

Passing on the Family Farm or Ranch:
Succession Planning Workshop for Farm and Ranch Families
November 22, 2013 Philo, CA

Workshop Evaluation Report

Based on 30 evaluation forms returned – not all respondents answered each question

1. Are you a ... (Check all that apply)

On average, each respondent check two or more responses

- farmer - 11 (52%) and/or rancher - 10 (48%)
- small-scale - 8 (62%) or large-scale producer - 5 (38%)
- experienced farmer/rancher (10+ years) - 9 (82%)
- new farmer/rancher (<10 yrs experience) - 2 (18%)
- farm employee - 1 (5%)
- on-farm family member employed elsewhere - 8 (42%)
- off-farm family member - 3 (16%)
- consultant or other agricultural professional - 1 (5%)
- resource agency staff - 1 (5%)
- other – 5 (26%)
 - small business owner;
 - land trust staff;
 - retired mechanic;
 - landowner; and
 - part-time on farm.

2. How would you describe yourself – check all that apply (optional)

- Ethnicity: white, Caucasian, Anglo, American, east coast transplant of European extraction
- Gender:
 - Female - 19 (70%)
 - Male - 8 (30%)
- Age:
 - Under 25 - 0 (0%)
 - 25-40 - 2 (7%)
 - 41-60 - 11 (39%)
 - over 60 - 15 (54%)

3. How far along are you in the succession planning process?

- Haven't started yet – 11 (39%)
- Have discussed with my family, but haven't done the legal work – 8 (29%)
- Have a good plan in place – 7 (25%)
- Not relevant for me or my family at this time – 2 (7%)

4. Overall, how useful was this workshop for you?

- extremely useful – 11 (37%)
- useful – 18 (60%)
- somewhat useful – 1 (3%)
- not useful – 0 (0%)

Please explain why:

- Well presented, interesting, flowed well, landowner attendance was exceptional;
- Inspiring, relevant, clear, well-organized;
- Helped show me when & where to get started;
- Lots of good detail instead of generalizations, resources;
- Many different ideas that we hadn't thought of;
- It got me thinking realistically and made the daunting process seem doable;
- Most family members present (4 of 5). Communication has begun and all are invested in getting the plan completed and together;
- This was a very helpful workshop - thank you;
- Some parts more useful than others: transferring the business could have been a half day alone, not deep enough; success-ion story - successful but not replicable; estate planning - uneven but good handout;
- Some issues not relevant but overall lots to think about, am in estate/financial planning process already and still developing plan for new farm;
- As a successor a lot of the discussion was beyond me - so technical - I still have no idea how to bring this topic up with my family;
- Food for thought;
- Good legal advice and starting points;
- Great ideas and tools to get started and motivated with;
- Emphasis on conversation, Rod was very good; and
- It gave us a place to begin and a direction to head towards.

5. Which sessions were most useful to you? (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| • Introduction to Succession Planning – 11 (16%) | 4 th ranked |
| • Transferring the Business – 13 (19%) | 3 rd ranked |
| • Meet Your Peers – 7 (10%) | 6 th ranked |
| • Farm Family Success-ion Story – 8 (12%) | 5 th ranked |
| • Effective Family Meetings – 14 (20%) | 2 nd ranked |
| • Estate Planning Nuts & Bolts - 16 (23%) | 1 st ranked |

6. Pre/Post Meeting Knowledge Assessment

Please circle your level of knowledge about the following on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning no knowledge and 5 meaning extremely knowledgeable.

| | Pre-meeting | | | | | Post-meeting | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|----|---|---|--------------|---|----|----|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Basic retirement planning considerations | 7 | 7 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 15 | 2 |
| Approaches to business transfer | 9 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 11 | 1 |
| How to plan and host an effective family meeting | 5 | 8 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 14 | 4 |
| Gift and tax strategies around succession planning | 12 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 10 | 1 |
| The difference between wills and trusts in relation to succession planning | 10 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 16 | 5 |
| How conservation easements could fit into an estate plan | 8 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 4 |

While not all evaluation respondents answered this question, by comparing the pre-meeting levels of knowledge on the different succession planning topics that were presented to their post-meeting levels, most attendees reported an increased level of knowledge on the majority of the topics.

7. This meeting provided me with the following (check all that apply):

- New information that will significantly affect my estate/business transfer decisions - 18 (24%)
- A clearer understanding of why succession planning is important – 18 (24%)
- Approaches that will help me to discuss succession with my family – 22 (29%)
- New contacts or resources -17 (22%)
- Other – 1 (1%)
 - collaborative opportunities w/ ALVT & professional colleagues

8. What other workshop topics would be helpful to you?

- Finding and getting a better loan;
- Forest management - oak woodlands; grassland/range management;
- Specifics on selecting farm successors if no kids - FarmLink does answer that well but needs more discussion;
- I'll think about it; and
- Water and land management with environment in mind.

9. Any other comments or suggestions:

- Thank you;
- Absolutely wonderful;
- Excellent organization, very good presenters;
- Thank you, very dynamic and well organized and thought through;
- Very good and not too long;
- Thank you! This was really inspiring and educational;
- Thank you;
- (a) You need to schedule mid-morning break, (b) you might consider doing info presentations before lunch and breakouts after, with breakouts focused on specific topic areas that people could choose based on need, (c) needs/questions may vary by demographic, where in planning process one is, or a person's strengths/weaknesses, (d) topic areas might focus on: ins and outs of LLCs, or setting up the family's first farm succession meeting, developing a business transition plan, trusts, special uses and tax issues;

9. Comments or suggestions, continued:

- (a) Very little on conservation easements, (b) not a local flavor and (c) key landowners were present;
- Sorry I missed introduction at start;
- Thank you;
- Thank you;
- Thanks to all the speakers and facilitators for an informative, helpful day!; and
- Good to see young and old in the same room and meet neighbors in a different context.

In addition to the written evaluation, the following comments on the workshop have been passed along to AVLT board members and staff:

- I want to reiterate my thanks for organizing a really fine event. I thought it was great, and I am hearing very good buzz about it.
- Since the workshop I have seen (two people who attended) and both were very happy with the workshop. (Another person who attended) also went out of his way to tell me how impressed he was with the turn-out of local ranchers and how valuable the workshop was. (Another) was very complimentary.
- I forgot to mention that I also talked with (another attendee) on Saturday at the Farmer's Market and he said he did not think that he got as much out of it as those with direct heirs, but then proceeded to tell me about his new plans to talk with his nieces and nephews about their interest in the ranch and about his future plans for it--and the need to get his estate plan together. I would say it was valuable for him!
- I really, really appreciate you hosting that very important workshop. Part of me is overwhelmed with the nature of work needed to properly preserve and plan for the safekeeping of the small farm we are stewarding and part of me is frustrated that so many good people are forced by the tax man, etc. - all to go thru such b.s. just to keep things going and pass it down to their heirs. The whole event was marvelous, sorry I had to leave a little early to pick up my son from school but I did get a great step forward to what I need to do next. It is daunting to get started... from the conservation easement, to the estate planning, to the succession work and all the decision trees associated with it...but to eat all elephants start the same way....with one bite at a time!
- Just a note of thanks for inviting (my daughter) and me to the workshop on Friday. There was loads of useful information plus it was a wonderful opportunity to spend a day with "my eldest" who just happens to be the one among my four children who is the most dedicated steward of our land.