

2014

# Maine Family Farms: Life and Business in Balance #4800

Leslie A. Forstadt Ph.D.  
*University of Maine*, [leslie.forstadt@maine.edu](mailto:leslie.forstadt@maine.edu)

Tori Jackson  
*University of Maine*, [tori.jackson@maine.edu](mailto:tori.jackson@maine.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/extension\\_ag](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/extension_ag)

---

## Recommended Citation

Forstadt, Leslie A. Ph.D. and Jackson, Tori, "Maine Family Farms: Life and Business in Balance #4800" (2014). *Cooperative Extension - Agriculture*. 4.  
[https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/extension\\_ag/4](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/extension_ag/4)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cooperative Extension - Agriculture by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).

## Bulletin #4800, Maine Family Farms: Life and Business in Balance

[extension.umaine.edu/publications/4800e/](http://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4800e/)

### Maine Family Farms: Life and Business in Balance

*By Associate Extension Professor Leslie Forstadt and Associate Extension Professor Tori Jackson, University of Maine*

For information about UMaine Extension programs and resources, visit [extension.umaine.edu](http://extension.umaine.edu). Find more of our publications and books at [extensionpubs.umext.maine.edu](http://extensionpubs.umext.maine.edu).

With the [2012 Census of Agriculture numbers](#) available, a portrait of Maine farmers reflects lives that are complex, with much to keep in balance. There are more than 8,000 farms in Maine, an increase of 12 percent since 2002. Of these, 49 percent list their primary occupation as farming, with the average age of the principal operator 57 years old. Among women farmers, 57 percent list their primary occupation as farming, and 38 percent of them are in the “beginning farmer” category, with 10 or fewer years of farming experience on the present farm. The principal female operator is 53 years old on average, but there are young women too—24 percent of primary women farmers are under the age of 44 years.



The needs of farmers at each life stage are unique, as choices about farming practices, child rearing, business growth, and succession planning enter into decision making.

This series, ***Maine Family Farms: Life and Business in Balance***, provides a starting point for farm families to think about issues that range from family conversations to managing stress and sharing ideas about life and business balance.

Titles include:

- #4801 [Why “Thank You” Matters: Expressing Appreciation](#)
- #4802 [Running Successful Farm-Family Meetings](#)
- #4803 [Farm and Family—Finding Balance](#)
- #4804 [Understanding Roles in the Farm Family](#)
- #4805 [Recognizing the Signs of Farm Family Stress](#)

There are rewards and stressors at each stage of farm business and farm family life. This series of publications was designed with the *people* of Maine's farming industry in mind. Interpersonal and intrapersonal needs are addressed, as readers are encouraged to think about, discuss, and access resources to support the personal experiences and relationships in family farming. We hope that these fact sheets will help foster farm family sustainability.

---

*Information in this publication is provided purely for educational purposes. No responsibility is assumed for any problems associated with the use of products or services mentioned. No endorsement of products or companies is intended, nor is criticism of unnamed products or companies implied.*

© 2014

**Call 800.287.0274 or TDD 800.287.8957 (in Maine), or 207.581.3188, for information on publications and program offerings from University of Maine Cooperative Extension, or visit [extension.umaine.edu](http://extension.umaine.edu).**

*The University of Maine does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, 207.581.1226.*