



CONSERVATION DISTRICT PROGRAM

Farm Team Coordination Services

What is a NRCD Farm Team Coordinator?

The farm team coordinator organizes the team members so that they work together efficiently and helps to bring about an outcome by providing indirect or unobtrusive guidance, assistance, or supervision.

The trained NRCD coordinator holds a key role on any team. Generally, the coordinator has familiarity with farming, expertise, work ethic, and dedication to high-quality work, is knowledgeable all available grant and other resources, and state of Vermont regulatory requirements.

The farm coordinator also serves as the farm team meeting facilitator. In some cases the coordinator and facilitator role may also be shared with an advisory role (such as a nutritionist, grazing specialists, veterinarian, etc.).



A good coordinator and facilitator...

- can guide the team – both the PEOPLE and the PROCESS.
- has excellent organizational skills.
- is a good communicator. The facilitator must be able to understand what others are saying by actively listening in addition to being able to express themselves well.
- works well with people.
- is able to change “hats” if necessary – technical input, project management vs. facilitator role.
- is comfortable asking for help due to limits of knowledge, programs, sequencing of workflow
- will ask tough questions, summarize discussion points, manage time.
- fosters a transparent and collaborative environment.
- responsive to inquiries and requests from team members.
- facilitates connection to appropriate partner staff to serve the farm team to meet the goals.
- has good professional judgment ability to coordinate a task or project.

Characteristics of a good coordinator and facilitator

- is a brainstormer and problem solver. Problem solving is the heart of the team’s purpose.
- has leadership skills.
- gains trust with farmers AND partners
- Enjoys working with people.
- Is enthusiastic about the team’s efforts – this positive energy is infectious and spreads through the team, impacting the group dynamic.
- Has a “can-do” attitude, particularly when solving problems.
- Manages a meeting well, with a respectful attitude toward all perspectives while remaining cognizant of agenda and time constraints.
- Is an active learner.
- Is interested in expanding knowledge and skills in teams, group dynamics and facilitation.

Duties in the farm team meetings

- Review agenda, objectives and clear farm goals
- Manage the meeting and the team process.
- Make certain that all members contribute.
- Aid the team in good communication practices.
- Ensure timelines and adhere to the agenda.
- Enforce the team's ground rules.
- Take brief notes and develop an action or "to do" list.
- Assign tasks to other team members as needed.

Duties outside the team meeting

- **Serve as a partner liaison.**
- **Advocate for farm goals and needs.**
- **Set up meetings.** Work with the farmer and team members to set time and place.
 - Options may include on-farm, virtual, office or other community space
 - If virtual, making sure everyone has access to the platform and setting up the meeting.
 - Work with the farmer to develop an agenda for each meeting; distribute to team members ahead of the meeting.
 - Distribute a brief set of notes including action/"to do" list as soon as possible following a meeting (within 48 hours of the team meeting)
- **Proactively monitor and track** objectives and progress of the teams tasks and projects milestone, objective and strategies
- **Work to aligning** different aspects of a project to ensure that all the moving parts work towards a common goal.
- **Check in with farm owner** to determine if team meetings need to be adjusted in any way, i.e. interval between meetings, changes in team members, etc. and interpret program bureaucracy.
- **Solicit feedback** on team performance.
- **Support open lines of communication** to help to address concerns, share updates, and establish expectations.
- Help maintain momentum, address challenges, and celebrate achievements.
- Offer assistance and works closely with team members to ensure that tasks are completed on time and to the highest standard.
- **Provide insights and perspective** to help team members make informed decisions and overcome challenges.
- **Create essential documents** like project budgets and funding plans
- **Support the farm** in applying for grant applications, grant management, meeting deadlines and submitting reports.



"The Farm Teams program is an invaluable resource for connecting farms and service providers in Vermont. The coordination the Districts facilitate is critical for implementing conservation practices on farms in ways that both meet our conservation goals and that work for our family farms. The Team approach allows specialists like myself to focus on what we do best, while ensuring that the farm's needs are considered and that no available resources are left on the table. The Farm Team is where the rubber meets the road, and the actual work of conservation gets done!" - VAAFPM Partner Staff



For more information, contact YOUR local Natural Resources Conservation District

Find contact information at <https://www.vacd.org/contact-nrcd>