



# FARM HR Self-Assessment

The HR Self-Assessment serves as a starting point to evaluate current HR programs and determine HR needs. It can be used as a template for developing an effective HR program. The HR Self-Assessment should be completed on an annual basis to determine if changes are needed due to industry shifts or changes in the farm's operations.

The HR Self-Assessment closely follows each section of the FARM HR Manual. It assists in determining HR-related strengths, weaknesses, goals and priorities. The first step in the process is to complete the self-assessment, answering "yes" or "no" to each question. Appropriate people to complete this questionnaire include those involved in the dairy operation's day-to-day HR activities including owners, office staff and managers. The self-assessment is for internal use only. Farms are encouraged to be as honest as possible in their self-assessment because it serves as the foundation for the HR program and future initiatives. After completing the assessment, look at which topics have the most "no" answers. Focus on those topics to establish HR priorities.

Once HR priorities have been established, the corresponding chapters in the FARM HR Manual should be reviewed and appropriate programs, procedures and policies established from there. The long-term goal is to answer "yes" to all questions on the self-assessment.

### **Management Checklists**

Questions in the self-assessment form the basis of management checklists throughout the manual. The management checklists at the beginning of each chapter detail key guidelines and best practices for HR topics contained in the chapter.

1. Establishing Farm Identity and Culture		Notes
<p>Do the farm owners and managers encourage a positive workplace culture? Strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading by example; demonstrating respectful behavior.</li> <li>• Taking steps to foster an inclusive work environment, like translating materials.</li> <li>• Showing gratitude, saying thank you and recognizing accomplishments.</li> <li>• Listening, being open and being respectful of others' opinions.</li> <li>• Giving employees a way to provide feedback to managers and supervisors.</li> <li>• Communicating frequently and clearly with staff.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Does the farm have a mission statement that answers the following questions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does the farm exist?</li> <li>• What is its purpose?</li> <li>• What does the farm do?</li> <li>• Why does the farm do it?</li> <li>• Who are the farm's customers?</li> <li>• What products or services does the farm provide?</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Does the farm have a vision statement that answers the following questions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What problem is the farm seeking to solve?</li> <li>• Where is the farm headed?</li> <li>• What does the farm look like 10 years from now?</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Do managers receive training on the farm's vision, mission and culture?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Does the farm have a Code of Conduct, Business Ethics Policy, and/or Employee Handbook that outlines acceptable conduct for its farm workers, managers and owners – including the farm's stance on ethical issues like safety, diversity and animal care?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

2. Recruitment and Hiring		Notes
Does the farm follow a consistent new hire process for all employees?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm maintain accurate and up-to-date job descriptions for each position?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do owners and managers know how and where to post advertisements for jobs?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm interview with a written list of questions and ask each applicant the same questions?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm use a consistent process for rating and selecting candidates when deciding who to hire for an open position?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm conduct reference checks and/or past employment verification before offering someone a position?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
If the farm conducts pre-employment background screenings, does it have a process that meets federal FCRA and state requirements when denying applicants based on their criminal background?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Does the farm keep employment applications and new hire paperwork on file in compliance with applicable federal and state laws?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm conduct new employee orientation?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do owners, managers and/or supervisors follow up with new employees during their first few months to get feedback on their job duties, the organization, training or other job-related topics?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

<b>3. Employee Communications</b>		<b>Notes</b>
Does the farm have an accurate, up-to-date Employee Handbook?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do owners and managers regularly communicate with employees about important issues affecting the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm implement strategies to overcome language barriers?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm hold regular staff meetings?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are employees properly trained for their jobs?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

<b>4. Management of Employee Performance</b>		<b>Notes</b>
Do managers and supervisors regularly set expectations for workers?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do employees get formal performance evaluations on a regular basis and at least annually?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Is informal feedback given on a regular basis so that employees can improve over time?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm use a progressive discipline process?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm properly document all counseling and warnings when handling performance issues, unacceptable behavior or conflict?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are managers and supervisors trained to handle conflict in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are managers and supervisors trained in the warning signs of substance abuse in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

