

Toolkit for *Existing* Farms

Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



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Introduction

This toolkit was developed to assist DVR staff in working with consumers whose goal is to maintain their existing farm.

This toolkit is designed to assist from the time of the initial conversation through successful closure of the case. The overall process for these cases is not different from any other case. However, the steps/questions are specific to farm cases. The steps/questions vary from other self-employment cases as the majority of farmers who come to DVR for services will typically want to maintain their farm. Because the farm is an already established business many of the steps/ processes for the typical self-employment case are inapplicable.

The information provided in this toolkit is best practice and is meant to help you and your consumer throughout the process; it is not meant to be taken as DVR policy nor does it replace DVR policy related to providing services. *If DVR policy is being referenced it will be italicized and clearly noted as policy.* [Appendix 1](#) states the related DVR policy.

When working with consumers who are interested in maintaining their existing farm, this toolkit should be referenced and used as a resource. You should allow for flexibility, changes in the process, and inclusion of other tools that you find useful to ensure that individual needs are being met.

Please note that this toolkit was not designed for start-up farms or existing farms whose goal is to change their farm operation (e.g., dairy cow farm changing production methods /operations from cattle to goat; dairy cow farm adding/reorganizing to include Artisan cheese making). For these goals, the [Self-Employment Business Start-up Toolkit](#) should be utilized.

For any questions related to this toolkit or the [Self-Employment Business Start-up Toolkit](#), please consult with your supervisor.

We hope that you will find this toolkit to be useful in assisting consumers with disabilities in achieving their goals.

Thank you!

Key Points

The following key points are a quick reference regarding the process found in this toolkit. This can be referenced by DVR staff and shared with consumers to assist them in understanding the process related to maintaining an existing farm.

- DVR assists individuals with disabilities to gain, maintain, or advance in employment.
- DVR is a time limited service.
- Six steps in maintaining existing farm:
 1. Discuss Preliminary Information for Expressed Interest in Maintaining Existing Farm.
 2. Initial Appointments with DVR Staff to Discuss Existing Farm & Consumer's Needs for Maintaining the Farm.
 3. Farm Assessment Referral and Follow-up.
 4. Development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for the Occupation.
 5. Provision of Services Listed in the IPE.
 6. Follow-Along and Closure.
- Consumers can choose to continue farming or change their occupation if they wish.
- The **viability** of the farm (the overall financial health of the farming operations) and the **vocational feasibility** (the consumer's ability to maintain or continue with his/her goal based on their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice) will be assessed.
- A farm needs to be viable in order for DVR to provide rehabilitation technology services and/or make a financial contribution for maintaining the farm.
- Individuals receiving DVR services need to make informed choices throughout their case as it relates to their goal of maintaining their farm.
- DVR staff, along with a Rural Rehabilitation Specialist (RRS) will assist the individual in identifying the individual's limitations/barriers and how they relate to performing the necessary operations of the farm.
- Recommendations will be provided on how those limitations can be addressed in order to assist the individual in achieving his/her goal of maintaining their farm. This could include accommodations, job restructuring, task re-assignment, or eliminating an operation/task.
- DVR will provide services that are determined necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the consumer in achieving their IPE goal at the least cost to DVR. This is important because DVR is a tax payer supported program.
- Services included in an IPE may include guidance and counseling, assessment, medical restoration, rehabilitation technology, etc.
- DVR has policies and fee schedules related to providing services that will be applied to all cases.
- DVR will close a case as "rehabilitated" after all agreed to services have been provided and the consumer has achieved and maintained their goal for 90 days.
- Consumers may request a copy of the current fee schedule from DVR staff.

Roles and Steps in the Process

DVR's Role in the Process:

- Guiding and counseling by the DVR staff as needed.
- Explaining DVR's, the consumer's, and any other organizations' [e.g., AgrAbility, FARM (Farm Assessment Rehabilitation Methods) Program, Farm Center, vendors'] role in the process.
- Helping the consumer determine vocational feasibility and needs related to the goal within the context of their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.
- Discussing and communicating to the consumer what services may be provided and why, including how DVR decides whether or not they will support the proposed goal.
- Explaining DVR's fiscal policy e.g., comparable benefits and services, payment methods (direct pay, purchase order, advance payments), and purchasing guidelines (e. g. when the cost of the goods or services exceed \$1500 comparison prices are required).
- Deciding which assessments, if any, will be used.
- If needed, identifying resources that may assist the consumer in reaching their vocational goal.
- Supporting the consumer by acting as a liaison between consultants and other vendors as appropriate.
- Providing a written explanation why a service has been denied, reduced, suspended or terminated along with their appeal rights and Client Assistance Program (CAP) information.
- Meeting with the consumer and Rural Rehabilitation Specialist (RRS) on the farm (if possible) to discuss accommodation recommendations, review options regarding the accommodations, and if possible reach consensus on what services are necessary and appropriate for the consumer.

Consumers Role in the Process:

- Identifying existing assets, both personal and financial (knowledge, skills, equipment, support networks, etc.).
- Identifying potential weaknesses, both personal and financial (e.g., skill deficiencies, high debt load, cash flow crunch, inability to hire help, commodity prices affecting farm profit, changing weather conditions impacting farming operations, etc.).
- Completing agreed upon assignments and tasks.
- Demonstrating progress as outlined in their IPE.
- Participating in agreed upon services.
- Providing information as requested to assist in achieving the IPE goal (e.g., medical information, farm related information).
- Making informed choices related to services.
- Meeting with the DVR staff and Rural Rehabilitation Specialist (RRS) on the farm (if possible) to discuss accommodation recommendations, review of options regarding the accommodations, and if possible reach consensus on what services are necessary and appropriate.

Rural Rehabilitation Specialists (See [Appendix 5](#)) Role in the Process:

- Becoming familiar with the DVR process for working with consumers with existing farms.
- Becoming familiar with DVR's purchasing processes and guidelines.
 - Completing assessments as referrals are received within agreed upon timeframes.
 - Working collaboratively with DVR staff to complete the necessary services for the consumer upon receipt of a purchase order within the agreed upon timelines.
 - Recommending services and goods to address the limitations identified in the referral request.
- Identify local community resources that may assist DVR staff and consumers through the process.
- Act as a resource, through collaboration with DVR staff, to assist the consumer in reaching their employment goal.
- Meeting with DVR staff and the consumer on the farm (if possible) to discuss accommodation recommendations, review of options regarding the accommodations, and if possible reach consensus on what services are necessary and appropriate for the consumer.

Steps in the Process:

Listed below are the six steps for working with a consumer who is interested in maintaining an existing farm (full description provided on following pages):

1. Discuss Preliminary Information for Expressed Interest in Maintaining Existing Farm
2. Initial Appointments to discuss Existing Farm & Consumers Needs to Maintain Farming Operation
3. Referral and completion of Farm Assessment
4. Development of the IPE for the Occupation
5. Complete Services listed on IPE
6. Follow Along and Case Closure

Step 1

Discuss Preliminary Information for Expressed Interest in Maintaining Existing Farm

The following items should be discussed with and explained to consumers whose goal is to maintain their existing farms. The information should be provided in a format appropriate for the consumer. DVR staff should take the time necessary to ensure the consumer understands what is being communicated. Check for understanding throughout the process.

- DVR has only one purpose - “to provide VR services for individuals with disabilities so that such individuals may prepare for and engage in **gainful** employment”.
- DVR is a time limited service looking at identifying the individual limitations of the consumer, removing the barriers to employment, with the understanding that the barriers being addressed are the ones that are needed for the farmer to maintain their farming operations as agreed to in the IPE.
- He/she can continue farming or change their occupation if they wish. If he/she is interested in changing occupations, exploration of career options or a vocational evaluation may be appropriate services to explore in [Step 2](#). If the consumer is unsure of their vocational options, the Farm Link resource in [Appendix 3](#) may be of assistance.
- Farmers who are interested in retiring from farming may have options related to selling or leasing their land, building, and operations. If the consumer is unsure of their options, the Farm Link resource in [Appendix 3](#) may be of assistance.
- The Consumer’s, DVR’s, and RSS’s roles in the process. (See [Pages 4 & 5](#).)
- The Farm Process Outline in [Appendix 6](#) and the six steps for existing farms in this toolkit.
- DVR’s funding policies and procedures including spending authority levels. (See [Appendix 1](#).)
- If the consumer is not the sole owner of the farm, i.e., has a business partner, please refer to the [Self-Employment Start-up Business Toolkit](#) for how these cases should be handled. Note: rehabilitation technology equipment needed for the consumer to maintain their employment is not subject to the rate of ownership cost percentage.
- The viability of the farm (the overall financial health of the farming operation) will be assessed by the RRS/vendor.

