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Your farm story.

In this exercise, you will craft a precise story about you and your farm. A good story has a plot, a main character (that's you!), a challenge, an action, purpose, resolution and meaningfulness. Please consider thinking in "features" and "benefits". Features are defined as facts, like your education and experience, for example. Benefits articulate the "what's in it for me" for your customers/farm guests.

- Who is the main character of your story? Describe fully.
- What did you have to do or overcome to be able to do this work?
- Why do you want to do this work? What happened to make you want to open your farm to visitors?
- How did you overcome your challenges or hurdles to accomplish this work? How did the vision for your on the farm guest experience idea emerge?

Now, take this information and write a draft of your farm story:

Your work deserves a concise tagline. (A VERY short story that is one simple idea that you want people to know or think about you.)

Tips:

- Keep it simple.
- Make it memorable.
- Be clear.
- It can be clever, or even funny, just be careful that the message is still clear.
- A tagline is outwardly focused. Remember the “what’s in it for me” for your potential clients. This is not a restatement of your mission, which is internally focused.
- Keep it short.

Write down words (not sentences) for the following characteristics of your farm:

Unique or what makes the farm special: _____

Special or different offerings: _____

What I value: _____

Special benefits that I bring to my customers: _____

Other key words that I associate with me and my farm: _____

Now, try your hand at using some of these words to create a short sentence. Practice!

Draft 1: _____

Draft 2: _____

Still crafting: _____

More final:

My farm welcoming visitors:

My tagline: _____

II. Developing the Marketing & Communications Plan:

Consider bringing your farm's working group together to develop a basic marketing/communications outline. By discussing and answering the questions within the group, each participant will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue and provide valuable input with the focus on the farm's mission to ultimately answer these key questions:

Who are we speaking to?

Describe the priority target audience(s), capping it at the top three.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

What are the top three objectives or goals for the farm? Define desired results/impacts. (Maybe two columns with goals on the left and results/impacts on the right.)

Why would the targeted audiences be moved to act? What are the benefits? Describe in detail.

How does the farm offerings compare to other similar services? Note similarities and differences. What is the ONE unique benefit of your farm?

What are the hurdles or challenges to obtaining the top objectives?

Where will the services be promoted? Make a list of all of the possibilities. What is the best fit of farm offering to target audience given the various target groups identified? (Again, a column with service on one side and target audience on the other.)

Budget is always a consideration. There is a lot of "earned promotional" opportunities, yet what about the paid ones? A professionally designed brand, identity package like brochures and business cards/promotional materials, templates for presentations. Again, what are the top priorities given where the organization is right now?

What else needs to be considered?