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## Nebraska Department of Agriculture Beginning Farmer Program & Farm Mediation Program

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**Authors**

Alphadog Inc., Ashley Schlake, Michelle Pineda, Emily Younger, Gabriel Sanchez, Margaret Weber, Erica Graves, and Kylie Friedrich

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AN INTEGRATED  
MARKETING  
COMMUNICATIONS  
PLAN FOR

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# NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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BEGINNING FARMER PROGRAM & FARM MEDIATION PROGRAM

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DEVELOPED BY ALPHADOG INC.  
MAY 2013

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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With approximately 46,800 farms covering 92% of the land, Nebraska is one of the nation's key agricultural states (NDA, February 2013). The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) created programs, such as the Beginning Farmer Program and the Farm Mediation Program, to assist with the farming and ranching process. Recently, there has been a decrease in program participants. With appropriate advertising and public relations, we will increase the number of applications for the Beginning Farmer Program and the number of clinic participants for the Farm Mediation Program.

Through primary research, we determined the target market includes current and upcoming Nebraska farmers and ranchers between the ages of 28-65. Within this market, there is an overall misunderstanding of the Beginning Farmer Program and the Farm Mediation Program. Currently, the market believes the Beginning Farmer Program is a service only offered to young individuals interested in farming and ranching. There is also a lack of awareness regarding the Farm Mediation Program.

The NDA offers programs that appeal to farmers' and ranchers' needs. Currently, there is an overload of information in the department's advertising materials. By simplifying the overall brand image, the purpose and benefits of the Beginning Farmer Program and the Farm Mediation Program will be more easily understood.

To build a cohesive brand image, the two programs will have similar taglines:

"Growing Our Farmers' Future" and "Strengthening Our Farmers' Relationships". These taglines will simplify the connection between NDA consumers and the programs' main purpose: to promote farming and ranching - a vital asset to the state's economy.

The programs' main opportunity is to uphold and strengthen Nebraska values and instill tradition and respect for the land. Through strategic implementation of social media, traditional media, and public relations, our campaign will provide the opportunity to establish, maintain and grow successful Nebraska farms and ranches.



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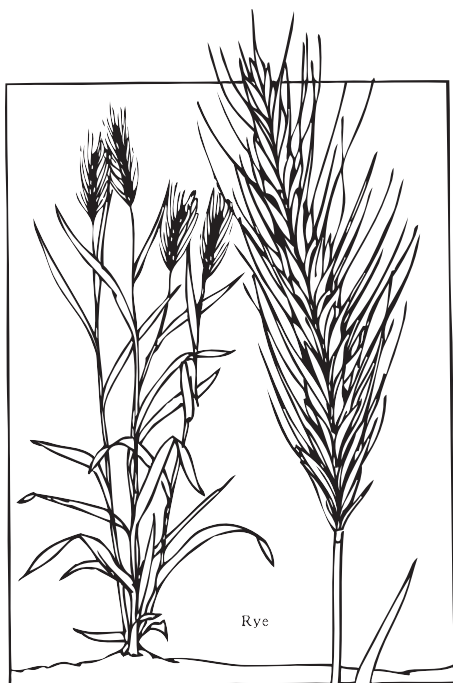
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# THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CLIENT

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The NDA's mission is to enhance agriculture by building partnerships and collaboration between farmers and ranchers, as well as regulators and consumers. Nebraska farmers and ranchers most often interact with the NDA through its regulations department, which includes the Farm Mediation Program and the Beginning Farmer Program (K. Bahm, personal communication, February 2013).



The Beginning Farmer Program is designed to help agricultural landowners retire and beginning farmers transition into landowners. This program provides benefits for both parties including tax breaks and lease agreements.

The Farm Mediation Program works to find agreeable solutions for agricultural and business disputes. This program also provides mediation clinics held in various communities throughout the state. These clinics provide producers with information regarding farm finances, debt restructuring,

laws, rules and regulations set forth by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), and mediation procedures.

In the past, the NDA has promoted these two programs with a variety of collateral pieces: a brochure and canvas poster for each program, a Nebraska agricultural fact card, and a trade show game. Along with the collateral, the department sent a newsletter in 2006 and provided a 30-minute informational video regarding farm mediation (K. Bahm, personal communication, February 2013).

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# BACKGROUND/ SECONDARY FINDINGS:

In 2011 Nebraska's 46,800 farms and ranches used about 92% of the state's total land area, making the state's reliance on agricultural exports greater than 30% (USDA Statistics Service, May 2012).

The severe drought in 2012 strongly impacted almost two thirds of cattle, corn and soybean production. It

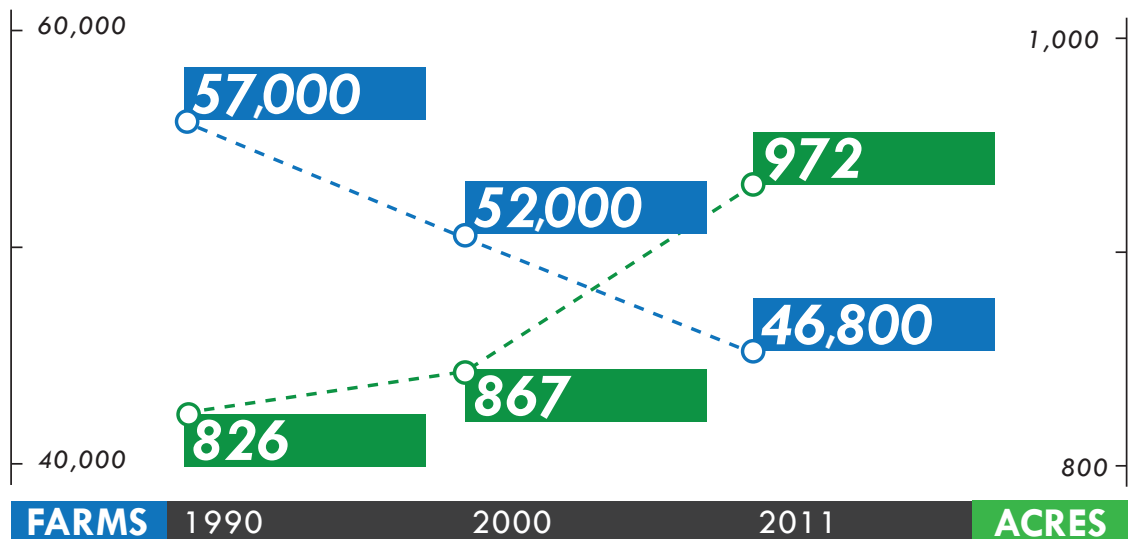
destroyed or damaged portions of major field crops in the Midwest leading to an increase in farm commodity prices (USDA Economic Services, February 2013). Overall, the total number of Nebraska farms is decreasing while the average acreage of single farms is increasing (USDA Statistics Service, May 2012).

