

# Assisting with farm and ranch transitions to a non-family successor

Lessons learned by programs in the Plains and Midwestern states



INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON  
**OSTROM WORKSHOP**

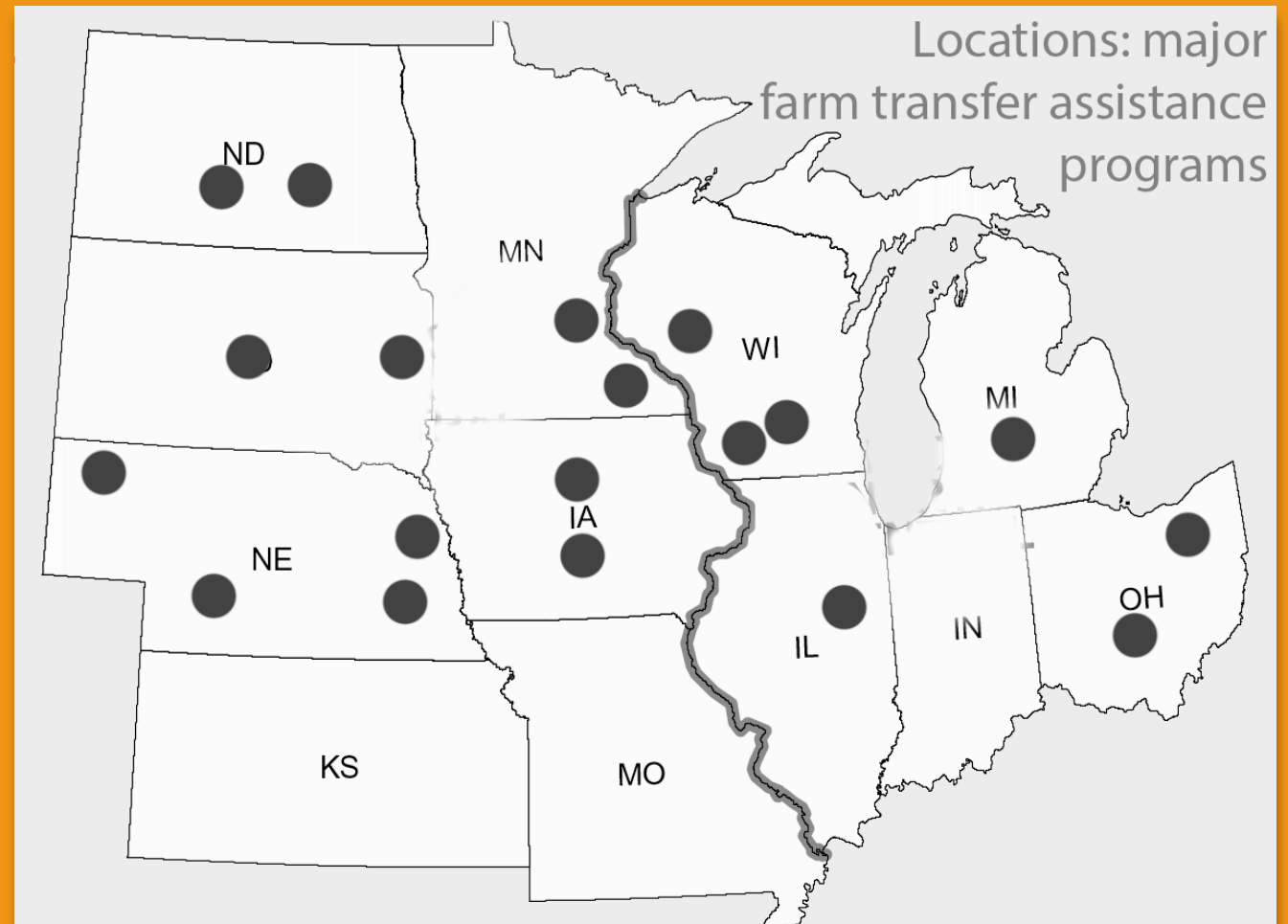
# KRC

KANSAS RURAL CENTER



## Types & locations of “linking” programs

- Listing - classified ads - unstaffed
- Listing - classified ads - staffed / managed, brokered
- Linking - with some support / facilitation
- Mixers / meet-ups / networking events
- Online discussion space (list serv)
- State tax credit
- Cost-share
- Mentoring / apprenticeships
- Community college ag/livestock program
- Ranching/grazing/dairying-specific



# Research questions

Problem: demonstrating program effectiveness

- How to demonstrate sufficient return on staff time invested?
- How to meet differing needs of owners and seekers?

