

David Hallauer
District Extension Agent, Crops & Soils

Farm Transition Planning

The Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State has a publication outlining 12 steps of a successful farm transition plan. University of Missouri Agricultural Business Specialist Wesley Tucker wrote an article outlining five phases of management transition during a family farm succession. Many other Universities, lenders, etc... have articles, newsletters, videos, podcasts, etc., etc., etc., on the topic as well – yet it's still needed? Why?

Maybe it's because it's hard. A farm transition plan is difficult to think about, let alone start discussion around. They're difficult to put into writing and even harder to implement or keep current. Yet, they're necessary if you want your farm business to continue to be successful.

An Oklahoma State transition publication has a graphic showing the small business generational transition success rate. Success drastically declines through time with just a 30 percent success rate from the first to the second generation and a 12 percent success rate from the second to the third generation. Agricultural enterprise transitions aren't exactly the same as small businesses, but with statistics (Purdue) suggesting only 55 percent of farms have a written succession plan, it's not difficult to see how successful transitions could be a challenge.

Does your farming operation have a transition plan in place? If not, an upcoming conference from the KSU Department of Ag Economics Office of Farm and Ranch Transitions and K-State Research and Extension is designed to help farm transition plans in all stages of development: from established needing review to not started at all. Dr. Shannon Ferrell, Ag Law Specialist at Oklahoma State University and long-time farm transition advocate will be the keynote speaker at three events held March sixth (Garden City), seventh (Great Bend), and eighth (Manhattan). The program will include speakers from USDA's Farm Service Agency plus sessions with accountants and attorneys familiar with farm transition planning.

Registration (\$60/person) and vendor visits for the Manhattan event start at 8:00 a.m. on Friday March 8th at the Hilton Garden Inn (410 S. 3rd St.). The program will be from 9:00 to 3:00 p.m. Register online at <https://agmanager.info/events/farm-and-ranch-transition-conferences> .

If you need just a little bit more information to get your transition plan started – or keep it going - check out this event. Dr. Ferrell has a great base of knowledge to point you in the right direction. Local attorneys and accountants will help you dig deeper into next steps or other things to think about as you move forward. We hope you'll plan to attend.

February 16, 2024

Ross Mosteller
District Extension Agent, Livestock & Natural Resources

Nothing this week.

February 16, 2024

Laura Phillips
District Extension Agent, Horticulture

Nothing this week.

Teresa Hatfield
District Extension Agent, Family and Community Wellness

Managing Caregiver Stress

Rosalynn Carter once said, "There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers." There are 43.5 million unpaid caregivers in the United States caring for family and friends. Caregivers often set aside their health and well-being during this time while providing essential care to others. Caregivers often experience sleep loss, a greater risk of depression, and a greater risk of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use. They experience poor health from not eating nutritious meals and lacking regular exercise. On an airplane, they tell us if we are traveling with young children, first put on our oxygen masks and then help our children. It is the same with caregiving; you must learn to care for yourself to continue effectively caring for others.

Caregivers often find it challenging to take care of themselves. Caregivers often have many reasons for not taking better care of themselves.

- They may feel guilty or that they are being selfish.
- They may feel there is not enough time to practice self-care.
- The person they are caring for needs care, not themselves.
- They think they are not good caregivers if they ask for help or are not living up to their marriage vows.
- Or I'm the only one who can do it right, or they may feel like they are burdening others.
- They made promises that were difficult to keep, such as, "I promised Dad I wouldn't put Mom in a nursing home.
- We always take care of our own.

If some of these things sound familiar, ask yourself what is getting in your way. Once you have identified the barrier, you can work to change the situation. It is okay to ask for and accept help from others. Start by listing how others can help out when they volunteer. Maybe someone can pick up a few items from the grocery store, sit with your family member while you take a walk, visit with friends, or sit and read a book. Consider hiring someone to help you relieve the pressure. There are also local agencies that offer services for caregivers, such as local area agencies on aging, the Alzheimer's Association, and organizations that specialize in the care receivers' chronic condition, are some examples.

Another way to ensure you take time for yourself is to set a weekly goal to do something just for you. Make sure you write down your goal as a mini contract with yourself. For example, I will read a novel for 20 min three days a week. Or I will walk for 30 minutes on Saturdays, Mondays, and Wednesdays while the home health nurse visits Mom. Have someone hold you accountable for your plan. If you fail to follow through, tweak your plan next week to fit better. Don't give up; you may need to try several options before you succeed.

The Meadowlark Extension District will conduct a "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" class starting March 28, 2024. The classes will meet every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. for six weeks.

This educational class series will help family caregivers. The program will help you care for yourself while caring for a relative or friend. Whether you are helping a parent, spouse, child, friend, or someone who lives at home, in a nursing home, or across the country, you will benefit from this class. Online class includes a Caregiver Help book; topics include hiring in-home help, helping memory-impaired elders, making legal and financial decisions, making decisions about care facility placement, understanding depression, and making driving decisions.

For more information about the Powerful Tools for Caregiver's class, please contact Teresa Hatfield at 785-364-4125 or thatfield@ksu.edu.

Cindy Williams
District Extension Agent, Food, Nutrition, Health and Safety

Safety of Canned Food that Freeze in Winter

Cold weather has created challenges for all of us this year. Power outages can lead to many problems. If you have canned foods, either home canned or commercially canned, in a storage location that froze, what can you do?

Check for broken seals or seams in metal cans or broken glass in home canned foods due to expansion of the food and liquid inside the container. If all are intact, they can be saved. Thaw gradually and store at room temperature.

For commercially canned foods, if seams are broken, that can lead to contamination and be unsafe to eat. Discard these cans.

For home canned foods, discard broken glass containers. If the lid became unsealed, and the jar thawed to room temperature, discard these too.

If a glass jar became unsealed but is still frozen, this can be safely used immediately or transferred to a new container and stored in the refrigerator or freezer.

During cold weather, wrap jars or cans in paper and cover with blankets to insulate them. Another option for vulnerable storage locations is to prop open pantry or cupboard doors to allow warm air inside.