U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR (MARCH 2013)



● EXCEPTIONAL ● EXTREME ● SEVERE

TOTAL FARMS  
VS.  
AVERAGE SIZE  
OF FARM

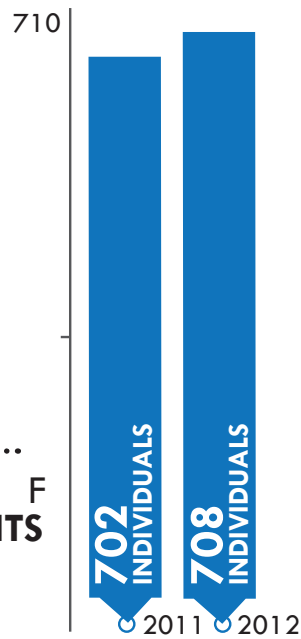


SOURCE: USDA May 2012

Mediation often involves disputing the following problems:

- Financial/credit issues
- USDA agency adverse decision appeals
- Farm and ranch estate transition and succession plans
- Allocation of costs between neighbors

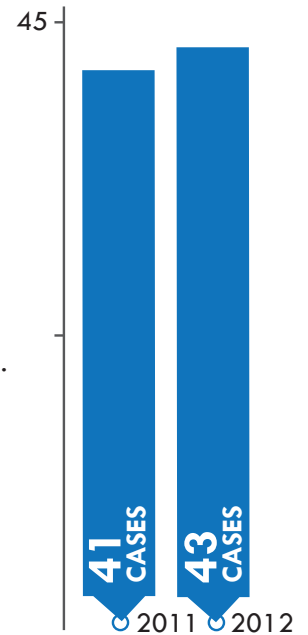
NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS



In 2012, an estimated 5,500 people visited informational booths at various agriculture shows or attended a presentation that provided an overview of the Farm Mediation program.

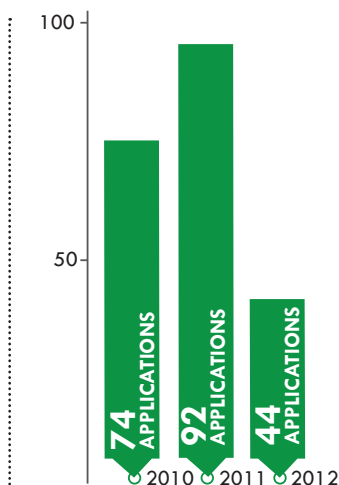
In 2011, there were 41 mediation cases and in 2012 there were 43 mediation cases (Farm Mediation, October 2012). The overall resolution rate of covered, closed cases in 2011 was 93%. Only 7% of closed cases remained unresolved (Farm Mediation, October 2012).

NUMBER OF CASES



# FARM MEDIATION PROGRAM & BEGINNING FARMER PROGRAM

PROGRAM



In 2010, the NDA received 74 applications. In the following two years, the number of applications decreased to 92 and 44, respectively. Applications are measured through the fiscal year (July 1-June 30). (Source: NDA, personal communication, February 2013)

TOTAL APPLICATIONS FOR THE BEGINNING FARMER PROGRAM

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1<sup>ST</sup>

To discover why people are not utilizing the Beginning Farmer Program.

2<sup>ND</sup>

To determine why participation in the Farm Mediation Program has remained flat for several years.

3<sup>RD</sup>

To uncover whether Farm Mediation Program clinic attendance was related to economic and environmental factors.

4<sup>TH</sup>

To measure current awareness levels of the Farm Mediation Program and Beginning Farmer Program.

5<sup>TH</sup>

To establish demographic and psychographic characteristics of the people involved in the Beginning Farmer Program and Farm Mediation Program.

# CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

1<sup>ST</sup>

To increase the understanding of the Beginning Farmer Program among current Nebraska farmers and ranchers and those individuals interested in farming or ranching.

2<sup>ND</sup>

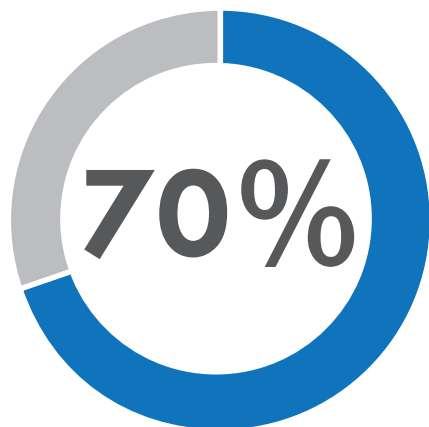
To improve the understanding and awareness of the Farm Mediation Program among current Nebraska farmers and ranchers.

3<sup>RD</sup>

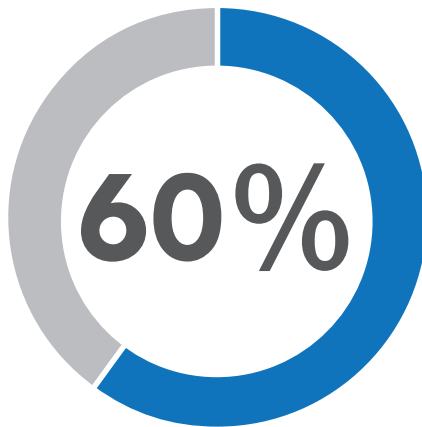
To build the target market's relationship with the NDA.



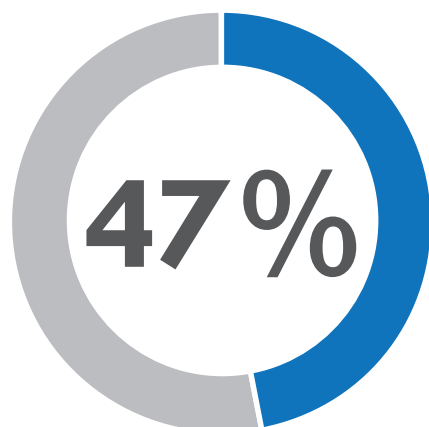
# PRIMARY RESEARCH FINDINGS



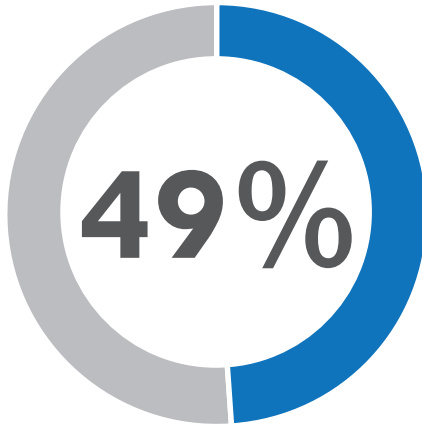
aware of the  
Beginning Farmer Program



aware of the  
Farm Mediation Program



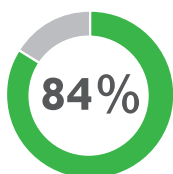
are Nebraska farm owners



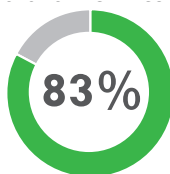
have been farming for  
30 years or more

## SURVEY RESULTS: (n=43)

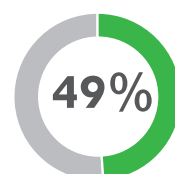
*A majority  
of people  
found  
out about  
the two  
programs  
through  
word of  
mouth*



have children,  
however more than half  
of those people's kids do not  
plan on going into farming



use Facebook,  
however only one of the  
respondents heard about the  
programs through social media.



prefer to receive information  
from the Nebraska Department  
of Agriculture through direct mail.



# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

## BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

*"The follow-up, the knowledge, the positive attitude is all great."*

.....

*"We couldn't have enhanced the land without the tax credit."*

.....

**MICHAEL MCDONALD**

*"We settled our disputes in a peaceful manner."*

.....

*"It helped our family when my parents decided to get out of farming and turn the farm over to us, keeping it fair between seven of us siblings."*

.....

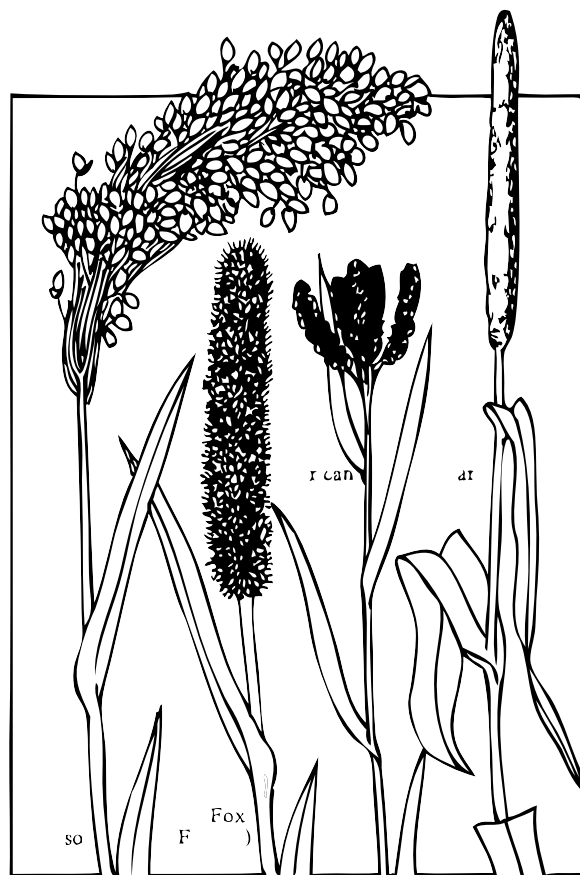
**DARREL BUSCHKOETTER**

## CREATING SUCCESS STORIES

*"It saved my farm, marriage and life. Mediation gave me my confidence back."*

.....

**DAVE MUSSMAN**



# KEY FINDINGS

**1<sup>ST</sup>**

Nebraska farmers and ranchers lack an overall understanding of what the Beginning Farmer Program and Farm Mediation Program entail.

**2<sup>ND</sup>**

Joint advertising of the Beginning Farmer and Farm Mediation Programs have lead to a misinterpretation of the criteria for participation.

**3<sup>RD</sup>**

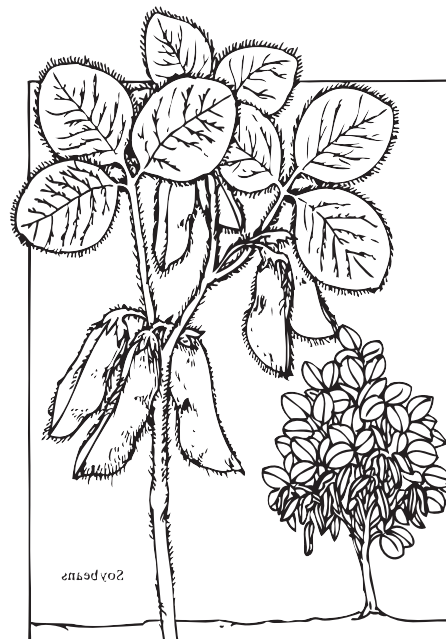
There is a misconception that the Beginning Farmer Program is solely for young/new farmers and ranchers; that is not the case.

**4<sup>TH</sup>**

The number of Beginning Farmer applications has decreased for the past two years. Based on survey results, farmers and ranchers say they have no need for the program or don't understand the benefits.

**5<sup>TH</sup>**

There is a very high success rate using the Farm Mediation Program.





STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three year lease for beginning farmer</li> <li>• Receive up to \$500 tax credit reimbursement</li> <li>• Personal property tax exemption</li> <li>• Owner receives a refundable tax credit: 10% of cash rent or 15% of sharecrop rent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required participation in Financial Management class for eligibility</li> <li>• Beginning farmer net worth &lt; \$200,000</li> <li>• Decreased number of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owners are able to retire at an earlier age and still take part in farming/ranching</li> <li>• New farmers and ranchers get their foot in the door</li> <li>• Increasing per-farm acreage</li> <li>• Carry on Nebraska farming and ranching traditions</li> <li>• Not meeting program requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreasing interest in farming (profession seems less desirable, increased college attendance, etc.)</li> <li>• Land available to rent or own is scarce</li> </ul>

# SWOT

BEGINNING FARMER PROGRAM

FARM MEDIATION PROGRAM

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unbiased professional opinion</li> <li>• Low cost (\$20/hour)</li> <li>• Confidential</li> <li>• Non-legal alternative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both parties are responsible for resolution and follow through</li> <li>• Both parties must agree to participate</li> <li>• No guarantee of conflict resolution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93% success rate</li> <li>• Big market for potential clients</li> <li>• Simplified program overview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opt for other legal advice</li> <li>• Clinic locations</li> <li>• Both parties must agree to participate</li> </ul>

# CONSUMER ANALYSIS

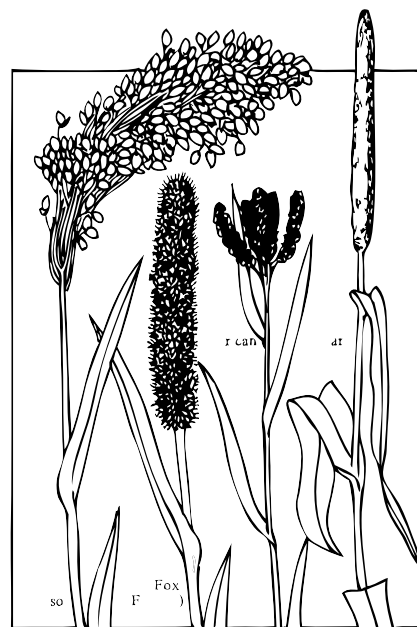
## MR. AND MRS. FARMER

High school sweethearts, Jane and John Farmer, were born and raised in small-town Nebraska. The couple, now in their early 60s, recently celebrated their 30-year wedding anniversary and the birth of their fifth grandchild. As their family continues to grow, their children and grandchildren enjoy visiting their farm during their free time. Their farm's net income averages around \$90,000 a year, plus loans from the bank help to acquire land and equipment.

