**Targeted BR&E Program**

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

**Module 4 - Survey**

***Agri-business Activities***

1. Which of the following best describes your farm/agriculture business?

**Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting production**

* Oilseed & grain farming
* Vegetable & melon farming
* Fruit & tree nut farming
* Greenhouse, nursery & floriculture production
* Other crop farming
* Cattle ranching & farming
* Hog & pig farming
* Poultry and egg production
* Sheep & goat farming
* Aquaculture
* Other animal production
* Support activity for crop production

**Manufacturing**

* Animal manufacturing
* Grain & oilseed milling
* Sugar & confectionary product manufacturing
* Fruit & vegetable preserving & specialty food manufacturing
* Dairy product manufacturing
* Animal slaughtering and processing
* Bakery & tortilla manufacturing
* Other food manufacturing
* Beverage manufacturing
* Tobacco manufacturing
* Pesticide, fertilizer & other chemical manufacturing

**Wholesale trade**

* Agriculture, construction, mining, machinery manufacturing
* Farm product raw material merchant wholesaler
* Miscellaneous nondurable good merchant wholesalers



1. In terms of ownership, how do you best describe your business? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

* Publicly held (stock)
* Private/ Sole Proprietor
* Employee-owned
* Family-owned
* Nonprofit
* Headquarters of multi-unit firm
* Branch office of multi-unit firm
* Corporation
* Others

1. How long has this business been operating at your current location? SELECT ONE ANSWER

* Less than 1 year
* Between 1-5 years
* Between 5-10 years
* Between 10-20 years
* More than 20 years

***Employment***

1. Including owner-operators, how many employees work at this location? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* 1-4 employees
* 5-9
* 10-14
* 15-19
* 20-29
* 30-49
* 50-99
* 100-299
* Over 300 employees

1. What percentage of your employees live:

\_\_\_\_\_ % Within your city/community

\_\_\_\_\_ % Outside your city/community but within county

\_\_\_\_\_ % Outside county

***Past Employment***

1. During the **past 3 years**, has the number of employees in this business ….? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Increased
* Decreased
* Stayed the same

1. What factors are responsible for this change? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* New products/services
* Renovation or expansion
* Corporate decision or policies
* Increase/decrease in market competition
* Increase/decrease in market share
* Management effectiveness
* Increase/decrease in sales
* Others

1. How do you rate the availability, quality and stability of the workforce in this area for your business?
2. Are you able to recruit sufficient qualified employees for your business? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

1. On a scale of 1-5, (1 being less skilled to 5 highly skilled) how would you rate the skill profile of your company's workforce? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Very low skilled
* Less skilled
* Uncertain
* Skilled
* Highly skilled

***Future Employment***

1. In the **next 5 years**, do you think the number of employees in your business will increase, decrease or remain the same?

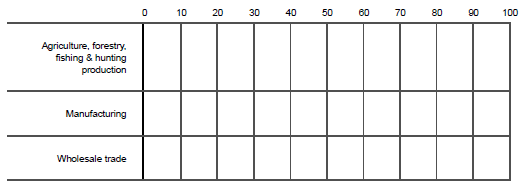
* Increased
* Decreased
* Stayed the same

1. If there will be an increase in the number of employees, what factors will be responsible for this increase? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

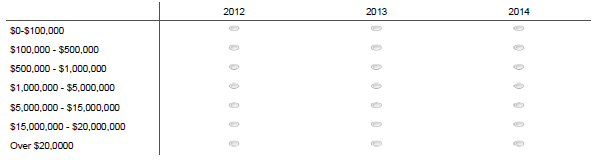
* Contracts/outsourcing
* Increase or decrease in market share
* Entering new market
* New products or services to be introduced
* Increase or decrease in sales
* Renovating or expanding
* More or less subcontracting
* Corporate decision or policies
* Management effectiveness
* Increasing or decreasing market competition
* Technological changes
* Other (please specify)

