“A world class agri-lender education experience combining high-tech and high-touch”
Farm Credit University

- Blended training program combining eLearning and traditional training media, with an emphasis on local mentoring/coaching

- Developed in direct response to Farm Credit Association training needs

- Owned by AgFirst FCB. Affiliates include:
  - AgriVisions, LLC (Dr. Dave Kohl)
  - WebEquity Solutions, LLC (Web Equity Manager)
  - Dancing Elephants Achievement Group (Will Turner)
FCU Background

- Farm Credit University employee training enrollment:
  - 1000+ with many enrolled in multiple courses;
  - 300+ mentors
- Geographic breadth: 60+ lending institutions in 35 states
- 95% + favorable ratings on course evaluations
Ag Biz Planner: CONCEPT

- Self-paced eLearning program
- Designed specifically for YBSM farmers and ranchers and for all farm types
- Completion time of 5-6 months
- Mentor-based approach
- Content developed by Dr. Dave Kohl and reviewed by ag-lending and academic professionals
Business Planning for Agriculture

- 1 in 7 agribusiness owners with $250,000 in annual sales have some form of a business plan
- Can be invaluable for those in a startup, expansion or transition mode
- Small businesses can use a simple plan that focuses on strengths and improving weaknesses
- Most have a clear plan in their mind
- A written business plan provides a well thought out and agreed upon guide for decision making
  - Value-added (niche) crops
  - Employing non-traditional practices
  - Planning for transition
  - Implementing unproven technology
Ag Biz Planner GOALS:

- Help YBSM farmers succeed in business
- Teach valuable planning skills
- Participants develop a plan for their farm
- Establish close mentoring relationship
- Train better borrowers
- Platform for YBSM relationships with all kinds of ag groups and stakeholders
- Additive to existing Association programs
SWOT Analysis

Open your WorkBook now to chronicle your You, Inc. data that will help build your Business Plan.

"Now that we have discussed the SWOT analysis, let’s pause for a moment and let you conduct a mini SWOT analysis of your own business. This will get you started on your application exercise for the module. List two items in each of the categories below."

• Strengths:
• Weaknesses:
• Opportunities:
• Threats:

Click Continue When Ready...
Ag Biz Planner: METHODS

- Online, On-demand, 24/7/365
- Flash content; interactive exercises; objective tests; application exercises
- Relies upon motivated YBSM students who see value in creating their own customized farm business plan
- Association-driven mentor relationships
You, Inc. – Vision, Core Values, and Mission

- List several key words that should be included in your business’ vision, core values, and mission statement.

You, Inc. – Goal Setting

- Think of one short term goal, to be accomplished in one year or less:

- What is one long term business goal, to be accomplished in one to five years?
Sample Workbook Exercises

ROAD TEST #1: Now let’s see if you understand the balance sheet equation, Assets = Liabilities + Owner Equity. If assets are $200,000 and liabilities are $75,000, what is the amount of owner equity?

- $200,000
- $125,000
- $275,000

ROAD TEST #2: Now let’s classify some assets. Determine whether the following items are current assets, non-current assets, or not applicable.

- feeder pigs: Current
  Non-CURRENT
- land: Current
  Non-CURRENT
- dairy cows: Current
  Non-CURRENT
- poultry buildings: Current
  Non-CURRENT
Ag Biz Planner: ADMINISTRATION

- Individual YBSM farmers sign up and pay $700 tuition online to FCU with credit card.
- Local Association is notified by FCU when YBSM signs up, allowing Association to be gatekeeper of which YBSM’s are mentored.
- Association not obligated to engage with any YBSM who signs up for online course.
- Association may offer YBSM farmer tuition reimbursement upon course completion (by the terms of existing tuition programs).
Ag Biz Planner: LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

- Ag Biz Planner should supplement existing Association YBSM programs
- Associations make their own decision to commit level of resources to mentoring
- Local Associations may cooperate on applying for grant funding to offer Ag Biz Planner statewide (North Carolina Associations received $94,000 grant)
Q: Don’t business plans take too much time to develop?
A: Yes, business plans can take from 50 to 100 hours to prepare, depending on the size of a business and depth of the plan. However, when you are investing significant amounts of time and money into your business venture, putting honest, objective, candid thoughts on paper can prevent financial headaches and heartaches. Like the old Fram oil filter commercial said, “You can pay now or pay later!”
Ag Biz Planner: National Marketing

- Marketed nationally to YBSM groups so their members sign up online as students
- Initial relationship established with American Farm Bureau YF&R program
- Marketed as “an online program for which your local Farm Credit Association may offer additional mentoring support”
- No express or implied guarantee that completing the course will assure a loan
7. A mission statement may include:
   - A. Business goals only
   - B. Business, family, and personal goals **Correct**
   - C. Specific actions

8. Which of the following is an examination of the external markets?
   - A. Mission statement
   - B. Opportunities and threats **Correct**
   - C. Strengths and weaknesses

9. One of the most overlooked aspects of a business plan is the:
   - A. Financial plan
   - B. Marketing plan
   - C. Operational plan **Correct**

10. The success of a business plan can be measured by:
    - A. Implementing evaluations and controls **This is the Correct Answer**
    - B. Hiring a consultant to plan **Incorrect Answer**
    - C. Hiring an accountant and lawyer

11. A business plan blunder is:
    - A. Solid research and objectivity
    - B. No executive summary **Correct**
    - C. Financial sensitivity analysis
**Ag Biz Planner: OUTCOMES**

- Truly a mission-based initiative
- Establish a results-oriented, System-wide YBSM program offering
- Measureable, reportable, explainable
- Facilitates long-term relationships among potential customers and Farm Credit employees
- Ultimate goal is to help YBSM farmers become more successful
You are finished with this module

1. Take the test by clicking “Test Now” in the eLearning Center.
2. Complete the “Make It Your Own” exercise in your workbook.
3. Choose at least one discussion point and post it to the Forum.
4. Check out the “Resource Center” for the latest helpful information.

Click here to close this module

Trip to concluding work in this module