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 Worksheet IT.1: Why Transition?
 (<http://misadocuments.info/IT.1WhyTransition.pdf>)

WHY TRANSITION?

Use the space below to describe why you are thinking about making the transition to organic production or processing. Is it for financial, environmental, health or other reasons? If you are having trouble answering this question, try describing how your business may change after transition. Then identify your critical planning issue, or the one factor that must be addressed by your business strategy in order for the transition to be worthwhile. Next, list specific challenges that you expect to face during transition and identify people (your planning team) who will be able to help you work through these challenges and can assist with brainstorming, providing feedback and identifying resources. Lastly, note how you will use your business plan: for internal (family only) or external (e.g., lenders, business partners) planning purposes.

1. Why are you interested in transitioning to organic management?

2. What is your critical planning issue?

3. What are your biggest challenges in transitioning from conventional to organic production, or in becoming certified?

4. Who would you like to include on your planning team?

5. How will you use your business plan? Will it be for internal planning or for communicating to a lender, business partner or buyer, or both?

MY VALUES

Think about your values and list them in the space below. Consider what it means for you to be successful in farming, or try distinguishing between personal, financial, environmental and community values. If you are having trouble putting values onto paper, recall a critical turning point in your life when you were faced with a serious tradeoff. What values guided your decision-making? Or take a peek at **Worksheet 1T.2: Personal Qualities** to explore personal strengths or qualities.

Personal Values:

Financial Values:

Environmental Values:

Community Values:

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Worksheet 1T.2: Personal Qualities (<http://misadocuments.info/1T.2PersonalQualities.pdf>)

PERSONAL QUALITIES

If you are having trouble identifying values, try using the following list to identify personal strengths or qualities that you think are important to work toward. Remember, nobody is good at everything!

Personal Qualities

1 = Rarely; 2 = Sometimes; 3 = Most of the time; 4 = Almost always

- _____ I have a strong work ethic.
- _____ I pay attention to detail.
- _____ It is important to me to do things on time.
- _____ I am persistent—I finish what I start.
- _____ I am interested in learning new ideas or ways of doing things.
- _____ I am flexible and willing to make changes when necessary.
- _____ I have good working relationships with others (e.g., neighbors, hired labor).
- _____ I communicate directly—I listen to others and am not afraid to ask questions or say what I think.
- _____ I am willing to consider others' advice and opinions.
- _____ I am careful about the advice I take.
- _____ I seek out relationships with organic farmers I look up to and can turn to for advice.
- _____ I keep up on organic market trends.
- _____ I enjoy farming and its challenges.
- _____ I have a supportive spouse, family members and farm partner(s).
- _____ I stay involved in a community or farm organization.
- _____ There are things in my life besides the farm (I am not "all work and no play").
- _____ I seek help when I need it.
- _____ I take responsibility for the decisions I make.
- _____ Everyone on the farm is working toward the same goals as a team.
- _____ I enjoy recordkeeping and accounting.

(Reproduced with minor modifications from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's management skills assessment, Organic Farmers: Steps to Success.)