***Financial Status***

1. Please estimate the percentage of your gross sales to:



1. Please estimate the gross sales ($) of your business. *Check the appropriate sales level for each year.*



1. Do you have a current business plan?

* Yes
* No
* Don't Know

1. How far in advance do you plan your financial performance? SELECT ONE ANSWER

* Not at all
* Monthly
* Quarterly
* Yearly
* 2 years
* Other (please specify)

1. During the past 3 years how did your agri-business operation’s financial situation change? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Deteriorated
* Stayed the same
* Improved

1. Which of the following factors affecting the ag‐industries above will cause your income to decrease over the next three years? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* Changing market conditions
* Overcrowded facilities
* Land limitation for expansion
* Workforce issues
* Rigid code enforcement
* High taxes
* Lease expiration
* Retirement
* None of the above
* Other:

1. Do you expect to sell or transfer some or all of your farm assets within... *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

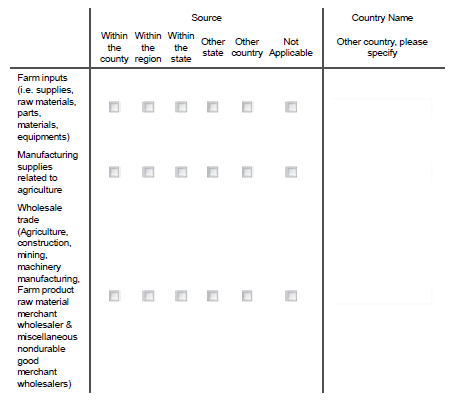
* 1 to 5 years
* 6-10 years
* 11-15 years
* 15 + years
* Don’t expect to sell/transfer

1. Will that sale/transfer be to... SELECT ONE ANSWER

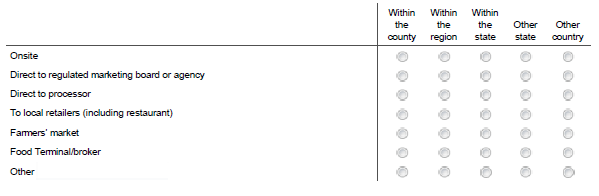
* To family members
* To unrelated party

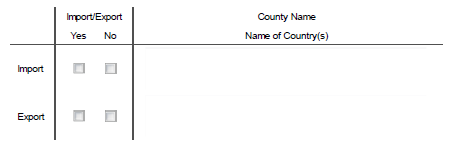
***Sources of Inputs***

1. Where do you purchase the majority of your agri-business supplies? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY FOR EACH SUPPLY.* Please specify the county if it different from your own county.

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***Marketing***

1. ****Where do you currently market your product (primary and/or processed) and where are they located geographically?
2. Do you currently import/export products? If yes, please specify the corresponding country(s).

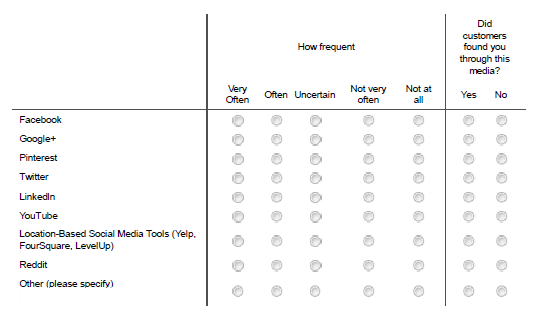


***Marketing Technique***

1. What types of marketing technique have you found successful? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* Distributors
* Direct mail
* Directory listings
* Sponsorship of activities and events
* General publications
* Trade show attendance
* Fliers/brochures
* Social media & company website
* Radio advertisements
* Television advertisements
* Newspaper advertisements
* Business cards
* Word-of-mouth
* Others (please specify)

1. How often do you use the following SOCIAL MEDIA in marketing your agri-business and contacting your customers? Do you think your customers found you using the following social media?



