

# Determining your skills and resources:

## Worksheet #2

This worksheet will help you assess your skills or resources in areas which are important to operating a farm. The next worksheet, #3, will help you outline some practical steps to take in order to strengthen areas which "Need attention" that you identify in this worksheet.

For each skill or resource area, check the column which is most appropriate to your skills or resources. For example, if you enjoy working and interacting with people, you might check "Excellent" on the "People skills" line. However, if you are shy, and find working with people challenging, you might check, "Needs attention" on the "People skills".



Photo: NCAT

Personal Skills & Resources:	Rating:	Needs attention	Acceptable	Excellent	Don't Know
A clear sense of your goals (see Worksheet 1)					
"People skills" (do you interact easily with your customers, financiers and service providers?)					
Language skills (can you communicate with your customers, financiers and service providers effectively?)					
Computer skills (for financial management & marketing)					
Financial backing or resources					
Savings					
Business management skills (managed a business in the past?)					
Mechanical/ construction/ maintenance skills					
Access to Land--own or rent					
Equipment, Hand tools					
Equipment, Machines (tractors, coolers, discs, etc)					
Produce transport vehicle					
Farm supplies for your enterprise in close proximity					
Production Experience:	Rating:	Needs attention	Acceptable	Excellent	Don't Know
Garden experience—specific to the region your farm is located					
On-farm experience—specific to the region your farm is located					
Experience with Livestock					
Experience operating equipment					
Personal Traits:	Rating:	Needs attention	Acceptable	Excellent	Don't Know
I like hard work					
I like taking risks					
I am a good problem solver					
I enjoy an outdoor and physical lifestyle					
I enjoy working alone					
I enjoy working with people					
My current (non-farm) job is flexible					



<b>Farm Site Characteristics:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Needs attention</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
<i>Note: If you are looking for land this can be used as a check sheet when you are evaluating each property OR rate the importance of these characteristics to your future farm operation.</i>					
Soil Quality (Important!!!: drainage, slope of land, soil depth and type (clay, loam, sand), organic matter content)					
Length of growing season/ frost susceptibility					
Availability and access to irrigation water					
Structures on the farm-for storage, sales and washing					
Accessibility to major roadways					
Prior land use (soil fertility, water quality, on-site wastes)					
Wildlife pest problems					
<b>Market Potential/ Demographics</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Needs attention</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
<b>For beginning famers: Evaluate the following criteria according to how strongly you feel each element has influence on the success of your (future) farm operation</b>					
Metropolitan areas within 60 miles					
Relative income level of this population					
Nearby farmers markets, co-op, grower co-ops, restaurants					
Potential for market niches (organic, pick-your-own, specialty crops/ livestock)					
Proximity to meat processing facility?					
<b>Infrastructure and information support</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Needs attention</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
<b>For beginning farmers: Rate the importance of each of these criteria to the success of your (future) farm operation.</b>					
Availability and quality of labor					
Affordability of local property taxes					
Land zoned for agriculture?					
Proximity of farm supply stores, dealers, and ag agencies veterinarians, equipment repair, processors, etc.					
Support from local grower organizations (RCDs, grower groups)					
Supportiveness of nearby farms and neighbors					

**If you checked “Needs attention” on a skill or resource, it may indicate that:**

1. You may need additional training;
2. Improvements should be made or alternative plans developed to address this skill/resource;
3. Different farming sites should be explored

The next worksheet, *Worksheet 3*, will provide an opportunity for you to outline steps to take to address those areas which you noted “Needs attention”.