

...The farm business management program has been very helpful in establishing good record keeping and accounting systems. Especially in a multi-enterprise operation, I have to know my costs of production in order to determine if I am marketing my products for a profit or loss. I highly recommend the program to anyone who wishes to improve their management skills.

*Pat Gregor
Minnesota organic producer*

Where do the funds from this project come from?

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is offering this program to certified organic farmers using funds provided through a three-year partnership agreement with the USDA Risk Management Agency.

What if I have questions this brochure does not answer?

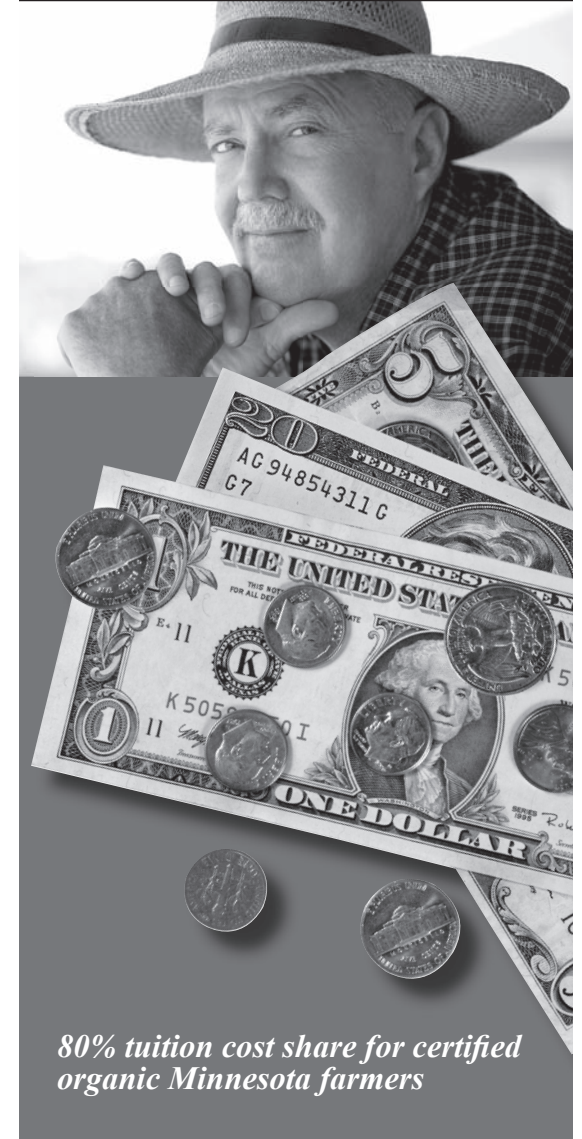
Call Meg Moynihan at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (651) 201-6616 or (800) 967-2474 or meg.moynihan@state.mn.us



Project partners and supporters

*University of Minnesota Center for Farm Financial Management,
Organic Crop Improvement Association MN Chapter #1,
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota,
MnSCU's Farm Business Management Program,
the Independent Community Bankers of Minnesota,
USDA Farm Service Agency.*

ORGANIC FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT



80% tuition cost share for certified organic Minnesota farmers

Organic farmers are no strangers to the importance of careful management. Building healthy soil, managing weeds, optimizing fertility, and storing and selling quality products all require making wise and informed decisions. But operating an organic farm as a successful enterprise requires solid business management skills, too.

Farm Business Management education programs in Minnesota are offered by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system and two farm business management associations. There are more than 100 farm business management instructors across the state of Minnesota.

Farm Business Management provides education and new skills to farm owners and operators to help them meet their business and personal goals. Students learn to maintain and use quality records to make sound business decisions. Effective financial management is the best way for a farm business to maintain that competitive edge.

This Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) program pays 80% of the cost for Minnesota organic producers to enroll in Farm Business Management education.



Who is eligible for the tuition cost share?

Certified organic producers who are residents of Minnesota.

Do I have to be a certified grower?

Yes—you must hold a valid organic certificate for at least part of your operation. You don't have to be 100% organic—split operations qualify for the program, too.

If I am already in the FBM program, am I eligible for this cost share? Yes!

How does it work?

You will work one-on-one with a farm business management instructor who will design the program to fit your needs and customize it for your farming operation.

How much is the cost share? How much do I have to pay?

The program pays 80% of your tuition cost. You pay the remaining 20%. If tuition is \$1,000, for example, the program would pay \$800 and you would pay \$200. If tuition is \$1,200, the program would pay \$960 and you would pay \$240. Tuition varies a little from region to region. Call the contact person for your region to find out more about the cost.

Is it worth the investment?

More than 3,300 other Minnesota producers think so. They use the program to help them manage their records and get a clearer picture of what is really happening on their farms from year to year. Which enterprises are making money? Which enterprises are unprofitable? Are there costs that could be reduced? Profits that could be enhanced? You and your instructor will create an end-of-year analysis and can use an anonymous benchmarking database



called FINBIN to compare your operation with others (organic or conventional).

Producers in the program report that information it generates can be especially helpful when talking to their **banker** about loans or payment terms, and at **tax time**.

When can I start?

You can start the program almost any time, but the closer to January 1 that you enroll, the more useful the program will be.

How long will this cost share be available?

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has funding to offer the program in 2006, 2007, and 2008.

How do I enroll?

Contact a farm business management instructor (see map). Be ready to provide a copy of your most current organic certificate.

How do I find an instructor?

Find your region on the map below, and call the contact person listed for that region.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Northwest
 <i>Ron Dvergsten</i>
 Northland Community & Technical College
 (218) 681-0797</p> | <p><i>Jim Kurtz</i>
 Southwest Farm Business Management Association
 (507) 372-3904</p> |
| <p>2. Northeast/East Central
 <i>DelRay Lecy</i>
 Central Lakes College
 (218) 894-5164</p> | <p>5. South Central
 <i>Al Brudeli</i>
 South Central College
 (507) 389-7264</p> |
| <p>3. West Central
 <i>Jim Molenaar</i>
 Ridgewater Community & Technical College
 (320) 231-7671</p> | <p>6. Southeast
 <i>Peter Scheffert</i>
 Riverland Community College
 (507) 433-0614
 or
 <i>Lorin Westman</i>
 Southeast Farm Business Management Association
 (507) 280-2868</p> |
| <p>4. Southwest
 <i>Al Brudeli</i>
 Minnesota West Community & Technical College
 (507) 847-3320
 Ext. 118
 or</p> | |