***Marketing Plans (Local Market)***

1. Have you considered pursuing any new niche market opportunities? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

1. Do you currently feel that **local marketing** of producers is important? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

1. Would you be interested in supplying local markets (retailers/institutional buyers) if the distribution and management systems were in place? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

1. How could the **local market potential** of your agricultural products be enhanced? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* Increase Buy Local marketing
* Local Food product labelling
* Access to a local abattoir
* Direct marketing to local consumers
* Additional local processing or value-added
* Access to local distribution channels/networks
* Improved transportation
* New or different role for marketing boards
* Other (please specify)
* Not applicable

1. Do you have the capacity to increase production to supply local markets if additional buyers were identified? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

1. What products or services would you like to purchase **locally** that are now being purchased outside of the area? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* Abattoir
* Specialty seeds
* Biogas technology
* Boiler service
* Cheese cultures
* Flour (consistent supply)
* Farm supplies
* Fertilizer
* Greenhouse fruits/vegetables
* Local food products (groceries)
* Utilities
* Organic beans/lentils
* Plastic for bunkers
* Raw materials
* Wool
* Others (please specify)

1. What could be done in the community to improve the marketing of your agricultural products?
2. Is lack of access to markets affecting your agri-business? If yes, please describe.

***Affiliation with Formal/Informal Business Organizations***

1. Are you active in any formal or informal group of other business leaders where you can confidentially share your experiences and learn from your peers?

* Yes
* No

34.1 If YES, are these local groups?

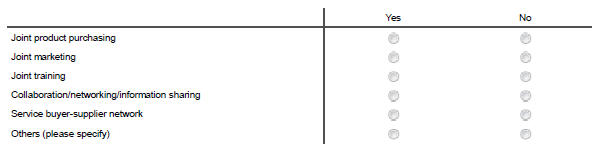
* + Yes
  + No

34.2 If NO, do you see any importance of being connected with other groups

of agri-business leaders?

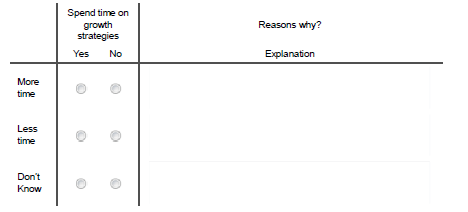
* Yes
* No

1. Are you interested in working cooperatively with other businesses in your community to pursue any of the following in the future? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

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***Business Growth & People behind Growth***

1. Does your CEO spend more or less time focusing on growth strategies than they were five years ago? Please explain your answer.



1. If you could make strategic hires that can help you focus more on opportunities for growth, what would these additional people do?
2. What special skills would they need to qualify to do the job?

***Growth Strategies***

1. ****Which would best describe your plans for your business over the next 3 years? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*
2. How interested are you in growing your business?



1. In what areas of your operation is the growth coming from? *Check all that apply*

* Opening another location
* Licensing your product
* Offering your business as a franchise or business opportunity
* Forming an alliance

**Diversifying**

* Sell complementary products or services
* Import or export yours or other products
* Introduce new products or services to existing customers
* Others
* Win a government contract (have the federal government as a customer)
* Selling more of their same products or services to new customers
* Target other markets
* Customer retention
* Expand globally
* Develop or enhance website
* Use social media
* Others

***Expansion***

1. If you are planning to expand the scale of your business, will your expansion lead to an increase in the following? *SELECT ALL THAT APPLY*

* Demand for skills training
* Process improvements
* Exporting
* Importing
* Investment in equipment/technology
* Services for customers
* Product lines
* Floor space
* Workforce
* Others

1. Which new businesses, services or products would you like to see added to your community? *SELECT ALL THAT APPLY*

* Abattoir
* Food processing and post-harvest value-added activity
* Restaurant
* Farm supply store (e.g. Farm Co-op)
* Others (please specify)