Their 900-acre farm has been in the family for two generations, making it more than just an occupation—it's an important part of their lives. Jane and John would be heartbroken if the farm was ever sold. They consider themselves lucky to be passing their farm down to their oldest son, Jackson, who is looking for a partner.

*The Farmers have a long-lasting relationship with their neighbors and are very involved within the farming community.*

John and Jane wake up bright and early every day. They have livestock to look after, fences and equipment to upkeep, and endless work to do in the fields. They have a love for country music and usually listen to talk radio while they work. They read the newspaper and try to learn and use social media.



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# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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The campaign will last one year (January 1-December 31, 2014). This is based on the following factors: applications are due for the Beginning Farmer Program by March 1 for

: further approval; tradeshow and clinics are most readily attended during January and February as these months are between harvest and planting seasons.

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## MARKETING OBJECTIVES

### *Beginning Farmer Program:*

Participation levels have been inconsistent in previous years (2010: 74 applications; 2011: 92 applications; 2012: 44 applications). Therefore, the marketing objective is to increase the number of applications by 15% in 2014 (from 44 to 51).

### *Farm Mediation Program:*

To increase the total number of mediation clinic participants by 6% in 2014 (from 708 to 750). The unit is the number of clinic participants as opposed to the number of mediation cases because ag-related problems cannot be predicted or controlled. By promoting the clinics, participants will learn about the services and benefits of the program even if they are not currently experiencing problems.

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## COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

At the end of the year, on December 31, 2014, we will reassess the objectives and measure the overall understanding and awareness of the two programs. Effectiveness measurement should begin on January 1, 2014. Concurrent- and post- testing will be conducted to reaffirm the achievement of our objectives during the campaign. We will check website and social media analytics to see how much traffic has increased. We recommend

: using a social media analytics website, such as Sprout Social, to measure engagement and reach statistics. Along with checking those analytics, we will conduct a survey to measure the understanding of both programs.

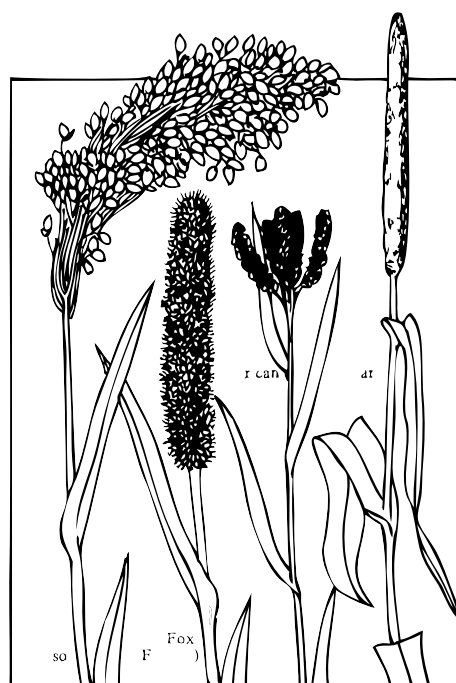
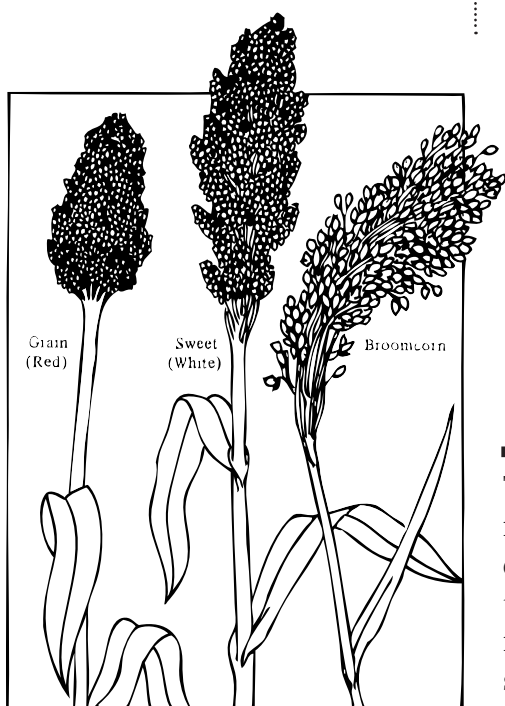
# POSITIONING STATEMENTS

## BEGINNING FARMER

P R O G R A M

The Beginning Farmer Program is a service focused on transitioning land between farm/ranch owners and

beginning farmers/ranchers. Committed to maintaining and growing farms in Nebraska, the program exists to keep Nebraska as one of the nation's key agricultural states. "Growing Our Farmers' Future"



## FARM MEDIATION

P R O G R A M

The Farm Mediation Program is a successful and cost-effective service designed to help resolve farming and ranching disputes. Aimed at strengthening farmers' and

ranchers' relationships, the service exists to keep Nebraska as one of the nation's key agricultural states. "Strengthening Our Farmers' Relationships"

# CREATIVE BRIEF

## BRAND PERSONALITY

The Nebraska Beginning Farmer Program and the Nebraska Farm Mediation Program are established agricultural services created to improve the farming and ranching community.

## THE OPPORTUNITY IS

To connect with Nebraska farmers and ranchers who base agricultural decisions on tradition and experience. Established to maintain and grow successful Nebraska farms and ranches, the programs' main opportunity is to uphold and strengthen Nebraska values and instill tradition and respect for the land as well as the community.

## TARGET MARKET

Potential and established Nebraska farmers and ranchers, ages 28-65, living or working on the 46,800 farms spanning 45.5 million acres in Nebraska. Based on census data of people working in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining, this accounts for approximately 44,734 people.

## BIG IDEA

To be recognized as programs striving to strengthen Nebraska agriculture, the Beginning Farmer and Farm Mediation Programs must be understood by the target audience.

*The Beginning Farmer Program* was created to maintain and grow agriculture within the state, and must be understood as a program focused on transitioning land from farm and ranch owners to beginning farmers and ranchers.

*The Farm Mediation Program* must be understood as a program created to settle agricultural disputes and strengthen relationships among farmers and ranchers.



