**Guide to Developing Farmers Workshops**

**FARMERS WORKSHOP VISIONING WORKSHEET**

This worksheet is designed as a guide to help the CAB plan and develop Farmers Workshops in your community. If your team does not yet have a CAB, see the Create your Community Advisory Board section. Filling out the spaces below will help the CAB and community partners think through what Farmers Workshops could look like.

Let’s get started by filling in your information below:

**Your Organization**

**Your Community Name**

**Today’s Date**

**Names of Individuals/Organizations Preparing This Plan**

**Farmers Workshop Goals**

What are your team’s goals in developing Farmers Workshops? Some questions to consider when coming up with these goals include: What will Farmers Workshops provide for the community? Why would your team like to have workshops for farmers? Some of your goals may conflict with each other, and you may want to list the goals in order of importance to determine which goals are most valuable. Some Farmers Workshop example goals are included below:

*Goal 1: Encourage community members to farm in both traditional and modern ways*

*Goal 2: Encourage community members to garden*

*Goal 3: Connect youth to traditional food systems*

*Goal 4: Pass knowledge to youth from elders, farmers, and other knowledge keepers*

*Goal 5: Support community members to grow and eat healthy local food*

*Goal 6: Provide information for community members involved in other Feast for the Future programs*

Write your goals for the Farmers Workshops below:

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Goal 4:

Goal 5:

Goal 6:

Goal 7:

Goal 8:

Goal 9:

Goal 10:

**Describe the Farmers Workshops**

Next, write a description of the Farmers Workshops that your team would like to see, including the goals that you’ve listed above. An example is included below:

*At our Farmers Workshops, community members, farmers, elders, and youth will learn about traditional and modern ways to grow healthy local food. We would like elders and farmers in the community to host some of the workshops to share their knowledge, and we also plan to bring in outside experts to bring knowledge into the community. We hope that community members involved in other Feast for the Future programs, such as the Traditional Foodways Education Program, the Edible School Garden Program, Community Gardens, etc., will participate in the workshops to learn new information relevant to them.*

Write your team’s description of Farmers Workshops in your community below:

**IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP**

Identify a lead organization and a Farmers Workshop Coordinator to take responsibility to organize, advertise, and host the Farmers Workshops. Make sure that this organization and individual have the skills needed to host Farmers Workshops, such as a familiarity with the farmers and elders in the region, experience farming or a willingness to learn, connections to external agencies willing to provide support for the workshops, connections to outside farmers/experts, passion and commitment to host Farmers Workshops, patience, willingness to partner and involve volunteers, and a large enough team to manage all necessary tasks. Examples of lead organizations include tribal agricultural departments, natural resource departments, and health and wellness programs. The lead organization may already be committed to hosting Farmers Workshops because they are in line with their organizational mission. Decide on what the lead organization will do in their role as a leader. This organization may already be a part of the CAB that guides the Feast for the Future programs.

**Lead Organization Contact Information:**

Organization Name:

Farmers Workshop Coordinator:

Address:

Telephone #:

Email:

Website:

**Describe the Role of the Lead Organization**

In collaboration with the agency, the CAB, and key stakeholders, decide on the role of the lead organization. An example is included below:

*The lead organization for Farmers Workshops will be responsible for recruiting farmers/elders and other experts to instruct the workshops, scheduling the workshops with collaborating organizations, advertising the workshops, overseeing evaluation of the workshops, and maintaining a financial log to make sure all workshop-related purchases are within budget. The lead organization will also coordinate with all partners, and coordinate regular meetings with the Farmers Workshop leadership team, the CAB, community partners, and other key stakeholders.*

Write a description of the responsibilities for the Farmers Workshop lead organization in your community below:

**Identify the Farmers Workshop Leadership Team**

A team of individuals, each with unique contributions, will help make the Farmers Workshops a success. Involving individuals and agencies from a variety of backgrounds can help make your team strong. Make sure to work with tribal agencies to receive needed commitments and approvals for the Farmers Workshops, which may involve a signed and approved letter from tribal leadership. Consider involving tribal government, tribal members, youth and youth groups, schools and colleges, farmers, the state’s cooperative extension services/programs, master gardeners, FoodCorps, community volunteers, and staff of health programs. Consider partnering with a local college to offer credit for the farmers workshops. Consider partnering with similar initiatives, such as with those coordinating the Family Garden program, to help support the workshops and to have a broad reach when advertising the Farmers Workshops.