***Community Climate for Agri-Business***

1. Please rate the local agri-business climate. *SELECT ONE ANSWER*



1. What are the **biggest opportunities** for local businesses in your community? *Check all that apply.*

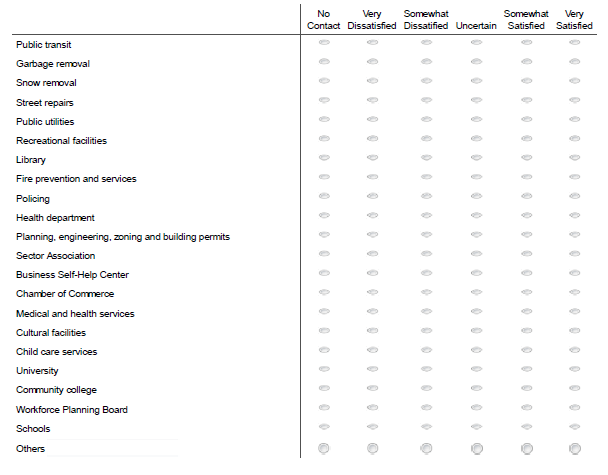
* Local food movement
* Agricultural hub
* Agricultural service/supply
* Quality farmland
* Value-added agriculture
* Culinary and Agri-tourism
* Support for agriculture
* Improve local marketing
* Others

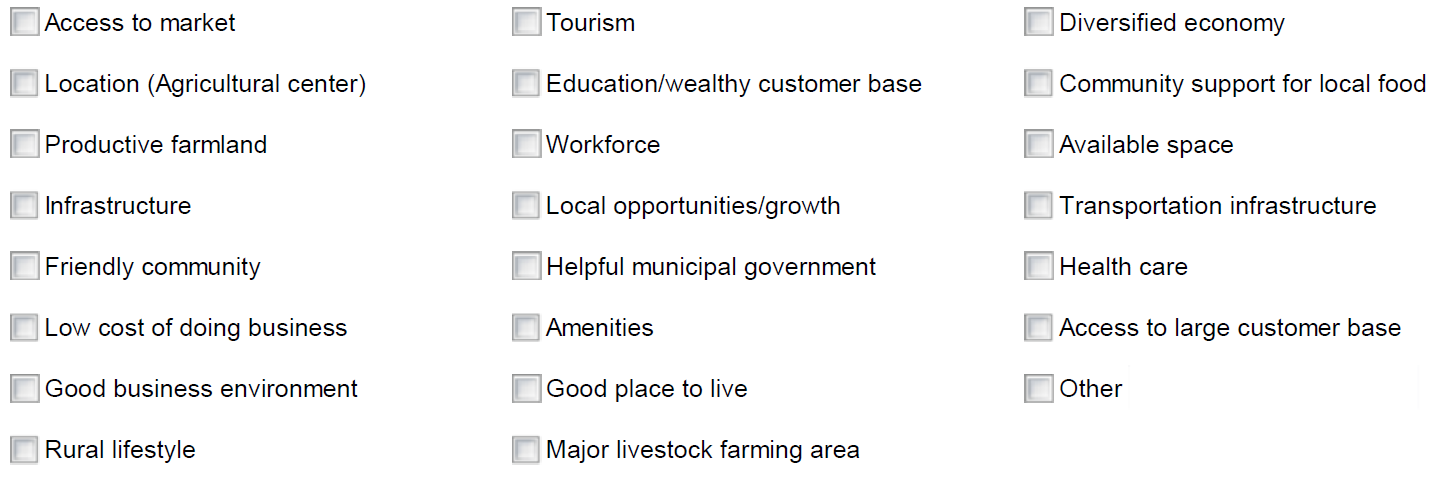
1. What are the **biggest challenges** facing local businesses in this community? *Check all that apply.*

* Local food movement/Regulation
* Competition from big box stores/cities
* Workforce issues
* Limited local demand
* Transportation
* Others

