

Evaluation of Resources



Skagit
County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

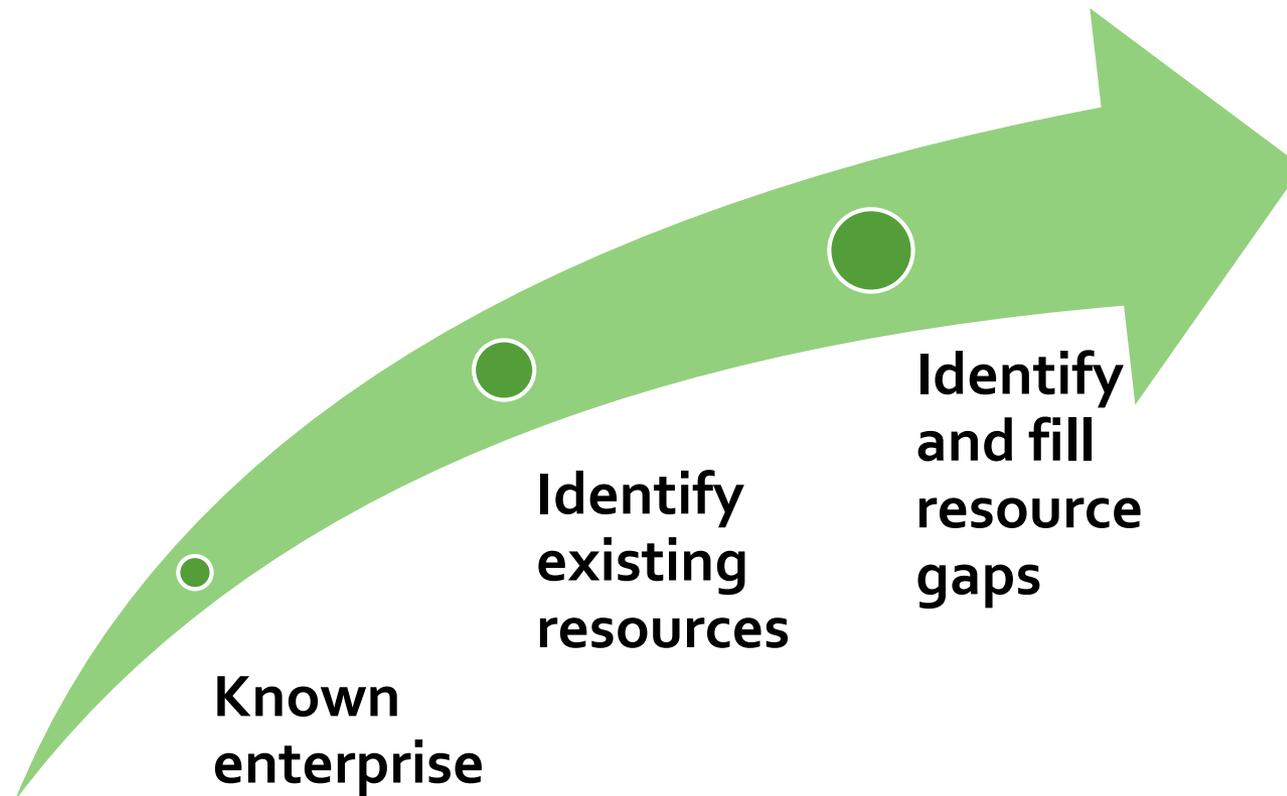


CULTIVATING SUCCESS™
sustainable small farms education

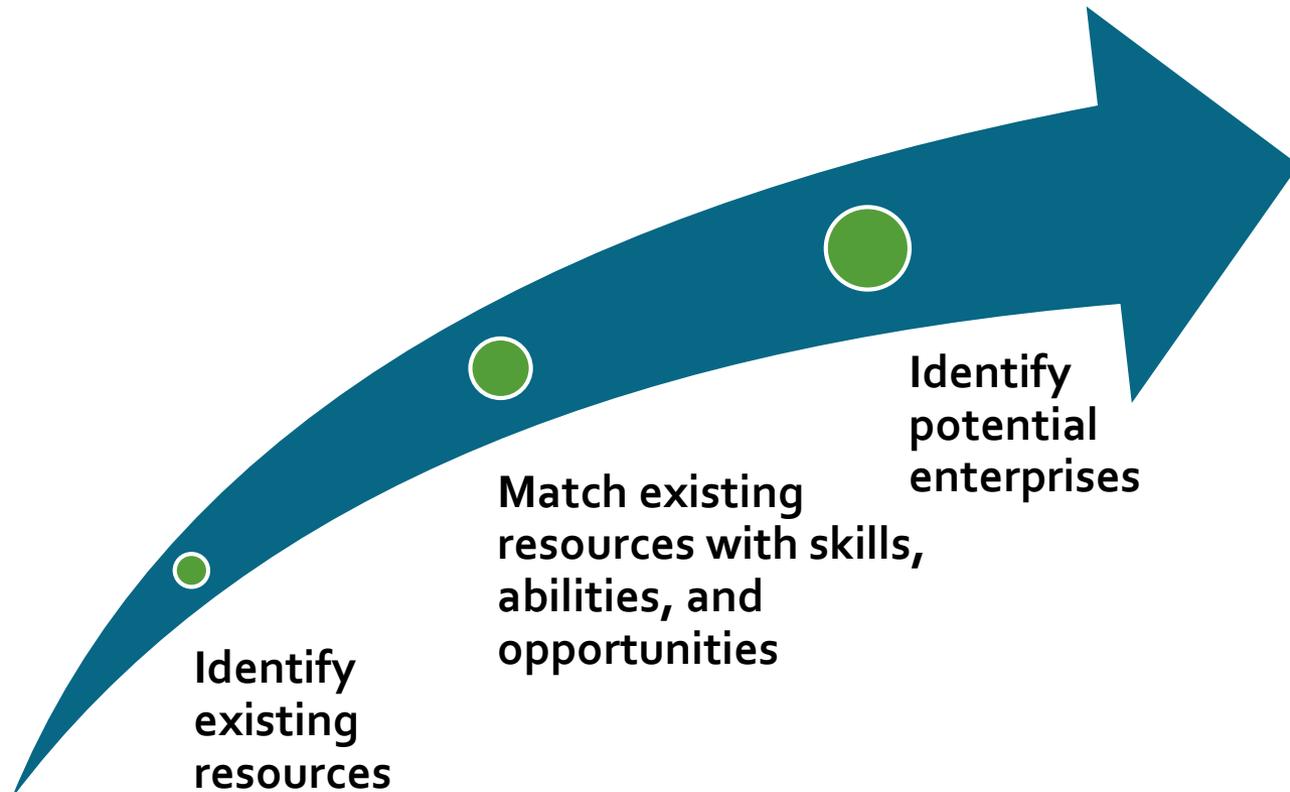
Reading and Homework Discussion

- What was the most challenging part about writing your farm goals?
- Farm Maps: Slope, Air Drainage, Wind Protection, Sunshine, Security and Pollutants. How many maps included the above items, proximity to other farms, space in watershed?
- Where there any resources or strategies that you observed in either the readings, visits or speaker presentations that you would like to incorporate into your farm?
- After reading the chapters and creating a map, is there anything about the layout that points you to a particular enterprise? Rule out a particular enterprise?

Framework for a known enterprise



Framework for an unknown enterprise



Human Resources, Skills & Interests

- Personal (and family) interests
- Experience/skills that have prepared you for farming or other small acreage venture.



Your Financial Resources

- **Current financial capital**
- **Potential for loans**
- **Support from family**
- **Income while beginning your farm**

Keep this in mind as you are evaluating your enterprise and the capital needed for your farm start up

Natural Resources: Land

- Soil
 - Soil types, texture
 - Organic matter content
 - pH
- Vegetation
 - Timber area
 - Weed problem areas
 - Slope

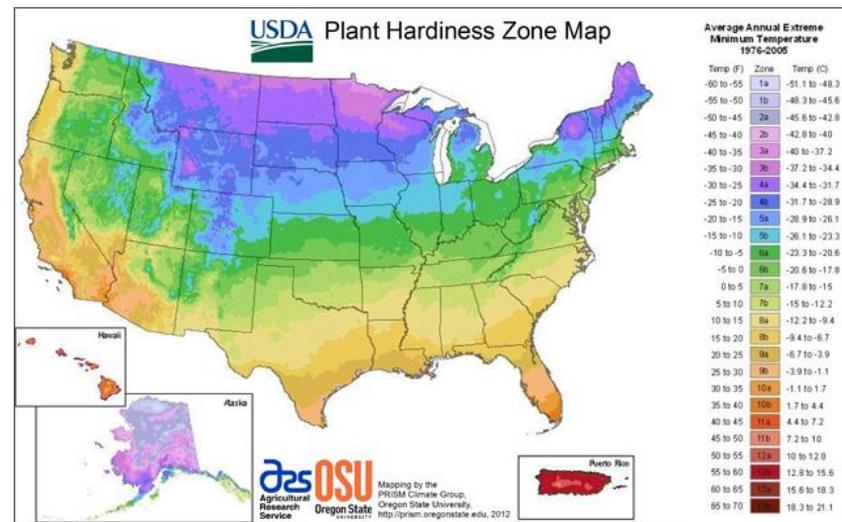


Natural Resource: Water

- Surface water (streams, creeks, or ponds) on your property?
- Existing wells
 - Water capacity? Calculating acreage you can irrigate
 - Limitations on amount and type of usage?
- Water rights for water?
 - Department of Ecology- [Buy or lease water rights or apply to state for new water right](#)