5. Compensation and Benefits		Notes
Are owners and managers familiar with all federal and state wage payment laws?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm maintain salary data for all current positions?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm have a strategy or policy for annual pay adjustments?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm use a timekeeping method that allows for employees and managers to review and approve time each pay period?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do workers receive pay stubs that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gross wages</li> <li>• Taxes withheld</li> <li>• Other deductions</li> <li>• Net pay</li> <li>• Year-to-date pay information</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm retain signed employee authorizations on file for all wage deductions?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm offer non-wage benefits to workers?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

6. Working Conditions		Notes
Are schedules made and communicated to employees in advance?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Is there a process for workers to give input on their work schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are scheduling processes fair and consistent for all employees?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are employees allowed meal and rest breaks in compliance with state and federal laws?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are breaks scheduled and properly documented?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Has the farm researched other state-required breaks, such as those for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing mothers</li> <li>• Minors under the age of 18</li> <li>• Religious practices</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Does the farm provide safe and adequate physical working conditions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restroom facilities such as toilets and sinks</li> <li>• A clean drinking water supply</li> <li>• Suitable, clean areas for rest and meal periods</li> <li>• Proper ventilation</li> <li>• Reasonable working temperatures</li> <li>• Appropriate lighting</li> <li>• Safe equipment and tools that are in good working condition</li> <li>• A workplace that is free from serious recognized health and safety hazards</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

<b>7. Discrimination, Harassment and Other Legal Considerations</b>		<b>Notes</b>
Does the farm have a written anti-harassment policy that covers harassment and discrimination in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm have a written policy for handling workers with permanent or temporary disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm have a written policy for medical leaves of absence?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do employees know how to properly report complaints of discrimination and harassment in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are managers and supervisors trained on how to handle workplace investigations?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

<b>8. HR Recordkeeping</b>		<b>Notes</b>
Does the farm maintain an employee or personnel file for each worker?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Is employee medical information filed separately from the employee's general personnel file?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are completed Federal Form I-9s filed separately from all other HR files?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are completed Federal Form I-9s for active employee filed separately from those for terminated employee?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are payroll records maintained and kept for the last three years of employee pay?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are payroll records easily accessible and auditable?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm have a document retention and destruction process for all HR-related forms, documents and files?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are employees aware of how to properly request access to their employee files?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	



9. Special Considerations		Notes
If the farm employs minors under the age of 18, are owners and managers aware of state and federal laws on youth employment, such as permits, working conditions, hazardous work restrictions and maximum working hours?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
If the farm employs minors under the age of 18, do owners and managers know what jobs on the farm are considered hazardous for minors?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
If the family of owners, operators or managers are also employees of the farm, are they treated the same and held to the same expectations as non-family member employees?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
If the farm employs seasonal workers, are they subject to the same HR policies and procedures as permanent workers?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

10. Health and Safety		Notes
Do owners and managers take steps to build a culture of safety on the farm?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do owners, managers and employees know the steps to take when a workplace injury or illness occurs?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Is a first-aid kit available and regularly inspected to ensure it is fully stocked?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Is there a designated safety representative to serve as the point person during an OSHA visit?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do you have and maintain up-to-date safety records, including employee training records, for the past five years?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

11. Managing Employee Housing		Notes
Has the farm consulted with an attorney to determine its local, state and federal requirements prior to providing worker housing?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do the farm's workers know the monetary value of farm-provided housing, even if it is provided free of charge?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm use a written housing agreement signed by all occupants that outlines management and worker responsibilities? And has the written housing agreement been reviewed by an attorney?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm have a yearly budget for housing repairs and maintenance?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Is a person assigned to manage inspections and repairs of farm-provided housing?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Are routine inspections conducted before new employees move in, when employees move out and at regular intervals in between?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm have a repair system in place for occupants to tell management when repairs or maintenance are needed? Does the system help management track the status of repairs, including when the work is complete?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do housing occupants know what to do if they're in an emergency situation like a fire?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm provide functional fire extinguishers, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in all farm-provided housing?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Has the farm established house rules for occupants of farm-provided housing and made the rules available to occupants by: posting it within the house, putting it in the Employee Handbook, putting it in the housing agreement, handing it out during move-in or by some other means? Are the rules translated into the workers' primary language(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the farm conduct housing orientation for workers and their families when they move in that covers responsibilities, inspections, house rules, utilities, emergencies, maintenance/repair requests and how to clean/use facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	