DVR requires that a farm be viable in order for DVR to provide rehabilitation technology services and/or make a financial contribution for maintaining the farm.

- DVR will also consider vocational feasibility (the consumer's ability to maintain or continue with his/her goal based on their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice) when determining whether or not they will support the farmer's goal to maintain his/her farming operation.
- DVR will provide services that are determined necessary and appropriate to meet the consumer's needs to achieve the IPE goal at the least cost to DVR (e.g., when considering used equipment- usage, wear, and features need to be similar). This is important because DVR is a tax payer supported program.
- Comparable benefits should be discussed and what is exempt from the exploration of comparable benefits (e.g., rehabilitation technology). (See [Appendix 1.](#))
- The DVR fee schedule and exception process should be discussed. (See [Appendix 1.](#))
- Consumers can voluntarily contribute toward the cost of services in their IPE, but it is not a requirement (e.g., trade in, in-kind contributions such as completing modifications themselves, cost share when purchasing a piece of equipment, etc.). (See [Appendix 1.](#))
- Consumers need to make continual progress toward the goal within a reasonable timeframe.
- Farm assessment typical timeframes are:
 - Ten days for initial statement of findings from the date of the appointment with the consumer.
 - Complete written assessment within 60 working days from the date of the purchase order.
 - Note: if additional quotes or information is requested the report may not be completed within the 60 day timeframe.

Busy seasons on a farm such as spring planting and fall harvesting could impact the consumer's ability to participate in a timely manner in the assessment process which may impact the timeframes.

To ensure the IPE is being developed in 90 days staff should work with consumer to ensure the case is progressing in a timely manner. Upfront work should be conducted as soon as possible to allow the Farm Assessment referral to be completed and the assessment report received back in a timely manner. If necessary and IPE extension can be requested, but most cases should have IPE's developed within the appropriate timeframe.

Basic information on farm cases:

- Average time frame of a DVR farm plan from IPE development to successful (26) closure in FFY2008 was 16 months.
- Costs for farm cases: No matter the plan type, the services and costs of those services for a case are dependent on what is necessary and appropriate for the individualized consumer to achieve his/her IPE goal. For some cases we may provide services that have a cost associated with them and some cases will have services with no cost associated with them (e.g., guidance and counseling, paid for by other resources). We should be spending no more or no less on a case than what is necessary for the achievement of the IPE goal.

Expectations and requirements related to closing a case successfully. (See [Step 6.](#))

Step 2

Initial Appointments with DVR Staff to Discuss Existing Farm & Consumer's Needs for Maintaining the Farm

After reviewing the information listed in [Step 1](#), if the consumer still wants DVR's assistance in maintaining their existing farm, additional appointments should be scheduled. The information in Step 2 is provided to assist the consumer in determining their goal as well as begin to identify their service needs as it relates to achieving their goal. DVR staff can also use other activities not listed here that they have found useful.

To ensure the IPE is being developed in 90 days staff should work with consumer to ensure the case is progressing in a timely manner. Upfront work should be conducted as soon as possible to allow the Farm Assessment referral to be completed and the assessment report received back in a timely manner. If necessary and IPE extension can be requested, but most cases should have IPE's developed within the appropriate timeframe. (See [Appendix 1](#).)

It is also suggested that the consumer be notified of what will occur in these meetings to allow them to prepare (as appropriate) for the discussions.

1. Initial Discussion of Interests and Goal:

For most farmers, farming is their way of life and they will want to maintain their farm as their employment goal. If you have concerns with the consumer's ability to maintain or continue with this goal (vocational feasibility), counseling and guidance should be provided. If the consumer expresses an interest in changing their employment goal or if there is an agreement on exploring an alternative employment goal, **DVR staff should use the same counseling and steps he or she would use to assist any consumer in determining their interests and vocational goal.** The consumer should also be provided with the Farm Link Program information provided in [Appendix 3](#).

As with all IPE's, the goal needs to be consistent with the consumers strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. The consumer should be given the full opportunity to explore their options as appropriate. Together, the consumer and DVR staff should determine the goal that will be listed on the IPE.

2. Discussion of Farm Operations for the Farm Assessment Referral:

Some consumers may no longer be able to perform all the tasks associated with operating their farm. However this does not mean that they are not able to complete some of the operations with accommodations, assistance from family members/ employees, or elimination of operations that may no longer be necessary. For examples of farm operations refer to [Appendix 2](#).

A glossary of farm related terms are included in [Appendix 5](#) to assist DVR staff in understanding terms that may come up during a farm visit or in the farm assessment report.

DVR staff and the consumer should take the time necessary to discuss the current operations of the farm and who is responsible for carrying out each of those operations. As part of this discussion, restructuring of job tasks, assistance from others, assigning tasks to others and/or elimination of activities should be discussed as possible outcomes from the assessment. In addition all services provided should be proportionate to the size/scope/style of the operation as it relates to the work activities and within the context of the industry standards.

An example of task reassignment would be a consumer identifying a task he/she currently performs but is having difficulty performing due to their disability. They mention that they are able to perform a task that another family member completes. If it is appropriate for the family member to switch tasks, then the limitation caused by the disability has been addressed and accommodated.

When discussing these topics with a consumer it is recommended that you discuss with the consumer what tasks/operations they are having difficulties with versus asking the consumer what they feel they need. If you ask them what they feel they need you may get a list of items that are not appropriate or the best method/ mode for addressing the barrier. By discussing the difficulties they are having you can first identify the barriers and then together, or through further assessment, determine the best way to address them.

As part of this process, it might be helpful for the consumer to consult with other farmers or others in similar aspects of farming to evaluate his/her farm operations for ideas and possible solutions to the difficulties being encountered by the consumer.

3. Review Necessary Medical Documentation for Referral for Farm Assessment:

After determining the farm operations that the counselor and consumer have agreed are problematic for the individual, determine whether there is sufficient medical information in the file for a referral for the farm assessment. Existing medical documentation should be used first. If needed, connect with the consumer's current or previous medical provider(s) to obtain additional information. Writing a letter to the consumer's medical provider(s) with specific questions related to their limitations can assist in obtaining the information needed for the assessment. If further information is still necessary (that existing information does not cover) a referral for a Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) can be made.

If it is unclear how much information is needed by the vendor for the assessment, the vendor should be contacted and asked what they will need. When providing referral information, any information beyond what is considered coordinating information for the IPE, should not be provided without a *signed release* from the consumer.

Any assessments needed for the development of the IPE can be provided prior to the development of the IPE.

Step 3

Farm Assessment Referral and Follow-up

Farm Assessment Referral:

A Farm Assessment is typically provided through Easter Seals FARM (Farm Assessment Rehabilitation Methods) Program or alternative vendor as appropriate. The assessment should look at the:

- Viability of farm (the overall financial health of the farming operation)
- Farm operation
- Problem areas related to limitations
- Rehabilitation technology recommendations
- Recommendation of other services or accommodations that may assist the farmer in maintaining the farming operations

When making the referral for the farm assessment, it is important to clearly define to the vendor what DVR wants to have assessed. Provide the vendor information on:

- **Functional abilities of the consumer (medical information)**
- **The farming operation(s) the consumer has identified as having difficulty performing**
- **Specific questions that should be addressed**
- **Other information as requested**

Ensure that a release is obtained as needed. (Link to confidentiality guidance piece: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/knowledgebase/default.htm>).

It is important to explain to the consumer the time frame for these assessments. Typical timeframes are:

- Ten days for initial statement of findings from the date of the appointment with the consumer.
- Completed written assessment within 60 working days from the date of the purchase order.
 - Note: If additional quotes or information is requested, the report may not be completed within the 60 day timeframe.

Busy seasons on a farm such as spring planting and fall harvesting could impact the consumer's ability to participate in a timely manner in the assessment process which may impact the timeframes.

To ensure the IPE is being developed in 90 days staff should work with consumer to ensure the case is progressing in a timely manner. Upfront work should be conducted as soon as possible to allow the Farm Assessment referral to be completed and the assessment report received back in a timely manner. If necessary and IPE extension can be requested, but most cases should have IPE's developed within the appropriate timeframe.

It is also important to discuss with the consumer that DVR may not purchase everything that is recommended in the assessment. DVR will purchase services that are agreed to as necessary and appropriate for the consumer to achieve their IPE goal **at the least cost to DVR**. This is important because DVR is a tax payer supported program.

