

NOMINAL GROUP PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS (40 MINUTES)

The purpose of this exercise is to help the group generate a list of priority strengths and weaknesses associated with Farm Bill conservation programs.

“What are the key strengths and weaknesses of Farm Bill conservation programs?”

5 MINUTES - INTRODUCTION

We are now going to run through an exercise to help the group identify various strengths and weaknesses of Farm Bill programs. This nominal group process is designed to allow everyone to participate equally and to arrive at consensus. Ultimately, we will develop a priority list of considerations that affect landowners' decisions about participating Farm Bill conservation programs. I will now pass out sheets of papers and pencils for this exercise.

This exercise will center on the question of:

“What are the key strengths and weaknesses of Farm Bill conservation programs?”

We are going to use a technique called nominal group process to generate a list of priority qualities of Farm Bill conservation programs. Rank order the list, and reach consensus.

5 MINUTES

Present the questions for the participants.

- What are the key strengths of participating in Farm Bill conservation programs (such as CRP, WRP, and ACEP)?
- What are the key weaknesses of participating in Farm Bill conservation programs (such as CRP, WRP, and ACEP)?

10 MINUTES

Give them 10 minutes for each one of them to silently write statements addressing the question on the flip chart.

20 MINUTES

After the 10 minutes is up, we will go around the room and ask each individual to provide one of the statement(s) they have listed on their sheet of paper. The recorder writes the issue EXACTLY as the individual gives it. DO NOT NUMBER OR LETTER THE LIST. Doing this makes it look like you are ranking issues/concerns. Continue going around the room from one individual to the next until you have exhausted the issues on everyone's lists. During this part of the process, DO NOT allow discussion of any objective.

20 MINUTES

After all the statements are listed, tell the group they may now ask for clarification of any statement listed. Anyone can clarify or ask for further clarification of an statement. It does not need to be the person who originally gave it. Don't let any one person monopolize the discussion. Clarification may result in combining some issues that are listed, BUT you can combine the objectives only if EVERYONE agrees. If one person does not think they should be combined, then you cannot combine them.

5 MINUTES

Once statements have been clarified, you ask each individual to look at the list and write down the 5 statements that they feel are most important in rank order on the back of their sheet.

10 MINUTES

Gather input on those items which people feel were the most important statements presented.