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Nebraska Land Link

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Cornhusker Economics

Nebraska Land Link

Nebraska Extension is pleased to announce that the Nebraska Land Link is open for applications. Nebraska Land Link connects new or beginning farmers and ranchers seeking land with landowners who wish to lease, sell or gift their land to a new or beginning farmer or rancher. The web-based enrollment and information for the program can be found at <https://farm.unl.edu/landlink>

A 2017 survey of 3,500 farmers by the National Young Farmer's Coalition listed access to land as the most difficult challenge for new farmers (Ackoff, et al., 2017). The challenge of land access is twofold. First, the high cost of land, livestock and equipment makes it difficult for new and beginning farmers to purchase these capital assets. The second challenge to land access is that many landowners are asset rich and cash poor. Therefore, they need to earn income for retirement from their land, equipment and livestock while transitioning away from the labor and management of their operation.

When a traditional multi-generational farm or ranch exists (parent-child), it can be easier to develop a transition plan that transitions the assets and management of the operation from the owner to their child. However, when a farmer or rancher does not have a child who wishes to actively take over the operation, the path to retirement is less clear. The Nebraska Land Link strives to connect new and beginning farmers and ranchers with retiring landowners who do not have a successor. The goal of the Nebraska Land Link is to provide land access using lease agreements, lease-to-own arrangements, buy-sell arrangements, or

other creative methods that are mutually beneficial for land seekers and landowners. This effort is important for a thriving rural Nebraska. One way to keep rural America, and especially rural Nebraska, in business is to keep as many ag operations functioning as possible

Our service has three main parts (1) an online application, (2) applicant vetting and (3) additional educational support. The application can be found at: <https://farm.unl.edu/landlink>. After your application is submitted, Nebraska Extension personnel will contact you to verify the information in your application.

Once the applicant vetting is complete, you will be enrolled in the program. Landowners will be given the applications of land seekers in their area that seem to be a good match. After the landowner has reviewed the applications, they can interview potential land seekers they feel have shared values, skills and interests. Once both parties have agreed to the match, the process of transitioning the operation hopefully begins.

Throughout the process, Nebraska Extension will provide important educational information regarding communication, negotiations, goal setting and more. And we are here to answer any questions you might have. In time, it is hoped that the match will lead to some type of long-term relationship where the land seekers have land, equipment or livestock that they can call their own that gives them a solid future.

Any size operation will be supported by Nebraska Land Link. There are land seekers that just want a few acres for their (smaller scale) fruit or vegetable businesses, for instance. Landowners can indicate that they would allow a smaller tract to be used.

Applying to Land Link is free for Nebraskans. Out-of-state residents will be charged \$30 to apply as a land seeker and \$50 to apply as a landowner.

Nebraska Land Link is a project of Nebraska Extension's Farm and Ranch Succession and Transition program and Nebraska Women in Agriculture. For questions, please contact Allan Vyhnaek at avyhnaek2@unl.edu or Jessica Groskopf at jgroskopf2@unl.edu.

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Reference:

Ackoff, et al., 2017 <https://www.youngfarmers.org/resource/building-a-future-with-farmers-ii/>

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