The DVR staff should accompany the vendor to the initial farm visit for the statement of findings. This will allow the counselor, consumer, and vendor to see the farm, the operations/ tasks performed on the farm, current equipment used, and a better understanding of how the consumer's disability impacts their job. *This will also allow a discussion of the farm operations the consumer must complete, options related to addressing those limitations (accommodate task, eliminate task, etc.), and answering of any questions prior to the assessment being completed.* Please refer to [Appendix 7](#) for farm visit planning and safety tips.

Farm Assessment Follow-up:

It is highly recommended that after receiving the *Statement of Findings* that it is **reviewed with the consumer and/or the vendor and that any questions or concerns are addressed prior to the detailed assessment being completed.** Once the written farm assessment is completed and received, **DVR staff should schedule a meeting to review the report with both the consumer and the vendor, at the farm.** By meeting together and in person, any questions that are raised can be addressed at that time. Please refer to [Appendix 7](#) for farm visit planning and safety tips.

Counselors are not expected to be experts in farm cases. However, counselors should feel comfortable with addressing any questions or concerns they have with the report or findings to the Rehabilitation Specialist prior to or during the review with the consumer.

It should be explained to the consumer that DVR will purchase services agreed to as needed to achieve the IPE goal **at the least cost to DVR**. This is important because DVR is a tax payer supported program.

- **Viability of the Farm:**

If the report lists concerns with the viability of the existing farm, the counselor, consumer, and vendor should discuss ways that this can be addressed. *When the plan is amended this should be the first item addressed.* Some resources to assist with the viability of the farm may include: UW-Extension, Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Farm Center, local Bank, etc. Some of these resources can assist the consumer with such things as debt analysis restructuring, cash flow projections, financial management planning, risk management, etc. DVR staff are encouraged to review the resource section in [Appendix 3](#) in order to have a basic knowledge of the resources available to assist farmers.

For DVR to support an existing farm, it is important that the farm is viable and will meet the consumer's employment needs. DVR staff and the consumer should together decide how to move forward when the viability of the farm is called into question. DVR staff can assist in making referrals, and as appropriate, fund services to assist the consumer in addressing the viability of his/her farm. DVR can also provide services at this time to

address the disability (guidance and counseling, medical restoration, etc.) if needed. However, prior to moving forward with support of the farm, the viability needs to be addressed and resolved.

- **Rehabilitation Technology Recommendations:**

The farm assessment report should include rehabilitation technology recommendations that will assist the consumer in performing the necessary operations of the farm. The report should list three estimates, from three different vendors (as available) for items recommended. If three estimates are not listed in the report, a rationale should be included (e.g., sole source provider). If there are any concerns about a recommendation or estimates provided by the vendor in the farm assessment, this should be discussed amongst the parties and consensus reached at this meeting.

The determination on whether a recommended item is rehabilitation technology should be based on the purpose of the item for that consumer. It is important to keep in mind that if an item or device is a necessary accommodation for a consumer to maintain their employment, it is irrelevant if it will also create capital improvement. Any questions related to specific items for a specific case should be discussed with your supervisor, team, and Policy Analyst as needed. Whether DVR considers an item an accommodation or capital improvement for the purpose of the DVR program does not mean the IRS will view it the same way. A consumer should consult with the IRS regarding what should and should not be reported related to DVR services and purchases.

- **Other Recommendations:**

Other items and services may be recommended to assist the consumer in maintaining their farming operation. These may include occupational tools or classes at a local technical college on such things as farm management or financial management.

If a recommended item is not for the purpose of rehabilitation technology but, is determined by the consumer and counselor to be necessary and appropriate to maintain the farming operation, the DVR fee schedule Addendum B, DVR purchasing policies, and the exception process need to be followed.

NOTE: A completed assessment should list equipment requested by the consumer that the RRS/ Vendor did not agree was necessary or appropriate. If a consumer requests additional equipment/service(s) from DVR the report should be referenced to determine if it was an item that the RRS did not feel was necessary. If it was not, it is recommended that DVR staff consult with the RRS/vendor and/or DVR supervisor/director on how to proceed. If appropriate, DVR staff can request the RRS/vendor do a follow-up visit to the farm to assess whether or not the equipment/service being requested is needed to accommodate the disability and/or to maintain the farming operation.

Step 4

Development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for the Occupation

After working through [Step 3](#), the IPE should be written with the goal that was identified and agreed to by the consumer and DVR. If appropriate the *goal should be specific to the farming operation(s) that the consumer is working toward maintaining*. A description and appraisal of why this goal is appropriate, given the consumers strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice, should be documented in the IPE case note.

The plan type for these cases will typically be restoration as the majority of services that will be provided are to address disability barriers.

Examples of employment goals:

- Full time employment, maintaining operation of milking cows in milking parlor.
- Part time employment, maintaining farm operation of breeding livestock.

All services included on the plan should be services that are agreed to as necessary and appropriate toward achieving the IPE goal.

It is important that the IPE list all of the services that are needed and known, at the time the IPE is developed such as:

- **Guidance and Counseling** - expectations from DVR, referrals to various programs or medical professionals, developing support systems, problem solving, etc.
- **Viability of Farm** - if the assessment identified the viability of the farm to be of concern, the plan should include services (e.g., referrals to available resources) to assist the consumer in addressing the viability of the farm. **The viability of the farm should be addressed prior to moving forward with support of the farm.**
- **Restoration** - medical services i.e., pain management, medical services.

DVR can provide additional services while addressing the viability of the farm that are determined needed to address/ resolve additional barriers (e.g., restoration) identified as necessary and appropriate in order to achieve the IPE goal. .

*All services in support of the farm that have been determined necessary for the achievement of the IPE goal should be included on the IPE. DVR staff should ensure the IPE services and progress measures are written in incremental steps - with the viability of the farm being addressed **prior** to the each successive service being provided.*

- **Rehabilitation Technology** - services agreed to as needed to support the operations of the farm.
- **Other services** identified as needed at this time to support the operations of the farm.

If there is a disagreement on the services that will be provided, the consumer should be given their appeal rights and CAP contact information.

DVR staff should remind the consumer that DVR does not have a required consumer contribution. A consumer can voluntarily choose to contribute toward the cost of their IPE services for example: equipment trade-in, completing modifications on own, cost share of item, etc.

Also explain that there may be some items or services that will be necessary for the consumer to contribute toward or purchase themselves if DVR determines they are not necessary for the IPE or if the consumer chooses to purchase a service that is at a cost higher than what DVR has determined they will contribute.

DVR staff should review with the consumer DVR's purchasing process, fee schedules, spending level authority and amounts that require approvals. It is also important when establishing funding parameters, to remember that DVR does not require comparable benefits exploration for assessments and rehabilitation technology. For services not exempt from comparable benefits, comparable benefits should be sought. (See [Appendix 1.](#))

Progress measures in the IPE should be positive as well as measurable, services should be incremental. The IPE should include the consumers responsibilities related to closure criteria.

Step 5

Provision of Services Listed in the IPE

During this step the individual is successfully obtaining the services and completing the progress measures listed in the IPE. If the person does not successfully complete the activities that are needed to reach their employment goal or is not making progress towards their goal, then it is important to ascertain why and address this with the consumer.

The IPE should be amended at this time as needed to:

- Include additional services identified as necessary and appropriate to achieve the IPE goal.
- Address/resolve any additional barriers identified as necessary and appropriate in order to achieve the IPE goal.
- Amend the IPE goal if needed.
- Address any progress concerns as needed.

Step 6 Follow-Along and Closure

During the follow-along period it is critical that DVR staff and the consumer remain in contact and have frequent updates on the progress of the case. There can be a tendency during this step for staff to be less involved and feel more at ease since the consumer is working. However, this is a time when the counselor and other DVR staff should be more involved and actively engaging with the consumer to ensure things are going well on the farm. DVR staff are strongly encouraged to visit the farm, connect with the consumer, continue to provide guidance and counseling, and provide other supports as needed.

Additional resources determined as needed should be provided, following all purchasing policy and procedures and amending the IPE as appropriate. (See [Appendix 1.](#)) DVR staff should ensure all items and services purchased for the consumer were received, the consumer was satisfied with the services and case note the results in the case file.

The 90 day clock does not begin until all services DVR has agreed to provide have been delivered. When to start the 90 day clock should be mutually agreed upon. To determine if the consumer can be closed as successfully rehabilitated after 90 days:

- The closure criteria is the same as it is for all rehabilitation closures (*90 days of at least a gross minimum wage at the level agreed upon (full time, half time, etc.), stable on the job, etc.*)
- For farm cases the minimum wage is based on the business generating the income, where the consumer is sole owner. This is not necessarily the same as the consumer's income as they may be reinvesting the money into the farm, paying employees, and not drawing an actual income at that time.
- The consumer's business must have brought in the equivalent of gross minimum wage times the number of hours per week that has been agreed upon in the IPE (10 hours, 20 hours, full time- calculated at 40 hours) for each of the three consecutive months.