## REASON TO BELIEVE

Once the target audience understands the dynamic and helpful features of the Beginning Farmer Program and the Farm Mediation Program, they will recognize them as beneficial services. These programs will help strengthen and grow Nebraska's agriculture.

## CAMPAIGN THEME

# TO GROW AND STRENGTHEN THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY.

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# REBRANDING

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The Beginning Farmer Program will be renamed the Farm Opportunity Program. The use of “beginning farmer” does not accurately describe the farm owners’ role in the program. Through primary

research we discovered Nebraska farmers were confused by the name. A majority misunderstood the program to be targeted only to new farmers, without realizing the participation of established

farmers is essential. Renaming it to the Farm Opportunity Program encourages the participation of our target market.

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## FARM OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM



*Growing Our Farmers' Future*

## FARM MEDIATION PROGRAM



*Strengthening Our Farmers' Relationships*

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The programs’ logos are designed to establish a recognizable, timeless feel and create a cohesive brand image. The images of key farming tools will help identify the two programs as helpful services promoted in a cohesive way by the NDA.

The tractor represents hard work and the effort it takes to run a farm. As a strong farming staple, it is often passed down through generations.

Throughout farming history the barn has been a meeting place. It represents people coming together and fits with the reason behind the creation of the Farm

Mediation Program. New program taglines were created to maintain cohesion under the umbrella of the NDA. The tagline “Growing Our Farmers’ Future” represents the Farm Opportunity Program while “Strengthening Our Farmers’ Relationships” represents the Farm Mediation Program.

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# BROCHURES

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The programs' brochures were redesigned to simplify the Farm Opportunity Program and the Farm Mediation Program's goals. Before changes, the brochures were filled with a surplus of information, making it difficult for consumers

to understand the programs' guidelines for participation. The new brochures clarify the purpose and highlight the benefits of the Farm Opportunity Program and the Farm Mediation Program.

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# CANVAS

## NEBRASKA STATE AGRICULTURE OVERVIEW



### NEBRASKA TOP NATION RANKINGS

**5<sup>TH</sup>**

Total value of livestock, poultry, and their products  
Quantity – 8,662,710

**4<sup>TH</sup>**

Total value of agricultural products sold  
Quantity – 15,506,035

**3<sup>RD</sup>**

Total value of Sales by Commodity Group (\$1,000)  
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas  
Quantity – 6,528,508

Total Quantity Cattle and calves  
Quantity – 7,358,555



### SOYBEANS

Planted All Purpose Acres – 4,900,000  
Harvested Acres – 4,830,000  
Value of production dollars – 2,971,658,000



### CORN FOR GRAINS

Planted All Purpose Acres – 9,850,000  
Harvested Acres – 9,600,000

### MILK

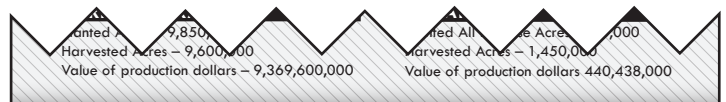
Milk Cows (Average Head) 57,000  
Milk Production per Cow (lbs) 20,579  
Production (lbs) 1,173,000,000



### WHEAT

Planted All Purpose Acres – 1,000,000  
Harvested Acres – 450,000

To replace the Nebraska Agriculture Fact Card, an infographic was created to display at trade shows and other department events. It shows the importance of agriculture in Nebraska. Both programs' trade show displays were redesigned to match the rebranded theme.



## NEBRASKA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

There are nearly 23 million acres (9,307,806 ha) of rangeland and pastureland in Nebraska – half of which are in the Sandhills.

Nebraska's farms and ranches utilize 45.6 million acres – 93% of the state's total land area.

### FARMS BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION



**NET CASH FARM INCOME**  
FROM OPERATION \$3,966,860,000  
AVERAGE PER FARM \$83,142

**PRINCIPAL OPERATORS BY SEX**  
MALE 43,687  
FEMALE 4,025

In 2008 Nebraska was eighth nationally in certified cropland acres (130,000) and eighth in certified organic pasture acres (21,518)

Nebraska livestock industry accounted for 49% of the state's total agricultural cash receipts during 2010. Livestock or poultry operations were found on 50% of Nebraska farms

Nebraska had 46,800 farms and ranches during 2011 the average operation consisted of 972 acres



# DISPLAYS

## FARM OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM



*Growing Our Farmers' Future*

The Nebraska Farm Opportunity Programs are designed to help new producers get a head start in farming and ranching while providing tax credits to the landowners.

### WHO'S ELIGIBLE?

- Nebraska Residents
- Less than \$200,000 net worth\* (adjusted annually)
- Farmed less than ten of the last fifteen years.

### BENEFITS

- Tax Credits
- Personal Property Tax Exemptions
- Three-year lease for beginning farmer



## FARM MEDIATION PROGRAM



*Strengthening Our Farmers' Relationships*

Farm Mediation is a process that brings producers and others together to resolve disputes. This process is voluntary and binding only in the parties can reach a mutual agreement.

### WHO MAY REQUEST MEDIATION?

- Farm borrowers • Their creditors • Producers • Federal agencies

### WHY MEDIATION?

- 93% of closed cases ended with an agreement.
- Low-cost alternative to litigation or appeal
- Maintains complete confidentiality

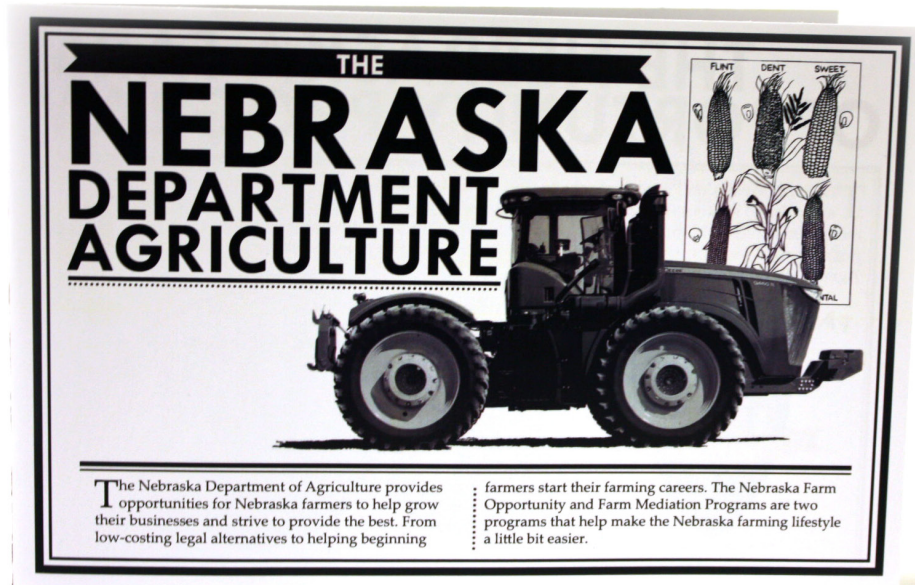
### MEDIATION CLINICS PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING:

- Farm Finances
- Laws
- Regulations and policies governing FSA
- Debt restructuring
- Other legal options



# DIRECT MAIL

A direct mail postcard was created to inform Nebraskans about the Farm Opportunity and Farm Mediation Programs. The postcard describes the benefits and goals of both programs.