1. What are your specific recommendations to improve the local business climate? *Check all that apply.*

* Local food movement/Reduce red tape/Lessen regulations
* Promote local food and products
* Improve local marketing/customer service
* Public education about food and farming
* Legislative support for agriculture
* Government support and assistance for local business
* Attract/develop/support value-added agriculture
* Encourage diversification
* Environmental protection and awareness
* Others

1. What is your level of satisfaction with each of the following services provided by community organizations and local government?
2. List your community’s **3 advantages** as a place to do business. Select ***only 3 reasons***



1. List the community’s **3 disadvantages** as a place to do business. Select ***only 3 reasons***

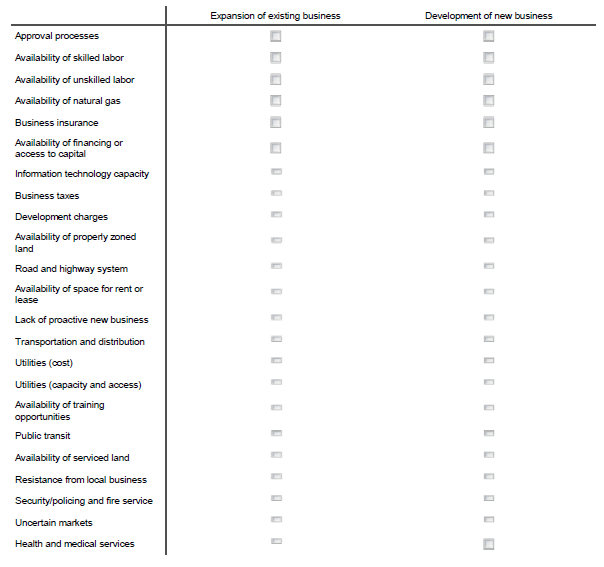
***Barriers to Growth***

1. What are the barriers to your agri-business operation? *Check all that apply*

**Regulatory approvals**

* Food inspections/approvals
* Building permits and regulations
* Zoning bylaws
* Organic certification
* Red tape
* Other (please specify)
* Access to capital
* Uncertain markets
* Labor availability
* Land costs
* Access to land
* Securing necessary farm services
* Other

1. Please indicate which of the issues will be considered barriers to the expansion of existing businesses and to the development of new businesses in the community. *Check all that apply*

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1. Which of the following factors related to your use of information technology/internet are barriers to your business? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* No barrier
* Speed
* Access
* Cost
* Knowledge
* Staff training
* Market development
* Online sales
* Time to learn and stay current
* Privacy
* Trouble shooting
* Other (please specify)

1. Is access to financial planning expertise a barrier to your business’ growth? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

1. Is access to or knowledge of financing or lending sources a barrier to your business’ growth? *SELECT ONE ANSWER*

* Yes
* No

***Information Assistance***

1. What information/assistance do you need to include processing as part of your farm business? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

* Health Unit approvals
* Market research
* Marketing plan
* Business plan
* Local processing facilities
* Feasibility study
* Securing land use & planning approvals
* Securing financing
* Other (please specify)

***Local Government Assistance***

1. In what ways could local government assist the agriculture sector in your area?

* Streaming of local regulatory and permitting processes
* Infrastructure maintenance and improvement
* Review of taxes and fees
* Database of available local farm labor
* Other (please specify)

1. In what ways could local/regional economic development organizations assist in increasing local food supply, demand and distribution? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

* Promote Buy Local campaigns
* Connect food producers and processors with local consumers through marketing and distribution
* Provide local food distribution hub
* Develop networking and communication channels between food producers and local
* Other (please specify)

1. What assistance, if any, could the community, local government or economic development organizations give to support your business? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*

* E-marketing
* Website development
* Productivity improvement workshops
* Identification of opportunities for shared use of resources
* Workforce planning, employee training, etc.
* Attraction of related supply & services businesses
* Joint advertising and marketing
* Export development programs and services
* Business networking sessions
* Trade shows
* Access to capital seminars
* Marketing seminars
* Other (please specify)