Determine who will coordinate different aspects of the Farmers Workshops to ensure that the program will continue to benefit the community. An example of potential roles and responsibilities is included below:

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| ***Name*** | ***Role*** | ***Responsibilities*** |
| *Ida* | *Farmers Workshop Coordinator* | *Serves as the point person for the Farmers Workshops. Oversees coordinating each workshop. Works with all the other individuals listed below. Reports back to the CAB.* |
| *Oscar* | *Evaluation Manager* | *Leads the development of the evaluation; keeps track of what is working well and what could be improved about the Farmers Workshops and shares that information with the team.* |
| *Rio* | *Community Outreach Coordinator* | *Coordinates with local farmers, elders, outside experts, and other community members to participate in (and instruct) Farmers Workshops.* |

Your Farmers Workshop leadership team may have different roles and responsibilities than in the example. Fill in the following table with your leadership team, their roles, and their responsibilities:

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| **Name** | **Role** | **Responsibilities** |
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If some individuals can no longer fulfill their role on the Farmers Workshop team, transition another individual into that role to ensure sustainability.

**PREPARING FOR THE FARMERS WORKSHOPS**

**Identify potential workshop instructors**

Think about individuals that may be interested in instructing a Farmers Workshop in your community. Consider local farmers, elders, and people that work in agriculture, as well as organizations with agricultural expertise, and individuals from outside your community that may be willing to share their knowledge. Write the names and contact information for individuals you have identified below, then contact each individual and see if they might be interested, and if so, what topics they could lead a workshop about. Farmers Workshop topics could include:

1. Bookkeeping for farmers and ranchers
2. Starting to Farm: A workshop for beginning farmers
3. Corn shelling
4. Developing farmers markets
5. The National Resource Conservation Service
6. Farm Service Agency Programs
7. National Agricultural Statistics Service Program
8. Soil, including information on types of soil, soil testing for nutrients, soil improvement, and tips to spotting nutrient imbalances in your plants
9. Growing vegetables
10. Planting and maintaining fruit tree orchards
11. Tractor and farm equipment
12. How to construct hoop houses, their benefits and costs.
13. Beef quality
14. Farming methods
15. Pest control: gophers, grasshoppers, and weeds
16. Chile harvesting

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| **Potential Farmers Workshop Instructors** | **Contact Information** | **Workshop Topic Ideas** | **Notes from Follow-Up** |
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**Identify potential locations**

Brainstorm potential sites for the Farmers Workshops. Your team may choose to conduct workshops in different places, depending on the topics, and people instructing. Consider:

* Locations that are easily accessible and convenient for farmers, elders, and other community members who may be interested in attending the workshop
* Sites that have available facilities (like bathrooms and chairs) that people may need to use while they’re attending a workshop
* Opportunities for an instructor to demonstrate farming/gardening techniques
* Places where the space is large enough to host a workshop.
* Is approval for the space needed? If so, who is responsible for giving permission to use the space?

As your team brainstorms, write down all potential locations below, including the contact information to ask more about the space. Once your team has written down several spaces, then think through some of the benefits and challenges of these spaces and write those in too. If there is any additional information to consider, write that in the “notes” column.

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| **Potential Location** | **Contact** | **Benefits** | **Challenges** | **Notes** |
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**Evaluation plan**

Decide how your team will figure out what is going well, and what needs to be improved about the Farmers Workshops. What are your goals for the Farmers Workshops and how will they be measured? Look back at the Visioning Worksheet to see if those goals can be included. This plan should be completed before the first Farmers Workshop.

