



Developing Leadership and Human Resource Management Skills for Mid- and Late-Career Farmers

Farmers often face risks resulting from a deficit of knowledge and skills related to effective labor management. In **New Hampshire**, a survey completed by 115 farmers identified a significant desire for education and skill building on a range of labor management topics including communication, conflict resolution, understanding labor laws, employee training, team building, and improving worker performance. The survey data was also supported by key informant interviews with staff from the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food, the New Hampshire Farm Bureau, the New Hampshire Farm Service Agency, Farm Credit East, and the University of Vermont Farm Management Specialist.

In order to address this need, a team of ag business experts led by **Seth Wilner** of **University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension** developed a project

that included delivery of four educational sessions in each of two locations. Each session featured a subject matter specialist who not only provided practical information, but also facilitated an interactive curriculum that encouraged participants to share their own knowledge and approaches. This created a powerful co-learning environment benefitting both participants and presenters.

Seventy-one (71) mid-career farmers from across northern New England attended the educational sessions. Program evaluation conducted following the project identified that the participants significantly increased their knowledge and skills in the following areas: agricultural labor law; job recruitment; employee retention; on-boarding new employees; effective training methods for all employees; performance feedback; conflict resolution; leadership; communication; motivating employees; employee recognition methods; labor efficiency; and the ability to calculate the full costs of hiring employees.



“Taking the labor management program has simplified the farm and saved us close to 10% of our labor costs due to increased efficiency.”

- New Hampshire Farmer





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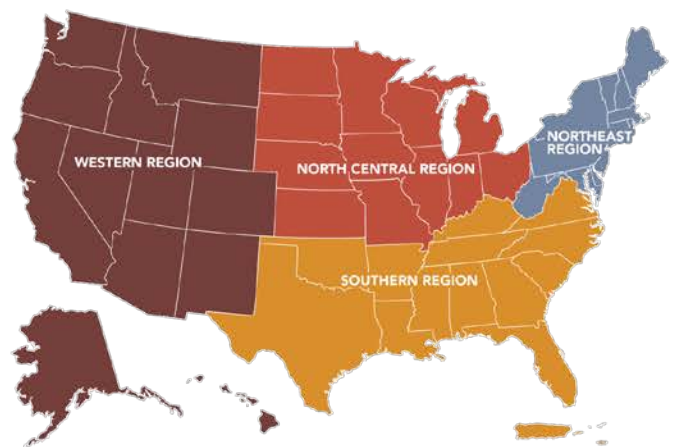
National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

“Educating America’s farmers and ranchers to manage the unique risks of producing food for the world’s table.”

Extension Risk Management Education (ERME) is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Projects are producer-focused, results-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted results that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those results.

Extension Risk Management Education has funded innovative programs that have generated tangible results for producers in every state. ERME is committed to funding results, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration. View the accomplishments of all funded projects on our website.
<http://ExtensionRME.org>



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