Lessons Learned: Staying Small & Profitable  
NYS Growers Expo 2013  
Quincy Farm

Introduction
-Snapshot of our farm
-Who we are / how we got here
-Our goals

The Planning Process
-Envisioning the farm you want: Size, labor, marketing, equipment, etc.
-Filling in the details from as many sources as possible
   -Farmers willing to share books, business plans, balance sheets, etc.
   -Equipment & material costs: catalogs, web, auction attendance,
     IronSearch/Fastline/TractorHouse/Equipment finder, craigslist, etc
   -Presentations, farm visits, articles, webpages RE others' systems and equipment
-Connecting where you are with where you want to be: land, capital, experience
-Have a long-term and very detailed plan so you know at any point along the way if you're on track
-Identifying and addressing weaknesses

Our Process
-Formal written business plan
-Nuts and Bolts 10 year financial plan: capital investment, operating expenses, employees/labor,
marketing and income, personal/household financial needs, cash flow
-Balance between reinvesting profits and paying yourself
-Recordkeeping tools

Why to plan
-It's easier to adapt a plan than create one from scratch
-You avoid making decisions that are hard to change later: field layout, infrastructure, etc
-It helps you to make smart decisions for the long-term health of your farm
   -What/why/cost/availability of future purchases = taking advantage of unusual opportunities
   -Identifying what not to buy / what you'll grow out of
-When the sh*t hits the fan, you have the information already in front of you to make an intelligent
decision in the chaos of mid-season.

Adapting
-Constant revisiting and updating
   -Is the farm you originally envisioned still your goal and/or practical
   -Being able to reprioritize expenses accurately when you recognize an unforeseen need
   -Updating your actual income and expenses as often as is practical

Closing
-Ultimately none of it matters if you don't enjoy your life.
-Q&A