Below are some examples of Farmers Workshop goals and an evaluation plan to help determine how those goals will be measured:

*Goal 1: Encourage community members to farm in both traditional and modern ways*

*Goal 2: Encourage community members to garden*

*Goal 3: Connect youth to traditional food systems*

*Goal 4: Pass knowledge to youth from elders, farmers, and other knowledge keepers*

*Goal 5: Support community members to grow and eat healthy local food*

*Goal 6: Provide information for community members involved in other Feast for the Future programs*

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| ***Farmers Workshop Goal*** | ***How The Goal Will Be Measured and Evaluated*** |
| *Provide information for community members involved in other Feast for the Future programs* | *The Evaluation Coordinator will work with coordinators of other Feast for the Future programs, such as the Traditional Foodways Education Program, the Edible School Garden Program, and Community Gardens. The Evaluation Coordinator will talk with these coordinators at least three times per year about what’s working well about the Farmers Workshops, what could be improved, and whether any of the information presented has changed the ways they conduct their programs. The Evaluation Coordinator will share this information at the spring, summer, and fall CAB meetings.* |
| *Pass knowledge to youth from elders, farmers, and other knowledge keepers* | *The Evaluation Coordinator will count how many people attend each Farmers Workshop, and how many of them are youth. The Evaluation Coordinator will enter this inforamtion in an Excel spreadsheet along with the date and topic of the workshop. The Evaluation Coordinator will share this information with the CAB during the spring, summer, and fall meetings.* |

Your community may have different goals for your Farmers Workshops, and different ways to evaluate those goals. Fill out the table below with your goals for the Farmers Workshops and how your team will evaluate those goals.

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| **Farmers Workshop Goal** | **How The Goal Will Be Measured and Evaluated** |
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**Approval for evaluation activities**

Many communities and tribes require that evaluation plans are reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board or other entity. Find out what, if any, approvals are needed for your team’s evaluation plan, potentially by contacting a local researcher who works in your community.

**PLANNING THE FIRST FARMERS WORKSHOP**

**What will the first Farmers Workshop be about?**

Consider working with an experienced farmer or elder to develop the topic for the first workshop. Look back at the list of potential instructors your team created while Preparing for the Farmers Workshops Your team could consider topics that would be useful and timely for people in your community to learn more about. For example, your team may want to host a workshop on traditional irrigation just before people in your community will irrigate their fields. An example of who will instruct the first Farmers Workshop and what the first Farmers Workshop will be about is included below:

*An expert from Santa Fe, Barry, will co-teach the first Farmers Workshop with a local elder, Flora. The workshop will be about starting seeds indoors and transplanting. We’ve decided to work with an outside expert to attract more people to the workshop, but Flora will share some of her seed starting strategies during the second half of the presentation to help pass on traditional knowledge. The workshop will be held in March, so that community members will have time to start seeds indoors after the workshop. Barry will talk about the kind of soil to use, where we can get seeds, what kind of pots to use and where to get them, and how and when to transplant starts to a garden or field.*

Your first workshop may be different. Write a description of the first workshop topic, timing, and instructor:

**Where will the Farmers Workshop be located?**

In choosing a site for the first Farmers Workshop, look back at the list of potential locations your team created while Preparing for the Farmers Workshops. Now that the topic of the first Farmers Workshop has been decided, think about where would be a good space to hold this workshop.

