ASSESSMENT of NEEDS and BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

ORAL SURVEY

**INTRODUCTION**

We’re intersted in learning about your operation so that we can best develop educational and research programs.

We are not regulators or law enforcers. If we something that’s dangerous or illegal, we will explain how it can be fixed and expect you to fix it so that you don’t get in trouble from a regulator.

1. Geto to know you and your farm since I’m a new advisor. I’d like to bring workshops and trainings and one-on-one visits that will be most useful for you.

2. We are working on a project that focuses on practices that help improve the soil quality, water quality and pollinators like bees so that your farm is most productive and the evironmental continues to be healthy. We will be able to to work both one-on-one with interested farmers as well as have group workshops and trainings.

3. Workshop in early March

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

What is your name? Please spell\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Does your business have a name?

What is your mailing address? Is this the same as your farm address?

What is the best way to contact you? (text?)

How many acres are you farming? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

For how long have you been farming?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Do you own or lease? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How long is your lease? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Who works on the land? Members of family that are part of the business, hired help, etc.

Main crops (ranked: most important)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**PRODUCTION**

Please rank: 1= biggest production problem

\_\_\_\_\_Insects pests (and other invertebrates and mites)

\_\_\_\_\_Diseases

\_\_\_\_\_Vertebrates, including gophers, squirrels, deer, wild pigs, birds, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_Weeds

\_\_\_\_\_Soil fertility

What are the challenges within each of the previous production problems?

(Add notes after each category above)

Do you use IPM or organic farming methods?

Did you lose any crops or were you unable to harvest any in the past few years?

Of the crops that were lost and not harvested over the past few years, what do you attribute it to?

* Production problems? (weather, pests, irrigation, weed management, crop development, quality)
* Personal or family problems, or other reasons?
* Explain.

How do you choose which crops to plant and when?

Do you know where you are going to sell the crop before planting it? (Yes or No)

Where do you obtain information about your crops, and how do you know what methods and products will work for your system?

What is the main equipment you use?

Is there any farm equipment that you need right now that you don’t have? What has prevented you from buying it? (money, credit, lack of knowledge about where obtaining it)

**MARKETING**

Please, tell me about how you sell your farm produce and products

What do you do with the products after they’re harvested? (Do you sell it immediately, is stored-with or without cooling?) How do you keep it?

How do you market your produce? (ranked: most to least profitable) (add a percentage to each)

1.

2.

3.

Please describe challenges with selling and marketing.

Do you process some products? (dried, canned, salsas, jams, jellies)

For the farm stand marketing, what would improve your sales or quality?Do you work off the farm? (Yes or No)

Is this employment year round or seasonal? Is it full time or part time?

**FOOD SAFETY**

Where do you get up to date information about health and safety regulations?

Have you heard of the new food safety regulations that were recently made?

GAP certification?

**BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

What improvements would you like to make on your farm?

What improvements to the business would best help your farm?

What is the biggest challenge to being successful?

PLEASE RANK THE FOLLOWING- Top 3 (print pictures of each and have them arrange them in order of importance)

­­­­\_\_\_\_\_**Hedgerows**: A hedgerow is a row of shrubs, bushes, grasses, forbs, etc. that surround farm fields. Hedgerows can act as a barrier to erosion and as a reservoir for beneficial insects and predators of pest.

\_\_\_\_\_**Tail water capture**: Water is captured and re-used from irrigation in a tail water recovery system, water flow into a ditch in which it is stored for later use. This practice can increase water-use efficiency and reducing off farm impacts on water quality.

\_\_\_\_\_**Bio swales**: Swales maintain vegetation on ditch banks and in drainage channels that will trap sediments, pollutants and help control erosion, this practice limits off farm impacts on water quality.

\_\_\_\_\_**Backflow Prevention**: Installing backflow prevention check valves on water wells will reduce the risk of contaminate reaching ground water.

\_\_\_\_\_**Buffer strips**: Leave buffer areas between farmland and environmentally sensitive areas. The amount of buffer needed varies with the farming activity and the nature of the adjacent area. Limit animals’ access to streams, drains, and critical areas.

\_\_\_\_\_**Irrigation Efficiency**: Using proper scheduling, increased distribution uniformity, and mirco/drip irrigation are methods to increase irrigation efficiency.

\_\_\_\_\_**Proper fertilizer and pesticide application**.

\_\_\_\_\_**Soil Testing and recommended proper soil health management**.