



## AGRICULTURE FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research project being led by Dr. Adam Daigneault, a faculty member in the School of Forest Resources at the University of Maine and Dr. Richard Smith, a professor in the University of New Hampshire's College of Life Sciences and Agriculture. The purpose of the research is to understand the barriers to adopting various management practices on your farm, especially when dealing with weather and climate variability. We are particularly interested in interviewing participants who are actively involved with agriculture in Maine. We are specifically targeting Maine farmers who actively manage potato, diversified vegetable, dairy, organic, and/or blueberry farm systems. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

### **What Will You Be Asked to Do?**

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to fill out a short electronic questionnaire on your farm system and experience, as well as answer questions as part of a 10 to 12 person virtual focus group via Zoom. The questionnaire is confidential and will contain questions such as "what is the area of your farm" and "what types of crops do you grow." The focus group component of the study is primarily open ended and will ask questions related to your knowledge and willingness to implement certain management practices such as planting cover crops. We will record the session to ensure that we have adequately captured the group's responses. It may take up to 180 minutes to participate in this focus group and respond to the questionnaire.

### **Risks**

Except for your time and inconvenience, there are no risks to you from participating in this study.

### **Benefits**

Although there are no direct benefits to you, the overall research is intended to better understand how farmer use and barriers to adoption of management practices that can help farms cope with weather and climate-related challenges. This research will also help us understand management constraints among Maine farmers and foresters, which could influence the development of educational resources and state-wide policies that could be helpful to landowners across the state.

### **Compensation**

All participants in this part of the study will receive a \$100 Visa gift card as compensation for their time. Compensation will be distributed immediately after the focus group has concluded. Participants wishing to receive compensation must to adhere to the University of Maine's Human Subject Payment Guidelines, which requires the researchers to disclose who received payments to the University of Maine's Department of Purchasing for IRS purposes.

### **Confidentiality**

All focus groups will be digitally recorded and transcribed by the researchers. Your name will not be on any of the data. The questionnaire you fill out will be tabulated in an electronic database that will be kept on a password protected computer in the lead researcher's office until December 2027. A code number will be used to protect your identity. A key linking your name to the data will be kept separate from the data in a locked office and destroyed by December 2021. Data, including all Zoom recordings, tabulated questionnaires, and transcriptions will be stored on a password protected computer. Zoom recordings will be deleted by December 2021, after the transcription has been completed and we have ensured that no follow up with participants are required. The processed transcriptions will be stored indefinitely. Only researchers directly involved in this project will have access to this data. Your name or other identifying information will not be reported in any publications. Due to the group format, the researchers cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will keep all responses confidential.

### **Voluntary**

Participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part in this study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You will still receive full compensation for participating, even if you do not answer all of the questions.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the lead researcher at 207-581-2805 or [adam.daigneault@maine.edu](mailto:adam.daigneault@maine.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Compliance, University of Maine, 207-581-2657 (or e-mail [umric@maine.edu](mailto:umric@maine.edu)).