



# National Farm *Viability* CONFERENCE

## Conference Workshops – Call for Proposals

2019 National Farm Viability Conference  
Red Wing, Minnesota  
October 22-24

The 4<sup>th</sup> [National Farm Viability Conference](#) is seeking proposals for workshop sessions for the 2019 conference. The National Farm Viability Conference is geared towards professionals in the fields of farm and food business planning, financial planning, agricultural financing, farmland conservation, agricultural market development, and food hub management. It offers attendees the opportunity to learn from industry leaders and other professionals in their fields, develop new skills, and connect with colleagues from across the country.

### **Types of workshops we are seeking:**

We are seeking workshop proposals that fit the goals of the conference and provide relevant professional development to our target audience. Below you will find a list of conference tracks and formats we are seeking for conference sessions, and a full list of possible workshop sessions is at the end of this document.

- Working with New and Beginning Farmers
- Food and Farm Marketing and Distribution
- Finance and Business Development
- Accessing Capital for Growth
- Equity and Social Justice in the Food System
- Land Access and Succession Planning
- Program Development, Funding and Design

The majority of the workshops will fall into one of the following categories: facilitated discussion with attendees, lecture, or panel presentation. Each time slot will be around 75 minutes long. We are also open to receiving proposals for more informal networking sessions (likely to be held over breakfast or lunch) and plenary sessions.

For examples of past workshop topics, please review the 2017 conference agenda:

<https://www.farmviabilityconference.com/2017-national-conference.html>

[https://www.farmviabilityconference.com/uploads/1/9/1/5/19154613/nfvc\\_program\\_small.pdf](https://www.farmviabilityconference.com/uploads/1/9/1/5/19154613/nfvc_program_small.pdf)

### **Selection process:**

The conference Advisory Committee will use a multi-step process to select proposals and develop the final conference agenda. Rather than selecting specific proposals exactly as they come in, we expect to play a strong role in developing the agenda and shaping sessions so they meet conference goals.

1. Interested presenters will submit draft proposals by June 12, 2019. These proposals do not have to be fully fleshed out. At this point we want to hear your ideas and intentions for sessions, and do not expect the content to be fully developed.
2. The committee will review proposals based on the selection criteria (see below) and will work with selected presenters to hone their ideas, connect them with other potential session panelists, and develop content that fits conference goals
3. Selected presenters will finalize their session and submit necessary information for the agenda, such as bios, full session descriptions, and panelist information in August of 2019.

### **Selection criteria for ranking workshop proposals:**

1. How well does this fit with the goals and themes of the conference?
2. How well does this contribute towards a diversity of practitioners, experiences, and perspectives? We are particularly seeking diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender identity of presenters and who they serve, as well in the geographic location and types of farm/food businesses served.
3. Level of experience (with the topic area, presenting, and/or organizing workshops) and ability to deliver a high quality session.

### **How to submit a proposal:**

1. Review this Call for Proposals and the [2017 program](#) to understand the types of workshops that this conference is seeking
2. Contact the Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program with any questions: [viability@vhcb.org](mailto:viability@vhcb.org)
3. Submit a proposal online by June 12 at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YCB6DTN>

**Compensation for presenters:** This conference is intended as a peer-to-peer professional development event, with most workshops led by conference attendees who are practitioners in this field. We do not have a budget to compensate presenters; however, we will be able to offer some reduced registration fees for the following groups:

- Workshop organizers will receive a code for a reduced conference registration fee (\$150 off)
- Panelists will receive a code for a reduced conference registration fee (\$50 off)
- Plenary speakers will receive a code for complimentary registration

For those who need additional financial assistance to be able to attend the conference, there is a separate scholarship request process for reduced registration fees and travel costs. Please visit the [conference website](#) for more information.

## Key Workshop Tracks & Topics

The following list is a compilation of sessions from previous conferences as well as priority topics for 2019. This list is only intended to be a guide to the types of workshops we are looking for. It does not cover everything! We are seeking creative new ideas, engaging ways to organize and deliver content, and a variety of presenters from across the country. Please use the following list as inspiration, not instruction.

### New and Beginning Farmers

- Supporting and serving immigrant farmers
- Beyond start-up: supporting “advanced beginning farmers”
- Financial planning for beginning farmers

### Food and Farm Marketing and Distribution

- Marketing research, planning, and implementation
- Cooperative models for aggregation/marketing, particularly for small to medium-scale farms
- How large companies connect with and cultivate farm suppliers
- Trends in labeling: regenerative, Real Organic, etc.

### Finance and Business Development

- Advanced financial management
- Assessing the viability of a new product or enterprise
- Legal issues
- Human resources
- Leveraging capital for growth
- The capital continuum – what types of capital work for farm and food businesses?

### Equity and Social Justice in the Food System

- How farmers are using fair labor practices
- How to be an effective advocate for change
- Equity and social justice in land access

### Land Access and Succession Planning

- Coaching families and retiring farmers through succession
- Financial readiness for land access
- Succession planning for farm families
- Land access issues for minority farmers; reparations, heirs property
- Working with farmers without identified successors

### Program Development, Funding and Design

- How to improve our farmer services in areas such as: peer/group education, experiential learning, reaching out to diverse populations, teaching behavior change effectively, meeting the needs of communities of color, incorporating technology into farmer education programs
- Marketing our programs to clients
- Fundraising and resource development
- Evaluating farm viability programs