# RADIO

Two 30-second radio spots were created for an effective reach of the target market. These spots showcase the dedication and hard work necessary to run a successful farm or ranch, and exhibit why the Farm Opportunity and Farm Mediation Programs exist.

TEAM: ALPHADOG INC.  
CLIENT: NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
TITLE: "NEBRASKA FARM MEDIATION"  
LENGTH: 30 SECONDS

**SFX:**  
LIGHT ELECTRIC GUITAR  
PLAYING IN BACKGROUND

**FARMER:** With a lot of good management decisions and practices you can  
(DEEP MALE VOICE): control your own destiny on the farm

**VOICE OVER:** The Nebraska Farm Mediation Program is helping local  
(DEEP MALE VOICE): farmers resolve agricultural disputes by building and fostering  
important business relationships in the Nebraska farming  
community. To better your farming relationships visit our  
website at [www.nda.nebraska.gov](http://www.nda.nebraska.gov).

TEAM: ALPHADOG INC.  
CLIENT: NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
TITLE: "NEBRASKA FARM MEDIATION"  
LENGTH: 30 SECONDS

**SFX:**  
LIGHT CHIMING MUSIC  
PLAYING IN BACKGROUND

**FARMER:** There's a lot of people out there that think all of their food comes  
(DEEP MALE VOICE): straight from the grocery store, well it actually is out in the country  
and it's running around right now.

**VOICE OVER:** The Nebraska Farm Opportunity Program is helping build the  
(DEEP MALE VOICE): future for Nebraska's agriculture and helping new farmers get a  
head start in Nebraska farming and ranching. To better your farming  
future visit our website at  
[www.nebraskafarmopportunityprogram.com](http://www.nebraskafarmopportunityprogram.com).



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# VIDEO

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Two 60-second video spots were created. Similar to the radio spots, the videos exhibit why the Farm Opportunity and Farm Mediation Programs exist: to create and maintain a thriving farming and ranching community. These videos will to be placed on the NDA's website and

social media outlets. They will also be played at NDA booths during trade shows. Along with the 90-second videos, four 15-second teaser videos were created. They are snippets from the 90-second videos and will run on local TV stations.

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## TEASER 1 (FARM OPPORTUNITY)



## TEASER 2 (FARM OPPORTUNITY)



## TEASER 3 (FARM MEDIATION)



## TEASER 4 (FARM MEDIATION)



The full Farm Mediation and Farm Opportunity videos take the viewer through the thoughts and actions of Nebraska farmers as they experience the two programs.

## FARM OPPORTUNITY :90 SEC

### VIDEO



### AUDIO

#### FARMER:

(DEEP MALE VOICE):

The livestock industry, the crop industry is always challenging you and I like challenges.

#### MUSIC:

(COUNTRY SONG)

#### FARMER:

(DEEP MALE VOICE):

When you can run all day in a tractor or go work with your cows and deal with them and help nurture them it more of a pleasure to me."

#### MUSIC:

(COUNTRY SONG)

#### FARMER:

(DEEP MALE VOICE):

Farmers may be rich in the ability to see crops grow and the ability to see livestock grow but as far as financially, the money we get in goes back out to producing the next crop.

#### MUSIC:

(COUNTRY SONG)

## FARM MEDIATION :90 SEC

### VIDEO



### AUDIO

#### MUSIC:

(COUNTRY SONG)

#### FARMER:

(DEEP MALE VOICE):

With a lot of good management decisions and practices you can control your own destiny on the farm. The Nebraska Farm Mediation Program offers legal alternatives with helping farmers resolve agricultural disputes.

#### MUSIC:

(COUNTRY SONG)

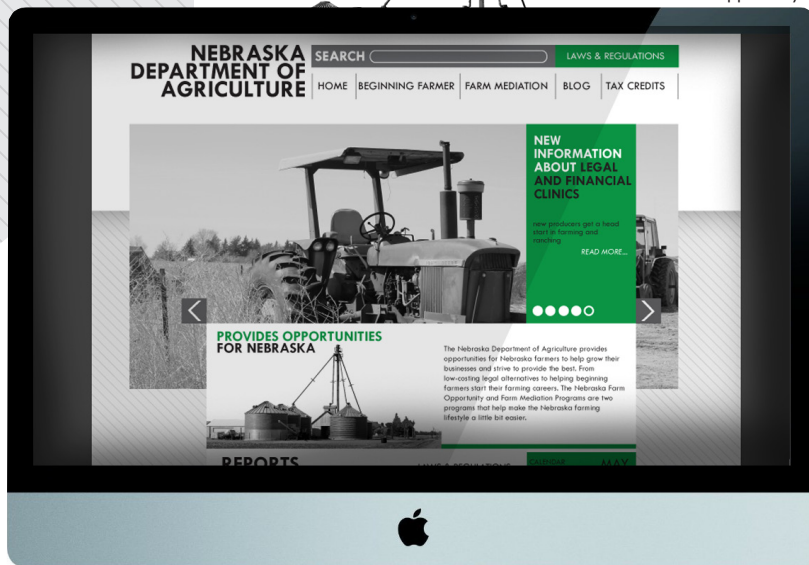
## NEW INFORMATION ABOUT LEGAL AND FINANCIAL CLINICS

new producers get a head  
start in farming and  
ranching

[READ MORE...](#)

## PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture provides opportunities for Nebraska farmers to help grow their businesses and strive to provide the best. From low-costing legal alternatives to helping beginning farmers start their farming careers. The Nebraska Farm Opportunity and Farm Mediation Programs are two programs that help make the Nebraska farming lifestyle a little bit easier.



CALENDAR  
**MAY**  
**10**  
New Eve

# WEBSITE

A website redesign is suggested to create cohesion for the department's brand image. Simplified navigation will lead to a better user experience. The new website will instill a greater sense of community and generate more conversation by linking back to the blog and social media pages.



# WEBSITE BANNER ADS

Two website banner ads were created: one for each program. They will be placed on websites the target market frequents and will link back to the programs' pages on the NDA website.

NEBRASKA  
**FARM  
OPPORTUNITY  
PROGRAM**

Let us help you become a  
Nebraska farmer. Learn more  
now. \_\_\_\_\_



NEBRASKA  
**FARM  
MEDIATION  
PROGRAM**

Need help finding agreeable  
solutions for agricultural  
and agricultural business  
disputes? Learn more now.



