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***How to use this template:*** *This template is designed to help you prepare for the administration, orienting, and training of a new employee and to track employee progress through the onboarding process. Customize this template to your farm and use the included resource links to build your onboarding program. Much of the instructional text in this document should be deleted in the farm’s final version of an Onboarding Plan.*

# **Your Farm Name Onboarding Plan**

# **Goals: (Customize or edit these goals as needed.)**

1. Increase new employee confidence and performance to achieve standard productivity levels within two weeks of the hire date.
2. Identify safety hazards on the farm that the new employee will encounter and how to work safely.
3. Help the new employee build strong work relationships with the farm team members that will continue for a long, productive work relationship.
4. Show new employees how they can be part of a supportive and engaging farm business culture.
5. Ensure farm business compliance with all employment laws regarding new employees.

## Activities: (Customize or edit this section in your completed Onboarding plan.)

1. **Orienting.** Onboarding begins on the first day of work. A designated and prepared person (an owner, manager, or HR person) orients the new employee by completing all of the items scheduled for Day 1.
2. **Welcoming.** An owner or senior manager should meet and welcome each new employee on their first day to set the stage that new employees are important and valued. Share important parts of your farm business values and culture.
3. **Connecting.** Take steps to help your new employee get to know the existing team, new employees need to connect with other people in order to feel accepted. It’s also a good practice to assign a “buddy” from peer employees, sometimes the new employee will feel more comfortable asking a peer a question rather than a manager.
4. **Training.** Onboarding activities to be completed in Week 1 and Month 1 can be led by the employee’s supervisor or a designated trainer. (Do not delegate onboarding to whoever happens to be working that day.)
5. **Evaluating**. Find out if the new employee learned and retained important information. Retrain if needed and improve the onboarding program.
6. **Documenting**. Keep records of training and evaluation results in employee’s personnel file.

# **Items to Complete by the End of Day 1**

## Compliance

[Department of Labor Posters for the Agricultural Workplace](https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/dipa/aglp3.pdf). Checklist and compilation of current posters that must be displayed.

* **I-9 Section 1**. Meet with your new employee to complete Section 1 of USCIS Form I-9. Section 1 must be completed by the employee. (Find resources here: <http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/regulations/authorization-to-work-i-9-form/>)
* **I-9 Section 2**. Verify new employee identification and authorization to work no later than Day 3 of employment. Best practice is to complete this task on Day 1 if possible.
* **W-4.** Federal employee withholding form. <http://www.irs.gov>
* **IT-2104.** New York State employee withholding form. <https://www.tax.ny.gov/forms/withholding_cur_forms.htm>
* **Work Agreement.** Go over the “Pay Notice and Work Agreement.” New York law requires that all the information in [Form LS 309](https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/wp/LS309.PDF) be filled out and shared, in writing, with the employee in a language they can understand. Here is the Form in [Spanish](https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/wp/LS309S.pdf) and [Haitian-Creole](https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/wp/LS309HC.pdf). Form LS 309 is available on the NYSDOL website in multiple languages, see the NYS Department of Labor site for more details under “Wage Theft Prevention Act” (<https://labor.ny.gov/immigrants/agriculture-labor-program/services-for-agriculture-employers.shtm>).
* **Animal Care Policies.** Share your animal care policy. Have your employee sign forms as needed & file. Access [animal care resources from FARM](https://nationaldairyfarm.com/dairy-farm-standards/animal-care/).
* **Collect Contact Info.** Name, address, phone number & emergency contact and phone number.
* **Other Forms.** Forms relating to specific farm practices or certifications.

## About the Farm

* **Mission**. Share the mission or vision that guides your farm business. Share important values and aspects of your business culture that your new employee should know and appreciate. For help developing a Mission Statement see [Cornell Small Farms Program Mission Statement Generator.](http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/plan-your-farm/worksheets/create-your-mission-statement/)
* **Organization Chart**.
  1. Who is your new employee’s direct supervisor?
  2. What other positions should they know about?
  3. Who should they go to for help or questions? Emphasize that questions are always welcome and you are always interested in safety first.
* **Facility Overview**. Give your new employee an orienting tour about the farm.
  1. Provide a map with the location and name of buildings.
  2. Identify location of important safety resources:
     1. Fire extinguishers
     2. Safety data sheets (SDS)
     3. Eye wash stations
     4. Emergency contact numbers
     5. Location of equipment operation manuals
     6. Show location of PPE
  3. Where is the bathroom? There are specific regulations for providing bathroom facilities to workers in the fields. ([See page 16 of Services and Protections for Farmworkers](https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/dipa/p737.pdf))
  4. Where should employees park?
  5. Where can employee store their lunch? And take a break?
  6. Where should employees access safe drinking water?
  7. For employees working a shift longer than 6 hours, explain that they must take a 30-minute, uninterrupted meal break. New York law requires if a shift is longer than 6 hours then at least a 30-minute, uninterrupted meal break is required. If a 6-hour shift begins before 11AM, then the meal break must be between 11AM and 2PM. If it begins before 11AM and lasts past 7PM then an additional 20-minute break must be between 5PM and 7PM. See: https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/dipa/p737.pdf

