

ENTERPRISING RURAL FAMILIES



An Online Newsletter

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Got DEBT? Several ways to get yourself back on track for 2017



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Are you starting to feel the consequences of the holiday excess? Over-eating and over-spending are common activities during the holiday season. January is a time for renewal; thus New Year's resolutions. How are you going to lose those extra pounds and/or pay off your credit cards? Do you have a plan to reach your goals?

In my family, it was important for us to stay on budget during the holiday season. Prioritizing and making choices were part of our plan to stay out of debt. It was difficult at times since marketing is a powerful tool. The major pull for me to spend more money on gifts was guilt! My family and friends deserve so much more than we were buying for them. We planned a winter outdoor day; to spent time together, which helped to ease these feelings of "not enough." Another strategy we use is writing down our goals (along with pictures). These goals included spending only \$1000.00 for gifts and \$500 for decorations and extra food. SMART goals help to gain a clear view of your goals and mission and can be used with most areas.

SMART goals and what each acronym means:

S: Specific what is going to be done or accomplished?

M: Measurable how will you measure your progress (money, grades, weight, etc.)

A: Attainable is this a goal you can reach, is it within your power to control? If not, reformulate a new goal.

R: Realistic what do you want the end results to be?

T: Time Bound, define a clear deadline or end

This newsletter is an instrument of the Enterprising Rural Families: Making It Work program of University of Wyoming Extension. For further information corning the Enterprising Rural Families program or on-line course contact information@eRuralFamilies.org or go to <http://eRuralFamilies.org/>.





Begin with your written spending plan!

Example of a SMART goal:

Specific: Beginning in November 2015, to save \$300.00 per month to attend the Dave Ramsey's financial coach master training in Tennessee by August 2016 (ten months).

Measurable: \$2895.00 total (training is 1795.00, the cost of roundtrip airplane ticket from WY to TN, approximately \$850.00 and meals/incidentals (for four days, approximately \$250.00).

Attainable: Steps 1-5 to achieve this goal:

1. Contact representatives about the training, ask multiple questions.
2. Send in \$500.00 signup fee for the training/class along with completed application in January 2016.
3. Make arrangements for time off at work.
4. Make arrangements for travel (airplane, hotel and taxi to destination). Will pay for airline tickets with money saved.
5. Continue saving \$300 a month and then complete payment for training and attend.

Realistic: Yes, it is at this time.

Time bound: Financial Coach Master Training to be completed in August 2016. Can make new goals once these are completed.

Any method that works for you is one to use! Each person has their own "system."

Systems would include paper and pencil, Excel spreadsheets, budget templates, 3-ring binders with indexes, check registers, computer software or a combination of these systems.

Here are other some tips to reduce your debt.

- ◆ WRITE down any major goals, possibly a picture posted where you can view it daily. Share these goals with your family.
- ◆ List all of your bills and get a system (3-ring binder or box, etc.)
- ◆ Get a *temporary* part-time job (newspapers, cleaning, babysitting, cutting hair, delivering pizzas, or other money making activities).
- ◆ Sell some items on craigslist, eBay, Facebook, or other sell sites
- ◆ QUIT going to the store, unless you have a plan and list. Take stock of your items at home before going to the store.
- ◆ Barter some services (if possible)
- ◆ Check off any goals or accomplishments to give you HOPE and traction!
- ◆ Plan for fun, low-cost entertainment



**Farm Publications for Winter Reading**

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Winter is a good time to catch up on what is happening in the industry, and there are lots of hard copy magazines and newspapers that serve the agricultural and rural audiences. Here are a few national and regional ones (Northern Plains of the US) that can provide a slightly different lens through which to view the work we do and the lives we lead. And they provide insights on operational, strategic, political, and cultural aspects that can be valuable.

Some of the publications are based on a paid subscription; some are free (though you may have to be a member of an organization (or buy a tractor!) to get them, or you may have to complete a form to “qualify” to get a free subscription). Almost all have an email newsletter signup or webpage for more or archived content, and most have a social media presence on Facebook or Twitter or YouTube or the like. As to format, some are printed on newsprint, some as glossy magazines. Most are monthly, though some are weekly. A few are quarterly. All can help expand our knowledge and provide insights and inspiration to help improve our family ventures.

A few ag publications tend to have content that is more strategic than tactical.

Farm Futures – big picture ag and strategic farm management. www.farmfutures.com

AgriMarketing – agribusiness news and discussion for North America. www.agrimarketing.com

Top Producer – ag news targeted to larger ag producers. www.agweb.com/top-producer

Most ag publications offer some very good tactical, informative content, and this is the category that most general ag publications I follow fall into.

Beef – well known cattle magazine. beefmagazine.com

Farm Journal – long running ag magazine emphasizing production, technology and policy.
www.agweb.com/farmjournal

ACRES USA – practical information on production-scale organic and sustainable farming.
www.acresusa.com

Drovers – beef cattle production magazine. www.cattlenetwork.com

Hay & Forage Grower – magazine on hay and forage production, markets, equipment and editorials.
hayandforage.com

Progressive Farmer – farming magazine with more emphasis on production in the southern US
www.dtnpf.com

Progressive Cattleman – “practical beef operation management” news (also publishes **Progressive Dairyman**). www.progressivecattle.com

Corn & Soybean Digest – Production news on corn and soybeans. cornandsoybeandigest.com

Vegetable Growers News - vegetablegrowersnews.com

Country Folks Grower (Western Edition) – “a monthly newspaper for greenhouses, nurseries, fruit and vegetable growers, farm markets, landscapers and Christmas.” <http://cfgrower.com/>

Western Fruit Grower – fruits, grapes, nuts www.growingproduce.com/magazine/american-fruit-grower

AgriMarketing – news and discussion for the North American agribusiness community.
www.agrimarketing.com

Cattle Business Weekly - published every Wednesday offering current industry news, event coverage and market reports to a large region surrounding South Dakota cattlebusinessweekly.com

Sheep Industry News – monthly publication of the American Sheep Industry Association about the industry. www.sheepusa.org

The Furrow – John Deere’s magazine. johndeerefurrow.com
Successful Farming – information on business, production and family. www.agriculture.com
Wheat Life – publication of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers. wheatlife.org
Growing for Market – “news and ideas for local food producers.” www.growingformarket.com
Prairie Star – broad range weekly ag newspaper serving Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. **Farm Progress** is a sister publication. www.thepraiestar.com
Trader’s Dispatch – free monthly newspaper serving ag, heavy machinery and trucking in the West. Good advertisements. www.tradersdispatch.com
Fence Post – Rural news from Colorado and Nebraska. Sister publication to **Tri-State Livestock News**. www.thefencepost.com
Stockman Grass Farmer – “devoted solely to the art and science of making a profit from grassland agriculture.” www.stockmangrassfarmer.com
High Plains Journal – broad ag publication serving the Midwest. Good classifieds. www.hpj.com
Prairie Grains – wheat production magazine for the northern plains. www.prairiegrains.com
Wheat Farmer/Row Crop Farmer – crop production information centered on the High Plains. thewheatfarmer.com
In Good Tilth – Produced by Oregon Tilth (a certifier of organic production) with an emphasis on biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture. tilth.org/in-good-tilth
Western Farmer-Stockman – one of numerous regional newspaper-format publications from Farm Progress, including Prairie Farmer. www.farmprogress.com
Wyoming Livestock Roundup – regionally focused cattle, ag and rural newspaper. www.wylr.net

This isn’t a comprehensive list of all the publications that touch on ag in the Northern Plains, so if you’ve found other publications that have been helpful, send me a note: cehmke@uwyo.edu. Thanks, and happy reading!



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