NEBRASKA  
**FARM  
OPPORTUNITY  
PROGRAM**

Get a head start in Nebraska  
farming or ranching today.  
Learn more now. \_\_\_\_\_



# PUBLIC R

## OBJECTIVE 1

To increase traffic to the NDA website by 40% within one year. Each of the social media outlets and paid advertisements create a cohesive call to action, driving farmers and ranchers to visit the NDA website.

A recommendation to increase traffic to the NDA's website is to create a landing page that hosts a blog. This page will show a stream of the department's Facebook and Twitter feeds. By generating relevant content and sparking discussion, the blog will provide a community for farmers and ranchers.

There will be four 15-second "teaser" videos to spark interest and drive traffic to the website. Nebraska farmers and ranchers will also be encouraged to

visit the website via Facebook, Twitter and blog posts. Comments on Facebook posts will serve as a tool to measure which posts generate the most interaction within the audience.

## OBJECTIVE 2

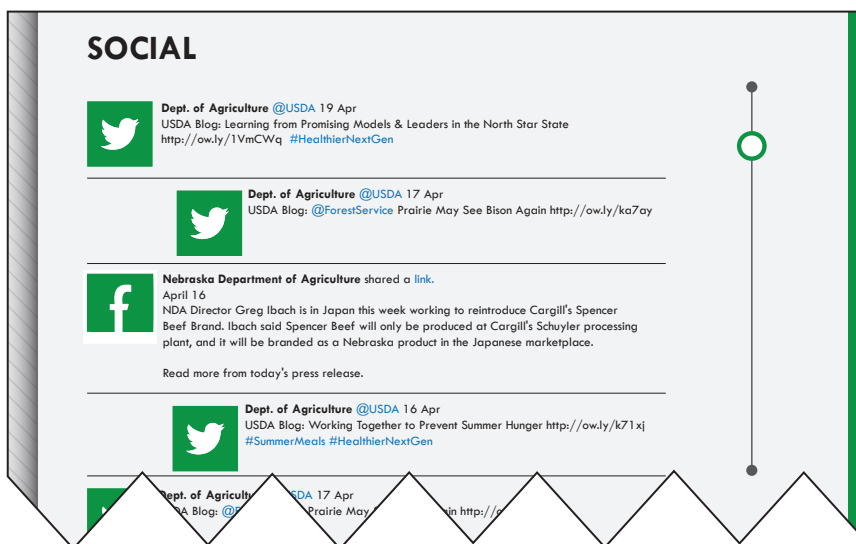
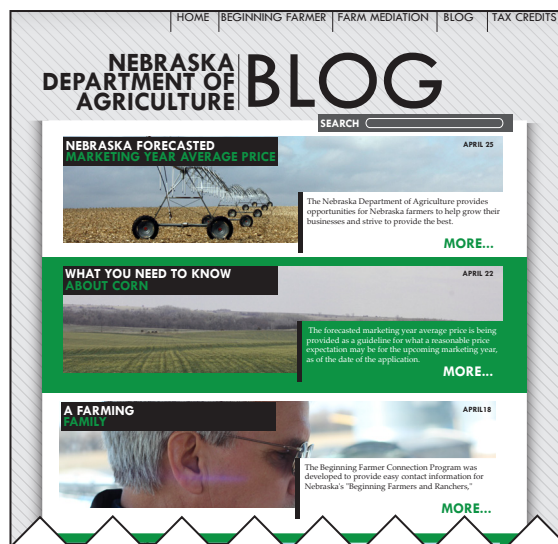
To increase consumer interaction via Facebook and Twitter by 25% within one year. The NDA blog, paid advertisements and promoted posts will increase social media exposure and create a call to action, driving farmers and ranchers to the NDA Facebook and Twitter.

Providing relevant content on Facebook, Twitter and the blog encourages consumer feedback and generates an interest in

the NDA, while providing the target market with a credible source for ag-related information.

A curator is necessary to generate this discussion and provide a constant stream of content on all social media platforms. By using a curator, the NDA will have access to other sources' content. An NDA program participant can serve as a guest blogger - providing insights into the programs' functionality. Other suggested sources include the USDA, FSA, South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Iowa Department of Agriculture.

*This strategy will help to increase traffic to the NDA website and foster client engagement.*





# RELATIONS

## OWNED MEDIA

*Channel brand controls*

- Website
- Blog
- Social Media (Twitter and Facebook)

## EARNED MEDIA

*Earned Media* Customers become the channel

- Buzz created around the NDA through Facebook, Twitter and blog interaction to drive increased traffic to the NDA website to watch the full commercial

## PAID MEDIA

*Brand pays to leverage a channel*

- Television Commercials
- Radio Commercials
- Direct Mail
- Website Banner Ads

# SUGGESTIONS

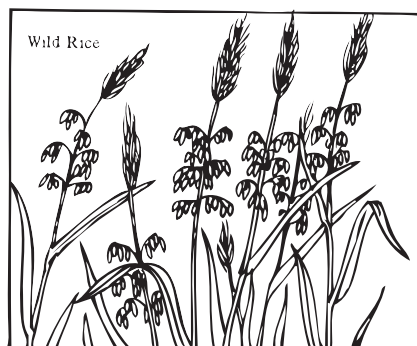
P U B L I C R E L A T I O N S

We suggest hiring an intern with PR and social media experience. A part-time position budgeted for 10 hours/week at \$8/hour is a low cost option that provides management of the blog and social media. Tasks include generating leads for potential curation sources, keeping the blog updated, monitoring social media posts and encouraging online conversations.

We recommend creating an editorial calendar - an effective tool for tracking key NDA events and how they will be supported through the media. This will show when to increase advertising surrounding special events and track needed funding. For example, promoted posts on Facebook would serve as a reminder of events for NDA followers and their followers' friends.

# MEDIA

**TACTICS** The media buys are focused on the target audience's media usage and lifestyle. Our campaign will run January through December 2014.



## OBJECTIVES

- Pulsing campaign: Increased advertising during January-March and November-December
- Build a 70 percent reach and a frequency of three within one year
- Create a strong and reliable relationship between the NDA and programs.
- Focus promotions in farming communities to increase awareness and understanding in the target audience.

### TRADITIONAL: \$21,670

#### BROADCAST (\$4,120)

We suggest running eight 0:15 TV commercials per month during prime time (7pm to 10pm.) These commercials will run on Nebraska news channels like KOLN or KLKN, from January 1 – March 31 and November 1 – December 31. According to Media Flight Plan, a program used to generate and manage theoretical media buys, prime time TV has the most effective reach compared to all other TV times.

#### DIRECT MAIL (\$12,450)

We recommend purchasing a mailing list from the U.S. Agriculture Masterfile. 30,000 postcards will be sent to qualified, farmers and ranchers

drawn from this mailing list.