Example: 20 hours (# of hours/wk. the IPE states this consumer will work) x \$6.50/hr (min. wage) x 4.3 (# of weeks in a month) = \$559/mo. (sustained for 3 consecutive months)

These earnings must be documented through the consumer providing DVR a brief letter stating that "... the monthly gross income figures from my business for September 2009 is ..., October 2009 is ..., and November 2009 is ...". If there is a cost for providing this information, DVR can assist with these expenses as determined appropriate.

See below for special requirements for consumers achieving TWW or SGA.

After all closure criteria have been met the case can be closed successfully.

Documentation for SSA cost reimbursement wage or self-employment claim:

*Consumers receiving benefits should be reminded that they are responsible for reporting any changes to their annual earnings or resources to the Social Security Administration. Failure to do so can result in over payment and subject to collections by SSA.

If the consumer will have earnings at SGA **DVR will need wage documentation demonstrating SGA earnings for 9 out of 12 consecutive months.**

How SSA looks at income for reimbursement is different than how DVR looks at income for closure.

- For self-employed individuals SSA looks at net income minus Work Incentive Deductions to determine if the consumer has earnings at TWW or SGA.
- The VRC must engage the consumer to determine what his/her net income will be and if any work incentive deductions will be utilized. This information will help determine if DVR will be able to make a claim on the file and if wage documentation should be obtained.
- The counselor and consumer should determine how to obtain the necessary wage documentation. The following are acceptable types of wage documentation:
 - Annual 1040 income tax returns- for SSA self employed cases
 - Quarterly FICA Documentation
 - 1040-ES- estimated tax payment if taxes not available- determined on individual basis
 - Schedule F for farmers

Please note: UI data is not available for self-employed consumers or farmers.

Please refer to the [Working with Social Security Consumers Directive](#) for specific requirements when working with SSI/SSDI consumers.

Appendix 1 DVR Policy

VR policy states:

VR services are any services described in a plan for employment necessary to assist a consumer in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining an employment outcome that is consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of the consumer.

DVR fee schedule and purchasing requirements related to costs: (requests that exceed the fee schedule require approval through the exception process)

Occupational Tools and Equipment	Up to \$3,000	Obtain 3 estimates
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There is no fee schedule for rehabilitation technology items. When purchasing these items as well as other items DVR purchasing policy and procedures should be followed. These include:

- For purchases of goods and services not covered by specific contract or fee schedules, comparisons among three vendors should be sought, when appropriate, the lowest price will be the maximum that DVR will contribute to the purchase, in the absence of those, the usual, customary and reasonable rate charged for the service, not to exceed the rate charged other public agencies, will be used.
- In all purchasing, the consumer may choose his or her preferred vendor. In making this selection, if the consumer chooses a product or vendor that exceeds the maximum rate of payment established by the above procedures, the consumer will be responsible for the excess amount unless an exception has been granted.
- Information supporting purchasing decisions must include:
 - Information supporting the determination of the rate of payment for purchases of goods and services of \$500 or greater that are not covered by contracts or fee schedules.
 - Information documenting price comparisons among three vendors for purchases of goods and services costing \$1,500 or more and not covered by specific contract or fee schedules. The lowest price will be the maximum the DVR will contribute to the purchase.
 - Information supporting requests to purchase goods and services that exceed the price established by price comparisons, fee schedules or contracts. These require approval from DVR management.
- DVR staff must also ensure they receive approval for amounts outside of their spending authority.

Exception Requests

DVR consumers can request exceptions to the DVR fee schedule by completing an [exception request form](#). If you need assistance in completing this form or need this form in a different format please notify your counselor.

Comparable Benefits

Before providing any VR services to a consumer, except for services exempt from determination of comparable benefits, DVR staff must determine if comparable benefits or services exist under any program and whether those benefits or services are available to the consumer. If available, the comparable benefits and services shall be used in whole or in part to cover the cost of VR services, unless such determination would interrupt or delay:

- The progress of the consumer toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the plan for employment.
- An immediate job placement.
- The provision of such service to any consumer at extreme medical risk.

The following services are exempt from determination of comparable benefits:

- Assessment for eligibility and plan for employment needs.
- VR counseling and guidance.
- Referral and other services to secure services from other agencies.
- Placement services.
- Rehabilitation technology.

Comparable benefits do not include awards and scholarships based on merit.

Consumer Case Services Purchase Authority:

VR Counselors, Consumer Case Coordinators (CCC):

- Up to but not to exceed \$5,000

Contract and Procurement Officer, VR Supervisors, DVR WDA Directors:

- Up to but not to exceed \$25,000

BCS Director and Central Office DWD Managers (If BCS Director or designee is not available request should go to DVR Deputy Administrator):

- \$25,000 and above

EDGAR

34 **CFR 76.533 Acquisition of real property; construction.**

No State or subgrantee may use its grant or subgrant for acquisition of real property or for construction unless specifically permitted by the authorizing statute or implementing regulations for the program

Extensions

DVR will complete development of the IPE as soon as possible. The IPE must be completed within 90 days of the date of eligibility (or activation from the Order of Selection waiting list - whichever is later). Extensions to the 90 day limit may be requested by the counselor **if** circumstances beyond the control of the consumer and DVR make an extension necessary. An example of a circumstance beyond the control of the consumer and DVR is if the IPE cannot be written without an evaluation which cannot be completed within the 90 day period. Exception requests must be approved by the consumer, the counselor, and DVR management before they are granted.

Requests for Extensions of Eligibility Determination and IPE Development Timelines

Requests must be made in writing, by a counselor, to a DVR WDA Manager. The request must document the following:

1. The circumstances beyond the control of the consumer and DVR that create the need for an extension, and/or
2. The specific assessment need that cannot be provided within the required time period or as part of the IPE development or implementation process
3. The specific date by which the decision (eligibility or completion of IPE development) will be made,
4. The steps to be taken to complete the process, and a timeline for those steps,
5. Consumer agreement with the extension.

Appendix 2

Listing of Farm Operations

For staff that may not be familiar with farming, this list is provided to give you an idea of some possible farm operations your consumer may be performing as well as a sense of how operations can be broken down.

- Milking cows in stanchion barn or milking parlor.
- Feeding cows in a transition stanchion barn using feed cart, wheelbarrow, or whatever works.
- Feeding livestock in a feedlot or free-stall barn.
- Grinding and /or mixing feed.
- Developing feed rations for livestock.
- Moving feed from storage to cattle (silage, baled hay ear/ shelled corn, etc.).
- Moving/sorting livestock in barns, feedlots or pastures.
- Collecting eggs.
- Constructing fixing, moving fences/ pens.
- Vaccinating, dehorning, castrating, medicating livestock.
- Loading/ hauling livestock.
- Breeding livestock i.e., artificial insemination.
- Cleaning livestock barns/sheds (manure removal).
- Hauling manure.
- Driving tractor, skid loader, combine etc. to till, plant, harvest and store crops.
- Hauling crops from field to storage or market.
- Doing general farm maintenance, repairing buildings and equipment.
- Hand weeding of crops/ gardens.
- Hand picking/ harvesting of fruit and vegetable crops.
- Managing hired labor.
- Doing farm bookkeeping/ financial management.
- Working with lenders, accountants, lawyers, and other professionals.
- Doing farm taxes.
- Working with government agencies on farm programs and compliance issues.
- Developing marketing plans.
- Working with customers (direct marketing).

Appendix 3 Resources

Farm Related Websites

WI Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/core/agriculture/agriculture.jsp>

Farm Center, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

- Farm Link Program
- Financial Counseling & Advising
- Farm mediation
- Legal Guide
- Information & Outreach
- Vocational Careers
- Stray Voltage- Rural Electric Power Services Program and more

<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/mktg/agriculture/farm-center/financial-counseling/index.jsp>

AgrAbility

<http://www.agrabilityproject.org/index.cfm>

Easter Seals - FARM (Farm Assessment Rehabilitation Methods) Program

http://wi.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=WIMA_agricultural_services

University of WI- Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

<http://www.wiscash.uwex.edu/>

University of WI Extension- Agricultural and Natural Resources

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/>

Wisconsin AgConnection

<http://www.wisconsinagconnection.com/>

Wisconsin Technical College System

<http://www.wtcsystem.edu/index.htm>

Financial

Farm Center, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/mktg/agriculture/farm-center/financial-counseling/index.jsp>

Center for Dairy Profitability

<http://cdp.wisc.edu/>

Dairy 2020 Initiative

<http://www.commerce.state.wi.us/BD/BD-AgriBusiness.html>

United States Department of Agriculture- Farm Service Agency

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

<http://www.wheda.com/>

Wisconsin Department of Commerce

<http://commerce.state.wi.us/>

Wisconsin Small Business Administration

<http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/wi/index.html>

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

<http://www.score.org/index.html>

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

<http://www.wfbf.com/>

Assistive Technology

Easter Seals - FARM (Farm Assessment Rehabilitation Methods) Program

http://wi.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=WIMA_agricultural_services

The Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access

<http://www.assistivetech.net/>

Department of Health Services

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/>

Breaking New Ground Outreach Program, Purdue University

<http://cobweb.ecn.purdue.edu/~agenhtml/ABE/Extension/BNG/Outreach%20Program/outreach.html>

ABLEDATA

<http://www.abledata.com/>

Appendix 4 Assessment Examples

Easter Seals Statements of Finding Assessment Sample

Client
Case Number
Telephone
Address

Referral

Dear VR Counselor:

As a result of your referral, I visited the Mr. Farmer farm on September 00, 2008, and talked with Mr. Farmer and his wife, Ms Farmer. This is the statement of findings on that farm assessment.