## About Your Job

* **Job Description**. Share a clear description of your employee’s new job. (Penn State’s [Job Description Generator for the dairy industry](https://extension.psu.edu/job-description-generator-for-the-dairy-industry) is a great resource to create job descriptions).
  1. What are their most important duties or tasks?
  2. How will they learn their duties or tasks?
  3. How will their performance be measured and supervised?
* **Time Recording**.
  1. How should your employee track the hours that he/she works?
  2. What should he/she do if they believe an error was made in time recording or payroll?
  3. How should your employee request time off? What is the approval process for:
     1. Vacation
     2. Sick time
     3. Appointments
* **Employee Discipline**. Review your policy and procedures for progressive employee discipline. Be sure to cover those things that can lead to termination quickly such as animal abuse, harassment, stealing, fighting, etc.
* **Paycheck Review**. The work agreement covers much pay information but paychecks can be confusing. Following are some example pay documents from the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and the Cornell Farmworker Program:
  1. Sample paystub: <https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/dipa/AL447.pdf>
  2. Spanish Explanations of Tax Deductions: <https://cardi.cals.cornell.edu/sites/cardi.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/CreatingPositiveWorkplaces-AGuidebookforDairyProducers%20November%202017.pdf>
  3. Required paystub details: <https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/dipa/AL446.pdf>
  4. Sample H-2A paystub: <https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/dipa/FL446.pdf>
  5. Explain your farm policy for last pay check, including providing a forwarding address if necessary.

## Safety and Health

* **Safety Culture**. Share your farm’s safety expectations. (Add your reasons below.)
  1. It is important for your new employee to work safely both to protect himself/herself and to protect others.
* **Top 5 Safety**. What are the top 5 safety concerns for your new employee’s job at your farm? Include any entrapment risks and hazardous materials.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Safety Risk** | **How to avoid it…** |
| *Example: PTO drive lines* | *Never work around unshielded PTO’s. Don’t step over a PTO. Don’t wear loose fitting clothing around equipment. Let manager know about any unshielded or damaged PTO shields.* |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |
| 4. |  |
| 5. |  |

* **Basic Safety Videos**. Have your employee view [safety videos from the U.S. Agricultural Safety and Health Centers](https://www.nycamh.org/resources/videos.php) (search “dairy safety training video series” on YouTube). This is a 7-part video English and Spanish series that covers basic dairy safety issues.
* **Safety Posters**. Share location of specific safety posters.
* **Drug and Alcohol Policies**. Review your alcohol and drug policy.
* **Smoking**. Where and when is smoking permitted on your farm?
* **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**.
  1. Train your new employee in what PPE to wear and when.
  2. Provide fit testing for workers who must wear safety equipment to prevent inhalation of harmful airborne substances. Provide other tasks for the worker until fit testing is done. Contact NYCAMH for options.

## Your Benefits

* **Meals and Breaks**. Share your policy for meal and rest breaks during the work day.
  1. New York requires a 30 minute, unpaid meal for employees working a shift of 6 hours or more. Generally a day shift must take the meal between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Night and swing shifts take the meal somewhere in the middle of the shift.
  2. No work is permitted during the unpaid meal.
* **Housing**. Tell the employee about the housing that he/she will be provided by the farm. It’s critical to take time to train the employee about housing and set expectations for cleaning and maintenance. See “[Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development, Worker Housing](http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/human-resource-management/worker-housing/)” for more resources.
  1. Orientation Guide for Occupants of Farm Housing, [English](https://blogs.cornell.edu/agworkforce/files/2018/05/Housing-Orientation-1g8nwjz.pdf), [Spanish](https://blogs.cornell.edu/agworkforce/files/2018/04/Housing-Orientation-Spanish-1ln58k9.pdf).
  2. Inspect and prepare housing before a new employee moves in.
  3. Consider providing a welcome basket (fresh sheets, toiletries, pantry staples, etc.)
* **Worker’s Compensation**. Inform your employee that worker’s compensation is available to cover any work-related injuries or illness. It is critical to notify a supervisor right away if a work-related injury or illness occurs.