#### RADIO (\$5,100)

Through research, we found the most effective way to reach our target audience is during the 6 a.m. – 7 p.m. drive. We suggest three radio spots on KRVN AM, three on KRVN FM, and three on KX 96.9 each week. These spots will run from January 1 – March 31 and November 1 – December 31.

##### KRVN Rural Radio

- Three Spots per week run on AM and FM
- AM weekday 30-second spot at \$30 each: \$2,100
- FM weekday 30-second spot at \$15 each: \$900

##### KX 96.9 Country

- Three spots per week run on FM
- \$35 per 0:30 spot: \$2,100

### ONLINE: \$3,730

#### FACEBOOK (\$480)

83% of surveyed farmers use Facebook, however only one of the respondents heard about the Farm Mediation and Beginning Farmer Program through social media. Promoting posts on Facebook throughout the year will connect the target audience with NDA tradeshow and events.

Used sparingly, promoted posts will be used to showcase upcoming NDA events such as tradeshow, the State Fair, ect. Promoted posts are budgeted for one year.

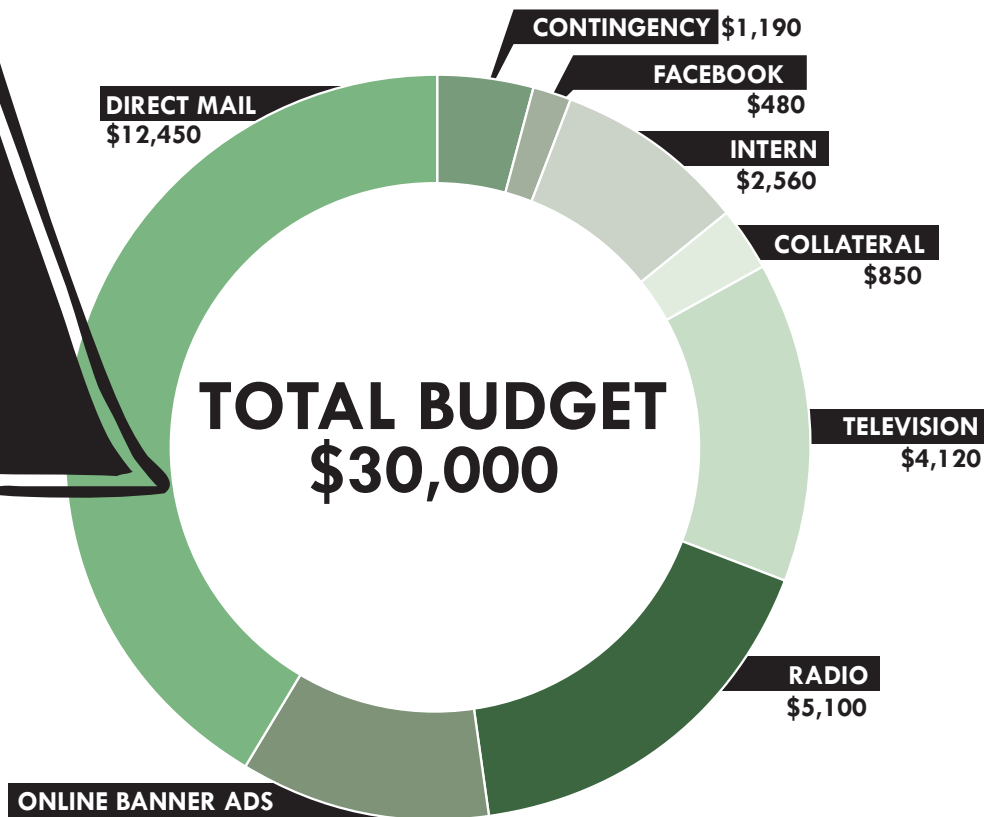
#### ONLINE ADS (\$3,250)

Nebraskafarmer.com (\$1,500)

# IA

## STRATEGY

To increase the understanding of the Farm Mediation and Farm Opportunity Programs' benefits and eligibility requirements.



Nebraska Farmer by Farm Progress is one of the largest agriculture information businesses in North America. We suggest placing a 160 x 600 (pixels) wide scraper advertisement on their website. The ad will rotate on the left sidebar of the homepage, weather page, news page, and market page from January 1 – March 31 and November 1 – December 31, generating 5,000 impressions per month for each program, totalling 50,000 impressions.

Prairiefirenewspaper.com (\$1,750)

Prairie Fire Newspaper is a regional monthly journal focused on the voice of the Great Plains. Its website receives 4,000-5,000 visitors and 6,500-

8,000 page views each month. We suggest placing a 486 x 60 (pixels) masthead which will be located at the top of the Prairie Fire website (Prairie Fire, 2012). It will run from January 1 – March 31 and November 1 – December 31.

### POINT OF PURCHASE: \$850

#### BROCHURES (\$550)

The estimated printing cost for 5,000 brochures, divided equally between the Farm Opportunity Program and the Farm Mediation Program, is \$550.

#### TRADE SHOW DISPLAYS (\$300)

\$300 have been allocated to print three canvas trade show displays: one infographic and one for each of the programs.

### INTERNSHIP: \$2,560

#### INTERN (\$2,560)

We suggest employing a social media/PR intern for 32 weeks (September through April). The intern position is budgeted at \$8/hour for 10 hours per week. An additional staff member focused solely on PR and social media will help keep the online conversation fresh.

### CONTINGENCY: \$1,190

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Alphadog Inc. would like to thank Frauke Hachtman, our advisor for this campaign. Her background and extensive knowledge of the industry helped guide our agency from research to the final creative executions.

A special thanks to Dave Mussman and Mike McDonald, our contacts through the NDA. They offered unique and positive insights into what it means to be a part of the Nebraska farming community. Their program experience and feedback was much appreciated.

*- Alphadog Inc.*



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# APPENDIX

## PRIMARY RESEARCH METHODS

- 42 Quantitative survey responses
- 4 Phone interviews
- 2 Video interviews

## SECONDARY RESEARCH METHODS

- Client briefing/current advertising materials
- United States Department of Agriculture Statistics
- Articles from online sources dealing with farming and drought statistics

## IDENTITY STANDARDS

Current Logo



CMYK: 84,78,0,0  
RGB: 253,49,23

CMYK: 7,0,78,0  
RGB: 245,246,86

CMYK: 70,0,60,0  
RGB: 59,189,141

Sans Serif Font: Tw Cent MT  
Serif Font: Palintino

CMYK: 100,90,10,0  
RGB: 37,64,143

CMYK: 85,10,100,10  
RGB: 59,189,141

Logo Smallest dimensions for print/web: 25x25 px

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KRVN and KX 96.9 rate cards