# Land Match England
# **Business Planning Guide**

This document is a guide to writing a Business Plan for your land based business. By including the suggested sections and titles below you will ensure that you are providing all of the information that is needed for a thorough understanding of your business ideas and ultimately for a successful Landmatch.

## Confidentiality and Data Protection

You will need to go into a great deal of detail about your business proposal in your business plan. Some of that information may be sensitive and it may contain personal data. Landmatch England are committed to protecting your data in line with GDPR and will only share your business plan within the Landmatch team and with the land holders you have given your consent to matching with. Your business plan will never be made public. By sharing your business plan with us you agree to the above conditions.

## Content

The purpose of a business plan is to promote your business idea, to generate support, and to secure agreements of various kinds. The reader wants to feel confidence in your idea and in your ability to execute it. They want to feel inspired by your passion, enthusiasm and drive to achieve your goals. This is your opportunity to detail your approach so that the reader knows exactly what you are setting out to do and how. As you are writing, remember to put yourself in your reader's shoes and ask yourself, am I communicating clearly and to the point? Is the key information prominent and easily accessible? And, is all of this information really needed?

## Formatting

Use the formatting that communicates most directly. Consider using a table or bullet points instead of writing a list within a paragraph. Images also help to communicate your vision and build excitement for your idea.

The most important sections below are highlighted, these should be included in your business plan. The rest of the sections are recommended but might not be needed for your particular business proposal. You can adjust the order of the document to suit your plan.

We would expect the business plan to fall somewhere in the region of 15-20 pages of narrative plus the financial spreadsheets.

# Sections


- 1 Executive Summary
- 2 Business Description
- 3 Methodology
- 4 Experience & Qualifications
- 5 Market Research
- 6 Labour Requirements
- 7 Set Up costs
- 8 Plot Plan
- 9 Business Activities
- 10 Site Requirements
- 11 Financial Summary

Appendices

- 1 Financial Projections
- 2 Other Appendices


# Summary of Sections

## 1 Executive Summary

This is the written form of the 'Elevator Pitch' and is your opportunity to convince the reader of your idea in the first few paragraphs. Some readers won't have time to go through all of the detail you have given, they will only want to see the executive summary and perhaps the financial summary at the end. In your Executive Summary give a summary of; the proposal, the overarching approach, who you are, what your key land/utilities requirements are and what you expect to achieve by yr 3 or 5.

## 2 Business Description

This is where you can go into detail about your business plan. You can include crop plans, anticipated yields and sales plans. Discuss any value added processing you will do in this section. You can describe here how you intend to scale up your activity on the land over the initial few years. Mostly however, this is your opportunity to share your enthusiasm for your proposal and how you will make it work.

## 3 Methodology

Here you can go into detail about your growing techniques and/or livestock care approach. If there are methods you employ that require deliveries of materials, or the use of machinery or anything which might affect the wider site that you are on, describe them here.

## 4 Experience & Qualifications

When describing your past experience, it is helpful to go into specifics about the work or training that is especially relevant to your business idea. Include details about the length of time you were in that role, indicate the scale you were working at e.g. farm scale / field scale and the responsibilities that you held.

## 5 Market Research

The success of your business relies heavily on your knowledge of the local markets available to you. Demonstrating that you have a strong grasp of the opportunities as well as the challenges is key. Explain how you will maximise your opportunities and overcome barriers to give the reader confidence that you will achieve your aims. A contingency plan is especially reassuring.

## 6 Labour Requirements

It is possible that you won't need to go into this much detail but if there are many parts to your business plan it can help to show tasks across a typical week divided between workers. Also if you intend to bring volunteers to your farm or you expect to employ additional workers, discuss this here.

## 7 Set Up costs

This is the capital investment you will need to make in order to start your land based business. By providing a costed list of equipment and infrastructure that you will need, you can be transparent with land holders about the investment that you are making in the site while also opening up the conversation about existing infrastructure that might be available to you.

## 8 Plot Plan

If you don't have a specific site to work on yet then it won't be necessary to include a Plot Plan. However, if you know the location of the plot you are applying for then providing a detailed plan of the area is important. Make sure the plan is to scale and give specific dimensions for farm infrastructure, such as polytunnels, as this will determine if planning permission will be needed. Being clear about the phases of plot development on the plan can be helpful, as can details of landscaping, shelterbelts or screening that you are expecting to create.

## 9 Business Activities

Here you can give a written account of your 3 or 5 year plan. Provide the main steps and milestones that you will complete each year, half year or season, including installing infrastructure, starting product lines, expanding growing areas etc.

## 10 Site Requirements

It is a good idea to share the features of a site you'd 'like to have' and especially the 'must haves' in your plan. These might be aspect, type of landscape, livestock shelter, access to

machinery or size of plot. Most landholders will have a specific plot in mind that they are offering for a landmatch but there might be wiggle room on a range of things.

### 11 Financial Summary

This section should reflect the final figures that you came to from your financial projection spreadsheet which will be in your appendix. In a table show your annual income, direct costs, overheads and depreciation over yrs 1-3 (or 5) with the Total Annual Margin along the bottom. (See Fig.1) Make sure to refer back to the full financial projections in the appendix.

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Income** | £42,600 | £89,845 | £114,420 |
| **Direct Costs** | £41,837 | £59,866 | £70,057 |
| **Overheads** | £23,594 | £43,195 | £44,396 |
| **Depreciation** | £3,823 | £3,823 | £3,823 |
| **Total Annual Margin** | -£26,653 | -£17,039 | -£3,856 |

Fig.1 (Ref. Appendix 1.)

## Appendices

### 1 Financial Projections

You will need to forecast the income that you will achieve annually per product line. You can also break this down across retail and wholesale or across sales outlets if you like. You then include the direct costs per product line, followed by overheads. (The difference between direct costs and overheads is; if you took away a product line its direct costs would disappear too, but the overheads would remain.) You should also calculate depreciation of any capital investments such as equipment and infrastructure. To do this, take the initial cost of an item, divide that across its useful life in years to reach it's yearly depreciation cost.

### 2 Other Appendices

If you want to reference articles or other documents but they are too big to include in the narrative you can include them in the appendices and reference them in the main text.