## Introduction to Work Procedures

* **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).** 
  1. Which SOPs will your new employee need/use?
  2. Are the SOPs up to date and available in the workplace?
  3. Access [SOP resources](http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/human-resource-management/performance/) from Cornell Ag Workforce Development.
* **Training.**
  1. Prepare for training using this resource…Plan, Conduct, Evaluate Training guide
  2. Plan for what your employee needs to learn and how you will teach it.
  3. Prepare needed training materials.
  4. Identify who will be responsible for training your new employee. Introduce the employee to the trainer.
  5. Train your employee using the Tell-Show-Do-Review method.
  6. Evaluate how well your employee learned the content.

## Culture and Connections

* **Welcome Letter.** Include paperwork for them to fill out ahead of time and details they need to know for the first day of work (what time to arrive, where to report, what to wear, etc.)
* **Personal Welcome**. Have an owner or senior manager welcome your new employee and express appreciation. Emphasize the importance of your new employee and your hopes for his/her future with the business, make it personal.
* **Provide Performance Feedback.** Reflect on Day 1 performance and provide feedback to ensure a successful first week.
* **Encourage Questions.** New employees are often afraid to ask questions. Tell employees, “If you don’t know, don’t be afraid to ask, there’s always time for questions.”

## Day 1 Onboarding Evaluation Example Questions

1. Who is your supervisor?
2. What are three important duties of your new job?
3. How should you record your work hours?
4. What are three important safety hazards on this farm?
5. On what day will you be paid?

**Signature of Onboarding Leader**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* The new employee has completed all items to be completed by the end of day 1 in the onboarding plan.

**Signature of New Employee**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* My Onboarding Leader has assisted in my completion of activities that have helped me understand the farm, my position, and expectations as an employee.

# **Items to Complete by the End of Week 1**

It’s important not to overload new employees on Day 1. In this section we’ve included things that do not need to be completed on Day 1. Plan to complete these items during Week 1.

## About the Farm

* **Business Goals**. Explain what the farm’s overall goals are for the year.
* **Organization**.
  1. How does your new employee’s job fit with others?

## About Your Job

* **Wage Statement.** Review the wage statement (pay stub) with each employee. Be careful to explain how each item is calculated for gross pay, explain what each of the deductions are for, and how the net wage is calculated.
* **Employee Goals.** Explain the goals for the new employee.
  1. What are his/her most important tasks?
  2. At what level must those tasks be performed when fully trained?
* **Work Attendance**. Review your policies and guidelines for work attendance.
  1. Is it important for your employee to arrive at work on time? Why?
  2. What if he/she is going to be unavoidably late for work?
* **Personal Phone Calls and Texting.** Be very clear about your expectations for where and when employees can use their personal electronic devices.
  1. Can employees use their devices when working or must they wait until break time?
  2. What about emergencies, how can a family member or friend contact them while at work?

## Safety and Health

* **Basic Safety Videos**. Complete viewing of any [safety videos from the U.S. Agricultural Safety and Health Centers](https://www.nycamh.org/resources/videos.php) (search “dairy safety training video series” on YouTube) that were missed on the first day. What questions does you employee have about farm safety? How should an unsafe situation be reported?
  1. Evaluate learning from the safety videos with 2 or 3 questions about the content.
* **Continue with safety materials and training specific to this job.** Find specific resources from NYCAMH.
* **Create opportunity for employee to ask safety questions.** Do you have any safety questions?
* **Sexual Harassment Policy and Basic Training**.
  1. Provide a copy of your sexual harassment prevention policy.
  2. Explain the basics of what sexual harassment is, and that the behavior is not acceptable in this workplace.
  3. Explain how to report sexual harassment.

## Your Benefits

* **Vacation**. Explain your policy for earning and using vacation days.
  1. How does an employee earn or accumulate vacation days?
  2. How should an employee request a day off? How much lead time is needed for the request?
  3. How is the vacation time recorded?
  4. Who approves the vacation time?
* **Explain Additional Benefits**. Farms offer a variety of benefit plans for employees. Take time in the first week to explain benefits and complete paperwork as needed.
* **Housing**. Ask your employee how the housing is working for them, what questions do they have?
* **Housing Inspection Procedure and Maintenance**. Share your farm policy and procedure for conducting regular housing inspections. Discuss occupant and landlord responsibilities for cleaning and maintenance.
* **Housing Maintenance Request Procedure**. Share your procedure for reporting maintenance needs and communicating about maintenance progress.

