

Focus Group Interview Guide

Qualitative Information

Project: **On-farm and ranch education of new and beginning Latino producers in Missouri.**

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1. Latino farmers' perceptions, views, skills, knowledge and awareness about their current sustainable production methods. (30 Minutes).

- a. Would you talk to us about why and how did you become involved in agriculture? If you are currently looking to become a farmer what is motivating you to do it?
- b. What do you know about sustainable production methods?
 - i. Tell us about your current production methods. How do you farm/ranch?
 - ii. Where do you get your inputs for production? Why are you doing it in that way?
 - iii. What do you know about production methods, that seeks to protect your soils and are classified as environmental friendly.
- c. How do you gain skills and knowledge for developing current and future farming and ranching sustainable activities?
 - i. How do you connect with current and new resources of information
 - ii. To what extend will you willing to access informational formal networks?

2. Latino producers' learning needs in sustainable agriculture. (50 minutes)

- a. How your experience has been in getting involved in agriculture/Livestock activities?
 - i. What were the main challenges you deal with?
 - ii. What challenges are you facing now?
- b. How would you differentiate sustainable agriculture, conventional agriculture and organic agriculture?
 - i. What production system might fit your production interest and why you think that way?

- ii. From your point of view, to what extent it is related to Sustainable, conventional u organic agriculture? (please describe)
 - iii. Would you describe the kind of information you might need to help your way in developing sustainable activities?
 - c. If you do livestock production. Would you mind describing the activities you do to manage livestock in the production process?
 - i. How do you manage your grass and pasture supply for your operation?
 - ii. How do you acquire information and new knowledge on grass management?
 - d. If you do not involve livestock production in your farming activities.
 - i. How do you do pest control management (weed, insects, fungus, and other pest)?
 - ii. How do you acquire information and new knowledge to deal with pest control management?
 - e. Sustainable soil management
 - i. What do you know about your soil? Please tell us about your point of view regarding the kind of soil you have and how do you improve its fertility?
 - ii. Why do you think is important to know your tillable soil?
 - iii. Please would you describe the Natural methods do you know to improve soil fertility?

Focus Group Break (10 Minutes)

3. Curriculum development in sustainable production methods. (30 minutes)

- a. To this point in the discussion, what challenges would you likely face for learning sustainable production methods?
- b. What challenges would you likely face for practicing sustainable production methods?
- c. If you are a livestock producer what kind of learning topics would you likely would like to learn about?
- d. If you are not a livestock producer what kind of learning topics would you likely would like to learn about?

- e. Please would you describe the social environment and setting that you think might influence you to attend and learn new skills and knowledge in relation to sustainable production methods?
- f. What are your perceptions about learning theoretical information in a classroom and learning on-site at the farm? Please describe.
- g. How would you describe your best learning environment? Kind of materials, session instructions, panel discussion etc. Please describe.

4. Supporting Latino farmers Social networks (30 minutes)

- a. Tell us about, how are you willing to get information about sustainable production methods?
- b. To what extent would you be able to ask for information to a formal institution such as any University Extension service provider?
- c. What other kind of challenges do you think will need to improve to be able to receive formal technical assistance from non-profit and University extension services? Please expand your explication.
- d. To what extent would you think that grouping in collective action might help to establish links to formal networks?
- e. What might be the challenges in growing social bonds with other Latino farmers?
- f. What those might be in growing social networks with other community resources (such as local input suppliers and other non-Latino farmers?)

End of Focus Group session