Background

During the farm visit, we discussed the general operation of the farm, the current make-up of the farm, some of the limitations affecting his farm work, some possibilities for accommodation, and future considerations.

Mr. Farmer owns a farm of 125 acres, of which 115 acres are tillable and planted to corn, small grains, and hay. Mr. Farmer grew up in the neighborhood on a farm owned by his parents. Mr. Farmer bought his present property several years ago, and he operates it as a dairy farm. He also rented his parents' farm of 180 acres. He reported that, until his accident, they had milked up to 100 cows. Because he was unable to milk and perform other farm tasks, they reduced the herd to 40 cows and he discontinued renting his parents' farm. Recently, he sold the dairy herd.

Two weeks before my visit, Mr. Farmer and Ms. Farmer had purchased a herd of milking goats and begun a dairy goat operation. They reported milking 140 goats, twice each day; they have another 100 head of young goats being raised for herd replacements and expansion. They mentioned that their goal is to be milking 300 by the end of 2009. They are removing the cow stalls from the dairy barn, and they have installed a twenty-stall, swing-10 unit milking parlor for the goats in a corner of the barn near the milk house. They have done much of the construction work themselves, but they hired a local milking equipment dealer to install the milking equipment, and they hire occasional help with renovating the barn's interior.

Mr. Farmer indicated that he has had no prior experience raising goats but has done extensive research in goat management, seeking advice from his feed supplier and contacting a number of dairy goat producers. He seemed to be excited about his operation. Working with smaller animals, in dairy goat production, allows Mr. Farmer to adapt conditions to meet his limitations, operate a farm, work with animals, and earn a living.

Along with farming, Mr. Farmer used to work off-farm at an area farm equipment manufacturer. He stated that, while he was working there, he was injured on February 00, 2005 when a feed mixer fell on his head. He sustained head trauma and tore ligaments in his neck. Mr. Farmer indicated that he has constant headaches, which, at times, are so painful that they prevent him from working. Mr. Farmer reported that he has constant dizziness, difficulty in maintaining balance, and neck pain. During the visit, Mr. Farmer used a cane to assist himself in walking around the farmstead. He mentioned that walking on uneven ground and bending forward make it difficult for him to keep his balance; he reported falling frequently.

He stated that he has no feeling in his right arm, his left arm “cramps up,” he has pain in his right shoulder and upper back, difficulty raising his right arm above his shoulder, tingling in his left arm when he lifts over 20 to 25 pounds, and some short-term memory loss. Mr. Farmer indicated that cold and rainy weather increase his headaches, and neck and back pain.

He reported that his doctor has told him not to drive a vehicle and not to operate machinery such as tractors. Mr. Farmer stated that he cannot drive a vehicle and is not to operate machinery such as tractors. He did report driving a tractor occasionally. Most of his cropping tasks are done by his father.

Considering his limitations in the areas of driving and operating equipment, Mr. Farmer and I addressed only those tasks associated with the goat milking enterprise.

Problem Areas

- **Closing parlor stalls**

Mr. Farmer’s milking parlor places the goats at a level where he is able to reach straight ahead. There are ten goats on each side of the operator’s area. When each side is full, and when each set of goats has been milked, Mr. Farmer reaches about four feet across the platform to pull cable handles that lock or unlock pipes holding the goats in place. He reported that repeatedly reaching forward increases the pain in his back and neck. Bending somewhat forward and then straightening up increase his dizziness.

Options being considered include extending the pull cables to locate the handles in the immediate area of the operator.

- **Carrying milker units**

Mr. Farmer uses ten milker units. These are connected to an overhead pipeline that moves the milk directly from the goats to the cooling and storage tank in the milk house. Before each milking, Mr. Farmer carries the units, two at a time, from the milk house to the parlor and connects the vacuum and milk hoses to the pipeline. At the end of each milking, Mr. Farmer must disconnect the hoses, and carry them back the milk house in order to wash them and the inside of the pipeline. It is about 25' from the milk house wash tanks to the parlor. The milk house floor is 12" higher than the parlor-level floor. The walkway to the parlor is sloping and obstructed by a curb and threshold. Carrying the units with hoses that are about seven feet long, stepping up and down over steps and thresholds, while maintaining his balance, are difficult and painful for Mr. Farmer. Reaching up to connect and disconnect hoses in the parlor and milk house increases his dizziness.

Options being considered include equipment that would clean the milker units in their places in the parlor.

- **Feeding grain in the parlor**

The goats are fed a pelletized grain supplement while they are being milked. Bulk pellets stored in a gravity wagon are carried into the parlor alleys in 5-gallon pails, which weigh 30 pounds when full. The pails are set on the floor, and small scoops of pellets are fed from them into small dishes in front of the goats. It is difficult and painful for Mr. Farmer to carry the pails. At times, his wife or children move the pails or feed the pellets. Bending forward to scoop from the pails increases Mr. Farmer's dizziness.

Options being considered include a bulk feed bin that will auger pellets into each side of the parlor, and small wheeled carts that will raise the pails to a height requiring less bending to access the feed or carry the pellets along the stalls.

- **Cleaning the parlor holding area and small pens**

An area outside the parlor holds the goats before they are milked. This area needs to be cleaned daily to prevent excessive manure from being tracked into the parlor by the goats. Mr. Farmer is in the process of constructing several pens in the barn for keeping small goats and birthing mother goats. These areas are too small to access with a skid-steer loader. His doctor has said that he is not to operate the skid-steer. He indicated that cleaning these areas with a fork, shovel, and scraper are difficult and increase his neck, back and shoulder pain. Bending forward increases his dizziness decreasing his ability to maintain his balance.

Options being considered include a mechanized method of cleaning the pens.

- **Moving around the farm**

Mr. Farmer needs to access his barns and buildings so that he can feed and care for his goats. It is about 100 yards from the house to the barn. He needs to access his fields to check on crops. It is difficult for Mr. Farmer to walk, especially on the sloping and uneven ground present in his farmstead and on his farmland. It is difficult for Mr. Farmer to carry items such as feedbags or pails, repair parts, or tools and maintain his balance, and he is not allowed to drive a truck or tractor that allows him to access the fields.

Options being considered include a mobility device. As Mr. Farmer's doctor has indicated that he is not to drive a motorized vehicle, Mr. Farmer is going to check with his doctor to ask if the restriction includes a utility vehicle or powered scooter on the farm.

Plan

It is my expectation that I will proceed with gathering estimates for these items, and with developing a full report related to the equipment outlined above. If you have questions regarding this, or if you would like me to proceed in a different manner, please contact me by email, at my office phone, 920-675-0570, my cell phone, 608-279-9435, or by US mail at Easter Seals FARM Program, 505 East Elm Street, Jefferson WI 53549.

I appreciate the referral of Mr. Farmer to the FARM Program. I look forward to working with you to help complete the assessment and the implementation of the recommended equipment.

Rural Rehabilitation Specialist
Easter Seals FARM Program

Easter Seals- Final Assessment Sample

Client
Case Number
Telephone
Address

Referral

Background

A referral was made to the Easter Seals FARM Program by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselor of the DVR Office. As a result, an assessment of Mr. Farmer's farm was conducted August 00, 2008.

FARM

Mr. Farmer and his brother have a 50/50 partnership in a beef cow and calf operation. They own 82 Angus cows and 77 feeder calves, which, still with those cows, weigh approximately 400 pounds. Mr. Farmer and his brother sell all the steer calves when they reach approximately 500 to 600 pounds, sell most of the heifer calves to market, and keep some heifer calves on the farm as herd replacements. Mr. Farmer reported that he has nine steers he is finishing to sell for meat to local friends and relatives. He stated that he recently sold 30 steers for \$1.24 per pound at a local sale barn. He has three registered Angus bulls for breeding the animals.