Climate considerations

- Skagit Ag Stats
- <http://weather.wsu.edu/>
- Farmers Almanac
- Growing season (first and last frost)
- Minimum winter temperatures
 - Hardiness zone 8a
- Precipitation



Climate Considerations

- Micro climates
- Winds
- Sun – aspect and coverage
- Local Impacts of Climate Change

<http://www.skagitclimatescience.org/>

Physical Resources

- Buildings – number, uses, condition
- Fencing – type, condition
- Equipment – condition, uses
- Power and Energy Source- Renewable energy?
 - UDSA Rural Energy for America Program
 - <http://www.nwseed.org/>

Zoning Issues limit or establish:

- Type of zoning- the allowed uses for your land
 - Skagit County Assessor's Office Dave Thomas
 - <https://www.skagitcounty.net/Maps/iMap/>
- A ratio of building to land
- Setbacks and/or easements within your zone
- The number and type of animals

State / Local Regulations

- Health regulations
- Noxious weed laws
- Animal issues
- Nuisance laws
- Right to farm ordinances



Other Resource Considerations

- Labor: availability, skills and expertise to contribute, potential sources
- Byproducts: Are there currently waste resources that could be turned to product?
- Liability: Farm and Product- Campbell Risk Management
- Market Resources:
 - Demographics
 - Location of Markets
 - Availability of Processing



Community Resources

- WSU Extension and Research Center to help with production and marketing
- NRCS, Soil & Water Conservation Districts can help with conservation projects
- Northwest Agriculture Business Center can help with business plans
- Local Banks and loan programs

Summary



- Know what you have before making plans
- Assess farm resources for current and future potential
- Look at human, financial, natural, physical, market and community resources