Write down where your team would like the first Farmers Workshop to be, as well as why you’d like to use the space and what your team would need to do to gain permission to use the space. An example is below:

*Since the first Farmers Workshop is about starting seeds indoors, we’d like to be in an indoor space. We’ve decided to hold the first workshop at the community center because it’s conveniently located and most people know where it is. There are also chairs available, bathrooms, and a folding table that Barry and Flora can use to demonstrate how to start seeds. One of the CAB members, Rachel, works at the community center and has agreed to let us use the space.*

Write down where your team’s first Farmers Workshop will be held:

**Advertise the first Farmers Workshop**

Reach out through the connections of the lead agency, CAB, and Farmers Workshop coordinator to talk with local farmers, organizations, and community members who may be interested in the workshop. Connecting with people individually can be a great way to encourage people to attend. Also, think about making and printing flyers to put up in places that people will see, such as at the grocery store, clinic, or gas station. Write down your team’s plan for advertising the first workshop. An example is included below:

| **Advertising Method** | **Plan** | **Person/People Responsible, and their Roles** | **Why this method?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Flyers | Posted at area stores that sell produce | Alan will make the flyers, Reggie will put the flyers in stores | To let the general community know about the workshop |
| Word-of-mouth | Call people who might be particularly interested, such as farmers, elders, gardeners, coordinators of other Feast for the Future programs, and people involved in local agriculture | Each person on the CAB, leadership organization, and Farmers Workshop team will reach out to people they know | To make sure that people who the workshop is designed for know about it |
| Social Media – Tribal Facebook pages/ Twitter accounts | Create a Facebook page for the Farmers Workshop, and invite community members to the first market as an “event” | Laura | To reach community members who use social media, particularly younger people |

Your team’s advertising plan might be different. Write yours down in the field below:

| **Advertising Method** | **Plan** | **Person/People Responsible, and their Roles** | **Why this method?** |
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**Finalizing Plans**

What remain to be done before the first Farmers Workshop? Consider:

🞏 Have a farmer/elder to host the workshop

🞏 Have identified the place and have all necessary permissions to use it

🞏 Have chosen the time and date

🞏 Have identified community members interested in the workshop and talked to them about it

🞏 Advertised the workshop

🞏 Have an evaluation plan in place

🞏 Have any funding needed to pay the farmer/elder giving the workshop

Use the following table to write down any remaining things your team needs to do before the first Farmers Workshop, who will take the lead on each task, and when each task will be completed:

| **Task** | **Deadline** | **Lead** |
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**Hosting the Farmers Workshop:**

When hosting your first farmers workshop you may want to consider having the following items ready:

* Set aside 30 minutes to an hour to setup the room/location of workshop. Ensure you have all your presentation materials (projector, screen, supplies, etc.)
* Workshop agenda
* Sign in sheet
* Pens/pencils
* Refreshments

**PLANNING FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

To plan for the next Farmers Workshop, the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and a strong team will help keep the workshops happening. Consult with the CAB at ongoing meetings to plan for success by setting short-term and long-term goals. Items to consider for long-term sustainability:

**Communication**

To ensure that the Farmers Workshops continue, maintain communication with the community about the workshops, including reporting to tribal leaders, parents/guardians, and the CAB about workshops that are upcoming and those that have happened. Also continue to listen to the community about potential workshop ideas. Consider also documenting and sharing information about the workshops through photos, newsletters, social media, etc.

**Partnerships**

Partnerships with nearby Universities, State or Federal Agriculture Departments, and/or the Cooperative Extension System are a great option for communities needing help with additional resources. Many states offer education about agriculture, food, the environment, and community economic development through the Cooperative Extension System. Contact your local extension office to see if their program can benefit your community’s the Feast for the Future Program (visit <https://nifa.usda.gov/land-grant-colleges-and-universities-partner-website-directory?state=All&type=Extension>). They may be able to provide leadership for your community’s Farmers Workshops.

**Funding**

As the Farmers Workshops continue, their style may grow or change to better serve your community. Additional funding may be needed, for things such as hiring additional staff, providing honoraria to farmers/elders who provide workshops, purchasing supplies, or renting equipment. To ensure that these needs are met, designate an individual on the leadership team to identify and pursue funding opportunities. In looking for funding, consider organizations that offer grants, such as the First Nations Development Institute.

**Moving Forward**

As the Farmers Workshop continues, consider working to:

* Set up regular Community Advisory Board/community partner meetings to provide a forum for discussion and planning

**Congratulations on starting Farmers Workshops in your community!**