Mr. Farmer stated that the operation has reached its capacity with the current feeding system, but that he would like to expand the number of animals they raise if they chose to erect another silo.

Mr. Farmer reported that he and his brother own 186 tillable acres. They have access to and use an additional 334 tillable acres owned by an uncle who does not charge them rent. On the land, they planted 120 acres of corn and kept the remainder in hay ground. Mr. Farmer stated that they chop most of the corn; if they have a good yield, they sell some as high-moisture corn.

He reported that they chop some hay and produce the rest in big square bales. They keep as much hay as they are able to store and sell the rest. Mr. Farmer said they sold big square bales of hay for \$55.00 this past spring.

Mr. Farmer stated that his tasks in the operation are to plant corn, chop hay and corn forages, haul manure, and cut hay. He is also responsible for checking and fixing fences, as he is able, and monitoring and feeding the cattle. His brother unloads the forages into the silos, bales the hay, performs maintenance on the silo unloaders, and completes the bookwork for the operation. Both Mr. Farmer and Brother work full-time in the operation. They custom hire the spraying of the crops. Mr. Farmer stated to me that he stopped working off the farm approximately three years ago.

MANAGEMENT

When I toured the farm on the day of the assessment, the farm was neat and orderly and there was quality feed present for all of the cattle. Mr. Farmer and I discussed the feeding set-up and how that allows Mr. Farmer to feed the cattle within his disability limitations.

Mr. Farmer owns the operation with his brother, Brother, and they share work responsibilities. He reported that he no longer works off the farm. Mr. Farmer resides on the main farm with his parents.

When I asked Mr. Farmer for a copy of his financial records, he stated that his brother, Brother, assumes the responsibility for managing financial records. Mr. Farmer stated that there is a \$67,000 dollar overall debt load on the farm and that they are current on the payments. He also reported that they sold big square bales of hay last year for \$55 dollars each.

DISABILITY

Mr. Farmer fell from the top of a 40-foot silo in 1978. He said that he has had chronic pain in his neck and back since the fall, but that initially the x-rays did not reveal any fractures. In 1990, Mr. Farmer began to experience increased pain in those areas and consulted a doctor. It was then discovered that Mr. Farmer had fractures in his neck at the C4-C5 and C6-C7 sections and in his back at the L5-L6 section. He then underwent surgery to fuse the fractures in his neck and to remove the six pinched nerves in his back.

Mr. Farmer stated that in the past year his left arm began to feel numb. He had an MRI, which showed compressed vertebrae and pinched nerves in the C7-T1 section of his neck. Mr. Farmer had a third operation on his neck on July 20, 2008 to fuse this area. He is required to wear a neck brace through September. Mr. Farmer explained that, as a result of his neck fusions, he has little range of motion in his neck and that he has difficulty climbing because of residual numbness in his left arm. He stated that the pain has been accommodated by the surgery, although he still has some pain at the base of his neck. He said he was informed that the pain was only caused by the neck brace. He mentioned that he has a diagnosis of arthritis in his neck.

Mr. Farmer indicated that he has three herniated disks, arthritis in his lower back, and decreased balance when he must walk over uneven terrain. He stated that he has a doctor's appointment in one month to discuss treatment and prognosis. Mr. Farmer reported that his pain is related to his back and that he takes Tramadol for pain relief four times per day.

Mr. Farmer was in a motorcycle accident in 2005, fractured five ribs, and sustained a head injury. At times, he still has some pain related to the rib injuries and some dizziness related to the head injury. He takes Meclizine for the dizziness and cannot drive a car without first taking the medication.

Mr. Farmer severed the tips of two fingers on his left hand while he was using a saw at work. He reported no limitations related to this accident. He stated he has carpal tunnel in both wrists with some pain that comes and goes, but that it is not debilitating at this time. Mr. Farmer mentioned he is deaf in his left ear. He wears glasses.

In the discussion below, problem areas are prioritized by importance and immediacy of need. All prices are vendor estimates, and, unless otherwise noted, all vendors accept purchase orders.

Problem areas

1. Chopping corn and hay forages

Job Task

Mr. Farmer uses a John Deere 6400 tractor and a New Holland pull-type chopper to chop corn and hay forages. He explained that he is responsible for chopping the forages and that his brother Brother hauls the loads to the farmstead and unloads them into the silos. The 120 acres of corn is chopped one time per year and is typically completed approximately within a week over a thirty-hour period depending on weather. The hay is typically chopped three times a year within a few days each hay crop, depending on weather. A high percentage of the hay ground that Mr. Farmer owns is baled and therefore he does not use a chopper for this acreage. He reported that he chops only the amount of hay that his silos will contain. Tasks within the chopping process that require turning and twisting to observe equipment include monitoring the pick-up head to ensure hay or corn is feeding properly into the machine, monitoring the chopper wagon in order to stop when the wagon is full, and monitoring the hitch point on the wagon when hitching and unhitching wagons.

Limitation

Mr. Farmer reported that because of the fusion surgeries in his neck, he is unable to twist and turn his neck to monitor the chopper and wagon being pulled behind the tractor. He also explained that repetitively getting on and off the tractor to hitch the wagons is difficult because of numbness in his left arm. He also stated that getting on and off the tractor causes pain in his back.

Goal

Mr. Farmer will be able to chop corn and hay forages with less difficulty.

Options

An AgCam system to monitor the chopping equipment being pulled behind the tractor would eliminate the need for Mr. Farmer to twist and turn to see the equipment being pulled by the tractor. A 9" monitor with three cameras and quad processor is included in this system and would allow Mr. Farmer to see all the areas required when chopping by pushing a button on the monitor. The quad processor would allow Mr. Farmer to visualize all three areas at once or only one area at a time, and he could switch between option screens. A third vendor, listed in the Vendor Summary, was contacted for an estimate and has not yet provided one. If one is received, I will send it.

AgCam system

Cost	\$3,395.00
Vendor	Vanderloop Equipment 609 4 th Street Marathon WI 54448
Phone	715-443-2192
Contact	Scott Vanderloop
FED ID number	39-1231241
Comments	<i>9" monitor, three cameras, quad processor, and installation.</i>

AgCam system
Cost \$3,615.50
Vendor CSF
Hilgendorf Power Transports
Automation Plus Div
810 Hwy 51 East
PO Box 227
Stoughton WI 53589
Phone 608-333-3315 (cell)
Contact Marty Freck
FED ID number 39-1175564
Comments 9" monitor, three cameras, quad processor, and installation.

I have attached a website offering a video demonstration of the AgCam for your review. I have also included a quote from the testimonials portion. After reviewing the website and talking to the dealer for this item, I concluded that the AgCam was created specifically for the purpose of eliminating twisting and turning to monitor equipment being pulled by the tractor.

<http://www.agcam.com/index.php?page=home>

"I have a John Deere 1850 Drill with a 1900 tow behind cart. I haven't been able to see the road behind for the past 3 years, once in a while I would swerve quickly hoping to get a glimpse behind the cart to see if anybody was following me. Making a left turn off of the highway was one of the most stressful experiences of the day. Since I installed my AgCam system I now have a perfect view of the road behind, and while in the field I point the camera forward and watch the drill operate. I have my second camera mounted on the end of the drill looking down the center of the front and rear gang, I can see any clogs before they become a problem, also I now gage my speed by the amount of bounce on the closing wheels. In short, I love my AgCam!"

D. R. in Lidgerwood ND.

Mr. Farmer indicated that an AgCam was recommended in an earlier DVR assessment and that he did not believe it would work adequately, as he would still have to twist and turn during chopping. At the time of the first assessment, Mr. Farmer did not allow the item to be installed. In the assessment Mr. Farmer refers to, only one camera and monitor were recommended.

Mr. Farmer is requesting assistance with a self-propelled chopper. The pick-up of a self-propelled chopper is located in front of the machine rather than behind the tractor such as the one that Mr. Farmer currently uses. It is also located below the operator's station and would require Mr. Farmer to flex his neck to monitor and may be difficult for Mr. Farmer considering his medical limitations of neck range of motion. Although the pick-up header is located in the front of a self-propelled chopper, as mentioned, it would still require range of motion of Mr. Farmer's neck to view and would not address the need to turn and twist to monitor the discharge spout to determine the fullness of a wagon and monitor the drawbar when hitching and unhitching wagons. It is my judgment that the self-propelled chopper does not meet the disability-related need and that it is not warranted.