## Work Procedure Training

* **Evaluate Training.** Does your employee have the basic knowledge and skill needed to perform essential procedures?
* **Performance Feedback.** Give your employee feedback about their performance at work using the [SCORE feedback model](https://blogs.cornell.edu/agworkforce/files/2018/03/SCORE-Feedback-17fitc5.pdf).

## Culture and Connections

* **Welcome New Employee.** Bring cookies for the team during the employee’s first week of work. Make sure that they have met all the employees on the farm.
* **Take a photo of the new employee.** Display on a farm bulletin board that includes all employees.
* **Record the employee’s birthday for future celebrations.**

## Week 1 Onboarding Evaluation Example Questions

1. When is it OK to use drugs and alcohol at work?
2. Treasure hunt: have the employee find important items at work.
   1. Fire extinguisher.
   2. Emergency phone number.
   3. First aid kit.
   4. Farm address.
3. Observe the new employee performing work, is he/she following the SOP?

**Signature of Onboarding Leader**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* The new employee has completed all items to be completed by the end of week 1 in the Onboarding plan.

**Signature of New Employee**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* My Onboarding Leader has assisted in my completion of activities that have helped me understand the farm, my position, and expectations as an employee.

# **Your Farm Name Onboarding Plan**

# **Items to Complete by the End of Month 1**

## Safety and Health

Depending on their position and type of farm, employees should have additional safety training that is appropriate for their needs. The following list of NYCAMH on-farm trainings also serves as possible training topics to choose for employees.

**Orchard and Vegetable Farms**

* Packing House and Product Line Safety
* Personal Hygiene and Safe Food Handling (GAPS)
* Heat, Sun, Hydration Safety
* Worker Protection Standard (WPS)
* Pesticide Safety
* Tractor and Equipment Safety
* PTO Safety
* Skidsteer/ Forklift Safety
* Safe Lifting and Carrying
* Chainsaw Safety
* Ladder Safety
* Other topics by request

**Dairy or Livestock Farms**

* Personal Protective Equipment
* Tractor and Equipment Safety
* PTO Safety
* Skidsteer Safety
* Mechanical Hazards
* Confined Space Awareness
* Manure Safety
* Animal Handling
* Lockout Tagout
* Shop Safety
* Milking Parlor Safety
* Hazard Communications (Chemical Safety)

## Performance Feedback

* **Review the most important SOP’s again** to answer questions and be sure that learning took place.
* **Provide feedback** about the employee’s overall performance in the first month.
* **Trial Employment Period**
  + If a trial period is used, make a decision about permanent employment status.
  + Some farms may consider making pay adjustments at this time.

## Culture and Connections

* **Employee Concerns or Suggestions.** How should your employee communicate ideas or concerns about his/her job?
* **Talk with the employee about their long-term goals.** How can the farm help him/her achieve those goals?

## Month 1 Onboarding Evaluation Example Questions

1. How can we do better onboarding the next new employee?
2. What else should be included in onboarding?

**Signature of Onboarding Leader**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* The new employee has completed all items to be completed by the end of month 1 in the Onboarding plan.

**Signature of New Employee**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* My Onboarding Leader has assisted in my completion of activities that have helped me understand the farm, my position, and expectations as an employee.

## Links to NYCAMH Farm Safety Resources

* Safety training (for dairy dozen and other topics, first aid/CPR, safety inspections and respiratory fit-testing): <http://www.nycamh.org/programs/farmsafetytrainings/>
* Personal Protective Equipment (worker can order items and ask for technical assistance): <http://www.nycamh.org/programs/ppeonlinecatalog/>
* Brochures, Farmworker Education, Safety Newsletters, Farm Safety Materials, Dairy Safety Training Videos, National Agricultural Safety Database: <http://www.nycamh.org/resources/>
* OSHA NY Dairy LEP Resources: <http://www.nycamh.org/osha-ny-dairy-lep/useful-links/>
* OSHA NY Dairy LEP Training Binder: <http://www.nycamh.org/osha-ny-dairy-lep/>
* OSHA NY Dairy LEP Farm Safety Checklist: <http://www.nycamh.org/osha-ny-dairy-lep/>
* National Farm Medicine Center Farm Mapper: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6iAzwkp6U_s>
* National Farm Medicine Center Farm Mapper: <http://www.marshfieldresearch.org/nfmc/farm-mapper>
* National Farm Medicine Center Farm Hazard Assessment Tool: <https://www.saferfarm.org/>
* Enrollment in Health Network (a mobile health records program): <https://www.migrantclinician.org/services/network/enrollment-in-health-network.html>
* Dairy Safety Training Videos from the High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (HICAHS): <https://www.nycamh.org/resources/videos.php>