

AgBiz Masters

A Learning Series for Young & Beginning Farmers



Participant Information Booklet

With On-Line Modules Provided by:



Spring 2010

Welcome!

The on-line component of AgBiz Masters is offered by Farm Credit University's Ag Biz Planner. This program consists of five modules or short-courses, each taking one to two hours to complete. Periodic quizzes and module exams will allow you to personally assess your comprehension and understanding of the materials presented. Application exercises will allow you to link module concepts and ideas to challenges and opportunities in your own business. The program will take you through the process of building a strategic business plan for your business.

Curriculum Highlights

Below are descriptions of the five modules included in AgBiz Masters for Spring 2010.

Megatrends of Agriculture: The first step of your journey will be to go up to the 50,000 - foot perspective to examine trends and forces in agriculture and society that will impact your business, family and personal lives. The information in this module will be helpful as you design or update your strategic business plan.

Strategic Business Planning: Next, the direction will shift to the components of a successful strategic business plan with readings and illustrations that will provide you a road map for application to your business.

Preparing for Your Lender: It is important to discuss preparing for your lender and the ingredients of a positive borrower-lender relationship. It covers the importance of checking your credit report regularly and specific steps to take before visiting your lender.

Constructing Financial Statements (2 modules): Next, the focus will shift to preparing your business' financials statements, which are critical in business analysis, planning, interactions with your lender, and sustainable success of your business. One module will cover the balance sheet and the next module will cover the income statement and cash flow projections.

Business Plan Creation Resources

The exercises in each module will lead you through the process of building a strategic business plan. **Choose one option below as a resource and format to create a Business Plan for your own business during this course:**

A. Download **Microsoft Word Business Plan Template File** and customize for your business. This file can be downloaded from the AgBiz Planner Resource Page.

B. **AgPlan: The Agriculture, Fisheries and Small Business Planning Web site**
<http://agplan.umn.edu/>

AgPlan is a powerful Web site developed to help rural businesses develop a business plan. It is free of charge for anyone to use individually or in educational programs. AgPlan is designed to provide customized assistance to different types of rural businesses. When you enter the site, you will be able to select your business type from the following choices: Ag – Commodity; Ag - Value-Added; Rural Small Business and Commercial Fishing.

Each business type has an outline designed specifically for that particular type of business, tips or questions that help you develop each section of the plan, sample business plans and links to additional resources for each section of the plan.

AgPlan is designed to help business owners work with an educator or consultant while developing a business plan. You can give access to your business plan to the reviewers of your choice and AgPlan will facilitate interaction with them.

C. **VA FAIRS Virtual Business Center:** <https://dev.vafairs.com/vafairs/>

Our tools will help you create a personalized business plan and financial statements and all of it is free for everyone! Use our easy, step-by-step form to generate your business plan. You can even use our sample business plan as a helpful guide.

Answer the questions in our three step interview process and you will immediately be presented a Profit and Loss statement, Cash Flow statement and a Balance Sheet - all customized to your business.

D. **INVenture:** <https://www.agecon.purdue.edu/planner/>

Start writing your business plan with INVenture . . . *a business planning tool to successfully launch a new venture*. Because it can be difficult to know where to begin exploring a venture, this Web site helps you by asking key questions about what you want to do. After completing the on-line assessment process, either individually or with the assistance of a New Ventures Team member, you should be able to go to potential partners with a well-planned idea.

Quick Reference Instructions

The following assignments should be completed for each on-line training module:
(This is the suggested order; however, assignments may be completed in the order of your choice.)

1. View Flash Content

- Login to FCU eLearning Center (go to www.FCUniversity.com and click on “Login to eLearning” on right side of page). Type your User ID & password and then click “Login.”
- Click on [ABP01 Flash](#). Flash “movie” will open in a new window.
- Each module’s content is about one hour long.

2. Read Text

- While viewing the Flash content, click on “Print” in the bottom right corner of the box to view/print a text version of the module.
- While viewing the Flash Content, click on the link to the course workbook to print the workbook for this course. This same workbook will be used for all 10 modules.

3. Complete On-Line Test

- Click on [Test Now](#) link in the eLearning Center to take a multiple choice/true-false test. Then click “Grade Now” when you’re done.
- You must re-test if you score below 80%. The new test will be different from the first one.

4. Fill-In Class Rating

- Click “Class Rating” on the right side of the My Classes window to complete a 10-question survey of each module.
- Type your feedback in the Comment Box.

5. Forum Response

- Click on “FORUM” at the top of the eLearning Center screen.
- At the FCU Forum Web site, click on “Quick Login” using your username and password.
- Click on “Introduction” to introduce yourself to the class, and then click on Module 1 to view and answer a question for Module 1. Choose at least one question to answer for each module and feel free to discuss other topics/questions in this module with others.
- You can reply to any post by typing your reply and clicking “Post Reply.”

6. “Making it your Own” Exercises

- Complete the “Making it your Own” application exercises listed in your workbook for the module. Depending on the exercise, you may answer the question in your workbook, or complete a portion of your business plan using the Word Template or on-line business planning tool. Each module will allow you to focus on a certain component of your business plan.

Assignment Check Sheet

<u>Module:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
View Flash					
Read Text					
On-Line Test					
Class Rating					
Forum Discussion					
“Making It Your Own” Exercises					
Date of Module Completion					