Agri-Speed hitches in conjunction with the Ag-Cam would allow Mr. Farmer to hitch and unhitch the chopper wagons from inside the tractor and would eliminate the need for Mr. Farmer to enter and exit the tractor repetitively. Mr. Farmer mentioned that his chopper wagons have a spring device that keeps the wagon tongue off the ground. The spring-loaded device on his wagons would have to be removed in order for this product to work properly.

Agri-Speed hitches

Cost	\$1,460.00
Vendor	Bergman Mfg 2866 Quail Avenue Arthur IA 51431
Phone	800-551-4554
Contact	Mike Bergman
FED ID number	42-1375396
Comments	<i>Price includes chopper hitch, tractor hitch, three wagon unit hitches, chopper drawbar adaptor, and shipping to farm.</i>

2. Monitoring cattle and fixing fences

Job Task

Mr. Farmer uses 40 acres of permanent pasture for his beef cows. He lives on the farmstead where the animals are pastured and is responsible for checking fences, fixing them, as he is able, and monitoring the cattle. Mr. Farmer uses a four-wheeler to move around the pasture area and to carry supplies for fencing.

Limitation

Mr. Farmer mentioned that the jarring and jostling that occurs when he operates the vehicle is painful to his back. He has difficulty swinging his leg over the four-wheeler to access the operator's station; sometimes, he must sit sidesaddle, which is an unsafe way to ride the machine. He must also twist and turn his back to hold onto fencing supplies on the four-wheeler. This is difficult for him and causes pain in his back.

Goal

Mr. Farmer with be able to monitor cattle and fix fences with less difficulty and pain.

Options

A utility vehicle would allow Mr. Farmer to access the operator's station without the need to swing his leg over it. The cargo box that is standard to the utility vehicle would provide a way to transport items such as fencing supplies, eliminating the need to twist and turn to hold onto the items.

I asked Mr. Farmer to visit area dealerships to identify the utility vehicle that best meets his disability-related need for accessing the operator's station and operating the controls. Mr. Farmer stated that the John Deere Gator best met his needs for accessibility and operation. I gathered estimates on used John Deere Gator XUV models as this model has independent suspension and would decrease the amount of jarring and jostling that Mr. Farmer experiences to his back that other models may not provide.

The used equipment estimates are gathered for discussion purposes only and may not be available when purchases are ready to be made.

Used John Deere Gator XUV 620i

Cost \$8,950.00

Vendor Riesterer & Schnell
2209 Clermont Street
Antigo WI 54409

Phone 888-271-0391

Contact Sales

FED ID number 39-1845937

Comments *Used equipment located on equipment finder website. Provided as an example for discussion purposes only. This particular implement may not be available when purchase is ready to be made.*

Used John Deere Gator XUV 620i

Cost \$9,300.00

Vendor Amundson Equipment
110 2nd Street NE
Elbow Lake MN 56531

Phone 800-524-6814

Contact Ryan Amundson

FED ID number

Comments *Used equipment located on equipment finder website. Provided as an example for discussion purposes only. This particular implement may not be available when purchase is ready to be made.*

Used John Deere Gator XUV 620i

Cost \$10,700.00

Vendor Sigourney Tractor & Implement Sales
1407 200th Avenue
Sigourney IA 52591

Phone 641-622-3838

Contact Sales

FED ID number

Comments *Used equipment located on equipment finder website. Provided as an example for discussion purposes only. This particular implement may not be available when purchase is ready to be made.*

3. Accessing the barn yard areas

Job Task

Mr. Farmer hauls manure from the barnyard areas to spread on his fields. To access the fields, he must manually open two electric gates. In order to open a gate, ill must drive up to the gate, get off the tractor and walk to the gate, open the gate, walk back to the tractor and get in the operator's station, drive the tractor through the gate and get off the tractor, walk to the gate and shut it, walk back to the tractor, get back in the operator's station, and continue. He must complete this process twice for every load hauled.

Limitation

Repetitively entering and exiting the tractor to open the gate is difficult for Mr. Farmer because of numbness in his left arm and because this activity causes pain in his back.

Goal

Mr. Farmer will access barnyard areas with less difficulty.

Options

A drive-thru gate placed at each gate opening would eliminate the need for Mr. Farmer to get on and off the tractor to open and close gates. This is a picture of a similar drive-thru gate product for your review.



Two 15' to 20' drive-through gates

Cost \$354.58
Vendor NASCO
PO Box 901
Ft Atkinson WI 53538
Phone 800-558-9595
Contact Customer Service
FED ID number 06-1165854
Comments Price includes shipping.

Summary

Given Mr. Farmer's desire and commitment to stay involved in his agricultural operation, I would recommend that the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation assist him with the above-outlined technology so that Mr. Farmer can continue to be successful in his chosen occupation.

Sincerely,

Rural Rehabilitation Specialist
Easter Seals FARM Program

COST Summary*

Job Task	Assistive Implement	Cost
1. Chop corn and hay forages	Ag-Cam system	\$3,395.00
	Agri-Speed hitches	\$1,460.00
2. Monitor cattle and fix fences	Used JD Gator XUV	Est \$8,950.00
3. Access barn yard area	Drive-through gates	\$354.58

**Note: All prices are vendor estimates, and, unless otherwise noted, all vendors accept purchase orders.*

VENDOR SUMMARY

Task	Implement	Comments	Vendor	Cost
1. Chopping corn and hay forages	Ag-Cam system	<i>Prices includes 9" inch monitor, 3 cameras, quad processor, and installation.</i>	Vanderloop Equipment 609 4 th Street Marathon WI 54448 715-443-2192 Scott Vanderloop FED ID number 39-1231241	\$3,395.00
		<i>Prices includes 9" inch monitor, 3 cameras, quad processor, and installation.</i>	CSF, Inc. Hilgendorf Power Transports Automation Plus Div. 810 Hwy. 51 E. PO Box 227 Stoughton, WI 53589 608-333-3315 Marty Freck FED ID number 39-117564	\$3,616.50
		<i>Vendor contacted and agreed to provide estimate. After several calls, one has not been sent. If received, I will forward it.</i>	Brilowski Dairy Supply 1282 Brilowski Rd. North Stevens Point WI 54481 715-342-0205 Ellen Brilowski FED ID number 01-07106151	No estimate
	Agri-Speed hitches	<i>Price includes chopper hitch, tractor hitch, three wagon unit hitches, chopper drawbar adaptor and shipping to the farm.</i>	Bergman Manufacturing, Inc. 2866 Quail Ave. Arthur, IA 51431 800-551-4554 Mike Bergman FED ID number 42-1375396	\$1,460.00
2. Monitoring cattle and fixing fences	Used John Deere Gator XUV 620i	<i>Used equipment located on equipment finder website. Provided for discussion purposes only and may not be available when purchases are ready to be made.</i>	Riesterer & Schnell, Inc 2209 Clermont Street Antigo WI 54409 715-627-4455 Sales FED ID number 39-1845937	\$8,950.00
		<i>Used equipment located on equipment finder website. Provided for discussion purposes only and may not be available when purchases are ready to be made.</i>	Amundson Equipment 110 2 nd Street NE Elbow Lake MN 56531 800-524-6814 Ryan Amundson FED ID number	\$9,300.00

		<i>Used equipment located on equipment finder website. Provided for discussion purposes only and may not be available when purchases are ready to be made</i>	Sigourney Tractor & Implement Sales 1407 200 th Avenue Sigourney IA 52591 641-622-3838 Sales FED ID number	\$10,700.00
3. Accessing the barn yard areas	Drive-thru gates	<i>Two drive-thru gates that fit 15' foot to 20' foot opening. Price includes shipping to the farm.</i>	NASCO 901 Janesville Ave. Box 901 Fort Atkinson, WI 53538-0901 800-558-9595 FED ID number 06-1165854	\$354.58

****Note: All prices are vendor estimates, and, unless otherwise noted, all vendors accept purchase orders.***

Vendor Estimates

(Not included for this sample)

Appendix 5

Glossary

Additional terms can be found at the following link:

<http://www.pfb.com/resources/ag-information/glossary-of-ag-terms.htm>

All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) - A small, amphibious motor vehicle with wheels or tractor treads for traveling over rough ground, snow, and ice, and through shallow water

Agribusiness - Producers and manufacturers of agricultural goods and services, such as fertilizer and farm equipment makers, food and fiber processors, wholesalers, transporters, and retail food and fiber outlets.

Bovine - Pertaining to cattle, both beef and dairy.

Breeding Stock - Sexually mature male and female livestock that are retained to produce offspring.

Bull - A sexually mature, uncastrated bovine male, generally employed for breeding purposes.

Capital Improvement - A resource or resources that can be used to generate economic wealth.

