United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program

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Transition to Organic Partnership Program
Guide for Creating SMART Goals

Why create SMART goals?

Setting goals can be challenging, and SMART goals can be a helpful framework for making the process a little easier. Meaningful goals that are broken into steps and are actually achievable are challenging to create. SMART goals provides a framework that can greatly benefit successful goal creation.

SMART is an acronym that stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely, which are all necessary attributes to set effective goals. Applying this framework allows you to break down goals into actionable objectives. Here's a few reasons for why SMART goals are beneficial:

- **Clarity and focus:** SMART goals force you to define your goals with precision. This clarity helps you understand exactly what you're working towards and minimizes ambiguity.

- **Measurability:** SMART goals require you to establish clear criteria for measuring progress and success. This helps you track your achievements and stay motivated.

- **Achievability:** By setting achievable goals, you set yourself up for success. SMART goals help you set realistic and attainable targets, which increases your confidence and motivation.

- **Relevance:** Goals should be relevant to your overall objectives and aspirations. SMART goals help you assess the relevance of your goals, ensuring that they align with your long-term vision.

- **Time management:** the "T" in SMART stands for timely, meaning that goals have a specific deadline or timeframe. This helps you prioritize tasks and allocate resources effectively.

- **Communication and collaboration:** SMART goals facilitate better communication within teams or between individuals. Everyone understands what needs to be accomplished, making collaboration, learning, and teaching smoother and more impactful.

Overall, the SMART goal setting framework provides a structured approach to turning abstract ideas into concrete objectives. It encourages you to think critically about your goals, refine your plans, and work systematically towards your desired outcomes.

How to Create SMART Goals

SMART goals are: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely

First, write a brief description of your goal:

Next, make the goal specific: Who/what/when/where/how:

Who will this goal involve? What skills do I need for this? When and where will I need to be?
How will this goal be achieved, and how will I know when I achieve my goal?

Write three specific steps to achieve this goal:

1.
2.
3.

Then, make the goal measurable:

How will I measure progress towards my goal? How will I know what success looks like?

How will I measure my success and track my progress?

1.
2.
3.

And lastly, ensure the goal is attainable, relevant, and timely:

How does the goal align with my long-term vision? Is my goal realistic?

Why do I want to reach my goal?

When do I want to reach my goal? What is the time-frame for my goal?