

ROLE OF FARMERS: BENEFITS

About this worksheet: This worksheet will walk you through some steps to consider how you currently see farmers aiding in your community and how that needs to develop.

Opening reflection: What comes to mind when you picture a farm? When you think about the farmers in your community? How do you value farming as a professional occupation compared to other jobs? Spend 5 minutes reflecting or writing down your thoughts.

Consider: Getting clearer about the unsung work that farmers do helps lift up the unseen contributions of farmers everywhere – and makes for a more informed starting place to engage with farmers you hope to partner with on community-oriented food scrap diversion programs.

YOUR BASELINE AWARENESS

Here are some questions to work through to get to know what you know about farming in general.

1. How many farmers and farms do you know where you live? How much can you describe the focus and philosophy of their different operations?
2. How often do you spend time on a working farm? If not a regular event, can you think of the most recent time you were on a farm – why were you there, how long did you stay, what was the experience like?
3. Can you name crops or livestock commonly produced in your region?
4. How much of your food comes directly from farmers?
5. What are some of the challenges and obstacles that farmers in your area face?
6. How do you think farmers contribute to your local economy?
7. How does farming impact the things that matter in your life?

8. What role do farmers play in conserving natural resources and maintaining the environment in the area where you live?
9. How have you or your family personally benefited from the work of local farmers?
10. Are you aware of any innovative or sustainable farming practices that local farmers use?
11. Who in your area supports farmers? How do they show their support?
12. What's special about the farms in your area?
13. How does farming contribute to your region's cultural heritage and traditions?
14. Name three things you've done in the last year to help ensure a future for farming.
15. How do you want farmers' roles in your community to evolve in the coming years?
16. Are there misconceptions or stereotypes about farming in your area that you think need to be challenged?
17. How – and how much – do you think your seasonal or climate cycles impact local farming?
18. What else happens on the farms in your area that you wouldn't consider "farming"?
19. Would you want young people to go into farming? Why or why not?

Follow up: How easy or hard was it for you to come up with a response for each question? If you like, assign a numerical rank to each: on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "I couldn't answer," 3 being "It took a long time to come up with a response, but I did" and 5 being "It was quick and easy for me to respond to this." Then total your responses.

Visit www.onfarmcomposting.org to submit questions or comments about this tipsheet and download more.

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The On-Farm Composting Toolkit was funded by a USDA Rural Utilities Solid Waste Management Grant. The Composting Association of Vermont is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. Get the full toolkit at www.onfarmcomposting.org.