Cattle Cycle - Cyclical increases and decreases in cattle inventories over time, which arise because biological constraints prevent producers from instantly responding to price. In general, the cattle cycle is determined by the combined effects of cattle prices, climatic conditions, and the time needed to breed, calve, and raise cattle to market weight.

Cow - A mature bovine female, usually having had a least one calf.

Cull - To remove from the herd or flock, usually undesirable and/or inefficient (unprofitable) breeding stock that will be sent to slaughter.

Drying Off - The process of using certain management practices, such as reducing milking frequency and changing feed rations, to stop milk production. A dry cow is not lactating.

Farm Assessment - An assessment typically provided through Easter Seals FARM (Farm Assessment Rehabilitation Methods) Program or Alternative Vendor as appropriate. The assessment looks at a consumer's specific farm operations, and individual barriers/limitations and provides the following information. The purpose of the assessment is to identify barrier and make recommendations to address those barriers. The assessment report would typically include the following information:

- Viability of Farm (the overall financial health of farming operations)
- Farm operations
- Problem Areas related to limitations
- Rehabilitation Technology recommendations
- Recommendation of other services that may assist the farmer in maintaining the farming operations

Feeder cattle - Cattle, ready to be finished for market, weighing 550 to 650 pounds or heavier. Usually yearling cattle (between 1 and 2 years old) with a big frame.

Feedlot - Facility where cattle are confined in a small area and fed carefully mixed, high-concentrate feed to fatten them. On average, cattle are fed here about 5 months, although this can vary from 3 months to 9 months, depending on their weight when they enter and their desired final condition.

Field Corn - Any variety of corn that is grown extensively in large fields primarily for livestock feed, as contrasted with the horticultural varieties, such as sweet corn or popcorn. Most field corn is of the dent variety.

Grain Elevator - A building for elevating, storing, discharging, and sometimes processing grain.

Haylage - A feed that is halfway between hay and silage. The feed is cut when green, chopped small (0.5 to 1 inch) wilted and then typically stored in a special airtight tower silo.

Heifer - A bovine female that has not given birth to a calf.

Mastitis - An infection and inflammation of the udder in cows.

Net Farm Income - The money and non-money income form operators realize from farming as a return for labor, investment, and management after production expenses have been paid. Net farm income is measure in two ways net farm income before inventory adjustment and net farm income after inventory adjustment. Net farm income doesn't include changes in the value of inventories such as crops and livestock at the end of the year.

Power-Take-Off (PTO) - A powered shaft, usually extending from the rear of the tractor and driven by the tractor motor, to supply rotative power to an attached or trailing implement such as a combine, hay baler, mower, etc.

Rehabilitation Technology- the systematic application of technologies, engineering methodologies, or scientific principles to meet the needs of, and address the barriers confronted by, individuals with disabilities in areas that include education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation, independent living, and recreation. The term includes rehabilitation engineering, assistive technology devices, and assistive technology services.

Rural Rehabilitation Specialist- (provided by Easter Seals) People who have grown up on a farm and operated farms with family members and also have a rehabilitation background or training (OT, PT, Vocational Rehabilitation). They work with famers with disabilities providing case management, farm assessments, and accommodation recommendations.

Seedstock - Pedigreed or well-bred livestock which is maintained for breeding purposes.

Silage - A crop that has been preserved in a moist, succulent condition by partial fermentation in a tight container (silo) above or below ground. The chief crops stored in this way are corn (the whole plant), sorghum, and various legumes and grasses. The main use of silage is in cattle feed.

Silo - A structure for storing bulk materials. Silos are used in agriculture to store grain (see grain elevators) or fermented feed known as silage. Silos are more commonly used for bulk storage of grain, coal, cement, carbon black, wood chips, food products and sawdust.

Skid Steer, Skid Loader, Skid Steer Loader, Etc. - A rigid frame, engine powered machine with lift arms used to attach a wide variety of labor saving tools and attachments. The term "bobcat" is sometimes used as a generic term for skid loaders.

Stocker Calves - Young, growing animals on pasture with very little other feed, with the intention of increasing weight and maturity before being placed in a feedlot.

Total Mixed Ration - A diet where all the feed ingredients are blended together to ensure every bit is nutritionally balanced.

Utility Type Vehicle (UTV) - means any recreational motor vehicle other than an ATV, motorbike or snowmobile

Viability - The overall financial health of the farming operations.

Vocational Feasibility - The consumer's ability to maintain or continue with his/her goal based on their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice

Appendix 6 Farm Process for Consumers

Eligibility	Discuss preliminary information about maintaining farm	Farm Assessment	Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for the Occupation	Closure – Ending DVR Services, at this time
<p>You are eligible if your disability is stopping you from maintaining your employment goal AND You require DVR services to deal with your disability so you can reach your employment goal.</p> <p>When VR does not have enough funding, VR must use a waiting list process called Order of Selection. If you re eligible you may be placed on the waiting list and contacted by VR when VR can work with you.</p> <p><i>Choices:</i> <i>Bring your disability information to VR to make this step go faster.</i></p> <p><i>Ask VR to pay for a disability evaluation if you do not have complete or current information.</i></p> <p>Timeframe 60 days</p>	<p>What is your employment goal? Is it to maintain your farm? If not, what type of job or business matches your skills & interests?</p> <p>Review medical documentation needed for farm assessment referral. If existing medical information is not available you may be referred for a functional capacity evaluation.</p> <p>How will your disability affect your ability to achieve your goal? How can you address this? Any other barriers? What do you need to do to address your disability? A farm assessment referral will be made to address these questions.</p> <p><i>Choices:</i> <i>Discuss farm operations that need to be assessed, work with DVR staff to gather information needed for the referral for the farm assessment.</i></p>	<p>Meet at farm with DVR staff and vendor to complete farm assessment.</p> <p>Review farm assessment finding and recommendations with your counselor and vendor.</p> <p>Identify services you need to maintain your farm and address your disability?</p> <p><i>Choice: select the service provider and timeframes for completing assessment.</i></p>	<p>You and your counselor will agree on a specific employment goal.</p> <p>Determine services that will be provided.</p> <p>How do you measure your progress?</p> <p>Obtain agreed upon services, notify DVR of satisfaction and receipt of these services.</p> <p><i>Choices: write the employment plan with VR help, by yourself, or with the help of someone else. Choose service provider and payment method for service.</i></p> <p>Timeframe: 90 days</p>	<p>DVR will “close” your case when you are successfully employed. Maintaining your farm is considered successful when: Your farm has gross earnings of minimum wage or higher for a minimum of 90 consecutive days. _____.</p> <p>DVR will also close your case if you are unable to participate for disability or personal reasons. You can reapply to DVR.</p> <p><i>Choices: You can reapply to VR at any time. Closing your case means you do not need or cannot use VR services at this time in your life.</i></p> <p>Timeframe: 90 days after agreed to services have been provided.</p>

Appendix 7

Farm Visit

Planning and Safety Tips

Planning your Meeting

1. Prior to your visit discuss with the farmer:
 - Condition of the driveway.
 - Any concern with getting your vehicle to the farm.
 - Any dogs- disclose any fears, any concerns you should be aware of with the dog.
 - Where to meet – the house, the barn, the car, etc. Let farmer know if you prefer he/she watch for your arrival to meet at your car.
 - Follow the lead of the farmer, rural rehabilitation consultant, or other consultant you are working with in relation to interacting with animals on the farm.

2. Proper Clothing and Foot Gear:
 - Do not wear good clothes as you may get pet hair, mud, etc. on you.
 - Wear proper foot gear (sturdy outdoor shoes or boots) as you may walk on wet surfaces, muddy surfaces, uneven surfaces, etc.
The farmer will usually be happy to let you rinse them off with the outside hose if needed.
 - Have a change of shoes in your car.
 - Have a bag in your car that you can put your dirty shoes in when you are done with the farm visit.

Safety

1. Engines and rotating parts:
 - Do not get too close to engines or rotating parts.
 - Do not lean over to get a closer look at things that are running.
 - Do not wear scarf's, neckties, sweatshirts or coats with hanging draw strings, etc. as it could get caught when around engines or rotating parts.

2. Earplugs:
 - If needed, take with you a set of earplugs. Loud equipment may be running while you are visiting the farm.

3. Livestock:
 - Do not get too close to livestock fences or attempt to touch livestock without permission. You can get nipped (cows, horses), spat on, or spook the animals.

4. Food
 - It is recommended that you not consume food or drink while touring the farm. It is customary to be offered a beverage once you are finished touring the farm and you can accept this offer if so inclined.

5. Hand cleansing
 - After contact with animals it is recommended that you wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer.