safely maneuver a tractor with a two-wheel trailer in a forward motion.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to safely maneuver a tractor with a two-wheel trailer for a backward motion.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be certified in CPR and first aid.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with proper ergonomic use of common field hand tools (hand shears, knife, trowel, hoe, spade, rake, scythe, etc.).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to select and use suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) for farm tasks.	1	2	3	1	2	3

Finding information

Fact Sheets

- Bulletin #1054, [Why High Tunnel Growing in Maine Might Be a Suitable Enterprise for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- Bulletin #1063, [The Benefits and Drawbacks of Farm Work Experience in Maine](#)
- **NEW!!** [Bulletin #1213, Using Checklists to Increase Productivity on the Farm](#)
- Bulletin #1220, [Cheese Maker Self-Assessment Tool for Occupational Health, Safety, and Ergonomics](#)
- Bulletin #2021, [Why Beekeeping in Maine Might Be a Suitable Enterprise for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- Bulletin #2022, [Tips for Farmers Who Hire Individuals with Disabilities](#)
- Bulletin #2023, [Why Growing Lavender in Maine Might Be a Suitable Enterprise for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- Bulletin #2215, [Why Poultry Might Be a Suitable Enterprise for Persons with Disabilities](#)



Credit: Carlson

Targeted Audience Information

Pre-Planning Considerations

Think about these factors before you obtain lavender plant material:

- Take a class to learn about lavender. This could be an in-person class or an online class.
- Learn about lavender production and processing through reading.
- Learn about lavender production by visiting a reputable producer.
- Start to develop a business plan or a purpose-driven plan for growing lavender; within this plan, include such an enterprise.
- Identify possible adequate funds or obtain a loan.
- Consider the site location for growing the crop:
 - Access to the site by foot, truck, van, 4-wheeler, or tractor in all seasons
 - The slope of the land (and compass direction of slope)
 - The orientation of the site to the sun and from prevailing winds through every season of the year
 - Access of the site

Typical Operational Tasks and Chores

- Develop a plan for each year in advance of the process might be modified. Depending on your specific setup and goals, some chores might be performed or if the chore is necessary for your situation. Add chores that are consistent with your strengths and limitations.
- There are different chores that you might want.

One Year Before Planting

- Select an appropriate site (consider slope, soil type, hardiness growing zone, etc.)
- Sample soil for analysis.
- Identify reputable sources of plant material.
- Identify probable markets for your product(s).
- Identify sources of fabric mulch, irrigation system, and other equipment.
- Develop a map of your property and a plan for access, establishment, and possible future expansion.

Spring of Establishment Year



Lavender Enterprise Opportunities

The production and marketing of lavender cuttings is the most common lavender-related enterprise for U.S. farmers.

- Processed lavender into salves and ointments

These alternative lavender enterprises may require additional knowledge and skills but could be a suitable opportunity for farmers with certain limitations.

Adaptive Tools and Technologies

Adaptive tools and assistive technology can make tasks easier and safer for the lavender grower. Some technology can be used on the farm and in the business. Planning ahead with site location, access and pre-design can enable a farmer, with or without physical limitations, to use a few suggested tools and equipment.

- A planting auger might be helpful. Manufacturers typically have different versions and different lengths available.
- A riding cart with wide wheels and rolls easily is helpful for those individuals with mobility or strength issues that could strain on one's back.
- Seating options can be built-in or located near the field(s) for those individuals with endurance issues (as a result of physical limitations).
- An electric wheel barrel or battery-powered wagon could be useful for some tasks that demand transport of heavy products, etc.
- Smaller hand tools or telescoping tools can be used if strength is an issue.
- A pneumatic pruner (air-powered) might be appropriate for some pruning tasks.

AgrAbility Factsheet Working Group



AgrAbility Factsheet Working Group

Mission:

To work collaboratively to create a fact sheet collection, with a searchable library of relevant topics for AgrAbility audiences. When gaps are identified, members of the group will respond.

Factsheet Working Group: goals

- **Create a compilation of factsheets**
- Identify the different intended audiences
- Identify missing topics

Questions Responses **191**



AgrAbility Publication/Fact Sheet Information

This form is designed to generate a list of existing publications, fact sheets, bulletins, etc. that are currently being used and shared by AgrAbility projects. A working group of AgrAbility staffers from across the country has recently been formed. They are taking on the task of generating a searchable list of current publications related to AgrAbility. We need your help in completing this task.

Factsheet Working Group: goals

- Create a compilation of factsheets
- **Identify the different intended audiences**
- Identify missing topics
 - Farm & ranch enterprise
 - Fishing industries
 - Forest and logging industries
 - AT & equipment
 - Disability specific
 - Physical health
 - Mental health & stress
 - Farm family & caregiver
 - Safety or injury prevention
 - Veterans
 - Youth

Factsheet Working Group: goals

- Create a compilation of factsheets
- Identify the different intended audiences
- **Identify missing topics**

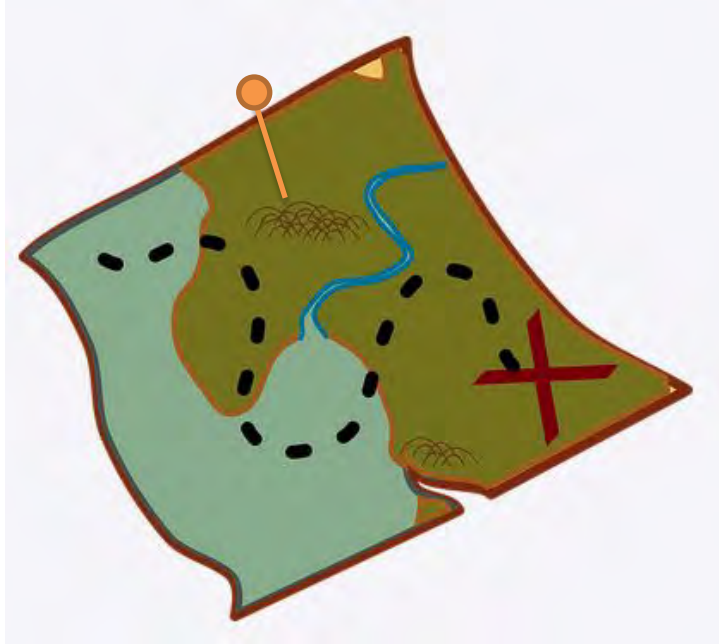
Bulletin #1213, Using Checklists to Increase Productivity on



[Using Checklists to Increase Productivity on the Farm \(PDF\)](#)

By Richard Brzozowski, Maine AgrAbility Project Director, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Beatriz M. Rodriguez, Project Director, North Carolina AgrAbility Partnership, and Rhonda Miller, Ph.D., Project Director, AgrAbility of Utah.

Thank you



Maine AgrAbility

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