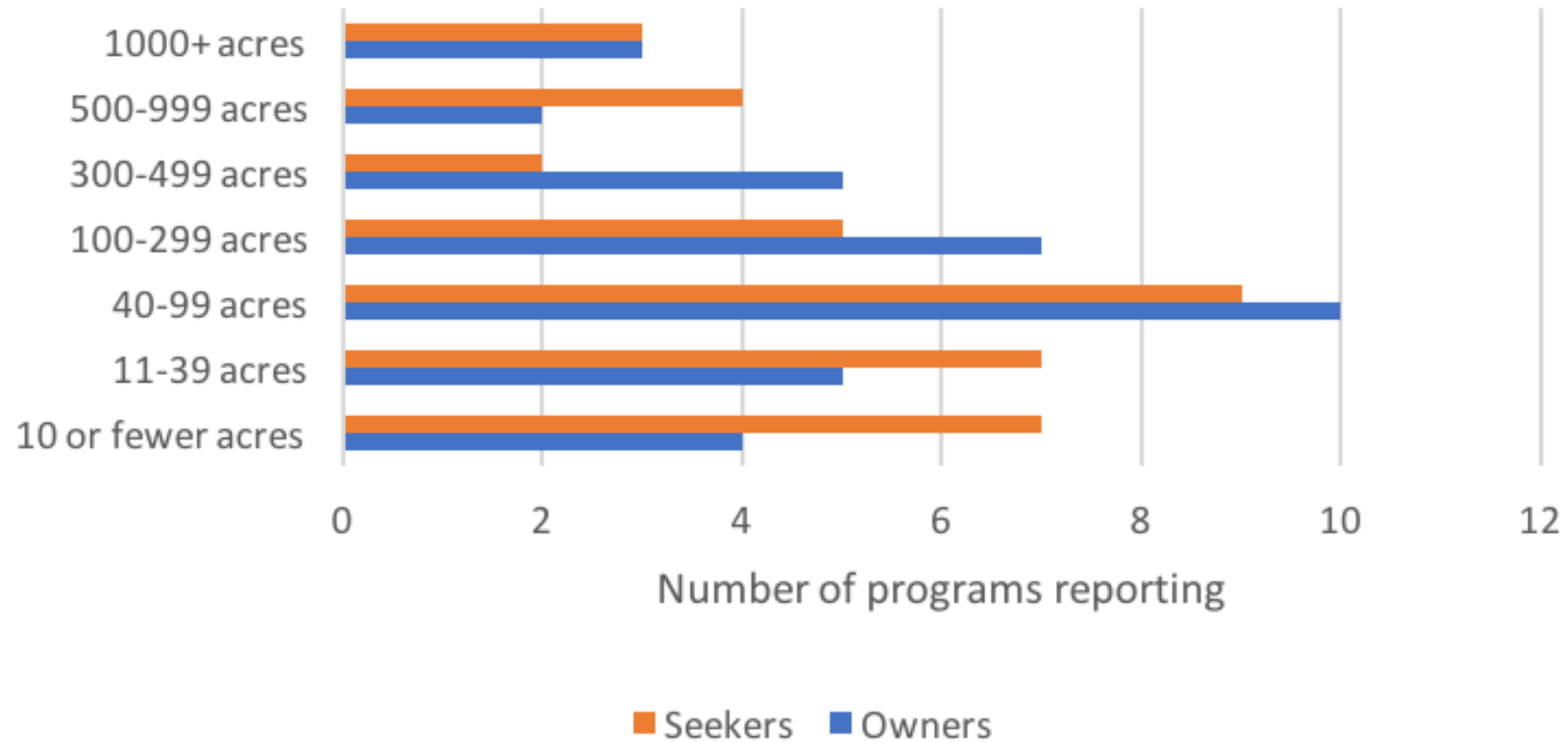
Main questions for program leaders:

- What is and what isn't working?
- For ended programs, why did you stop?
- Where ideally would your program be heading next?
- What do you see as best public investments in helping farms/ranches to continue by transferring to a non-family successor (policy, funds, infrastructure)?
- What tips the balance for a landowner who would like to transfer to an unrelated seeker?
- Appeal of models alternative to "turnkey" buyer-seller transactions

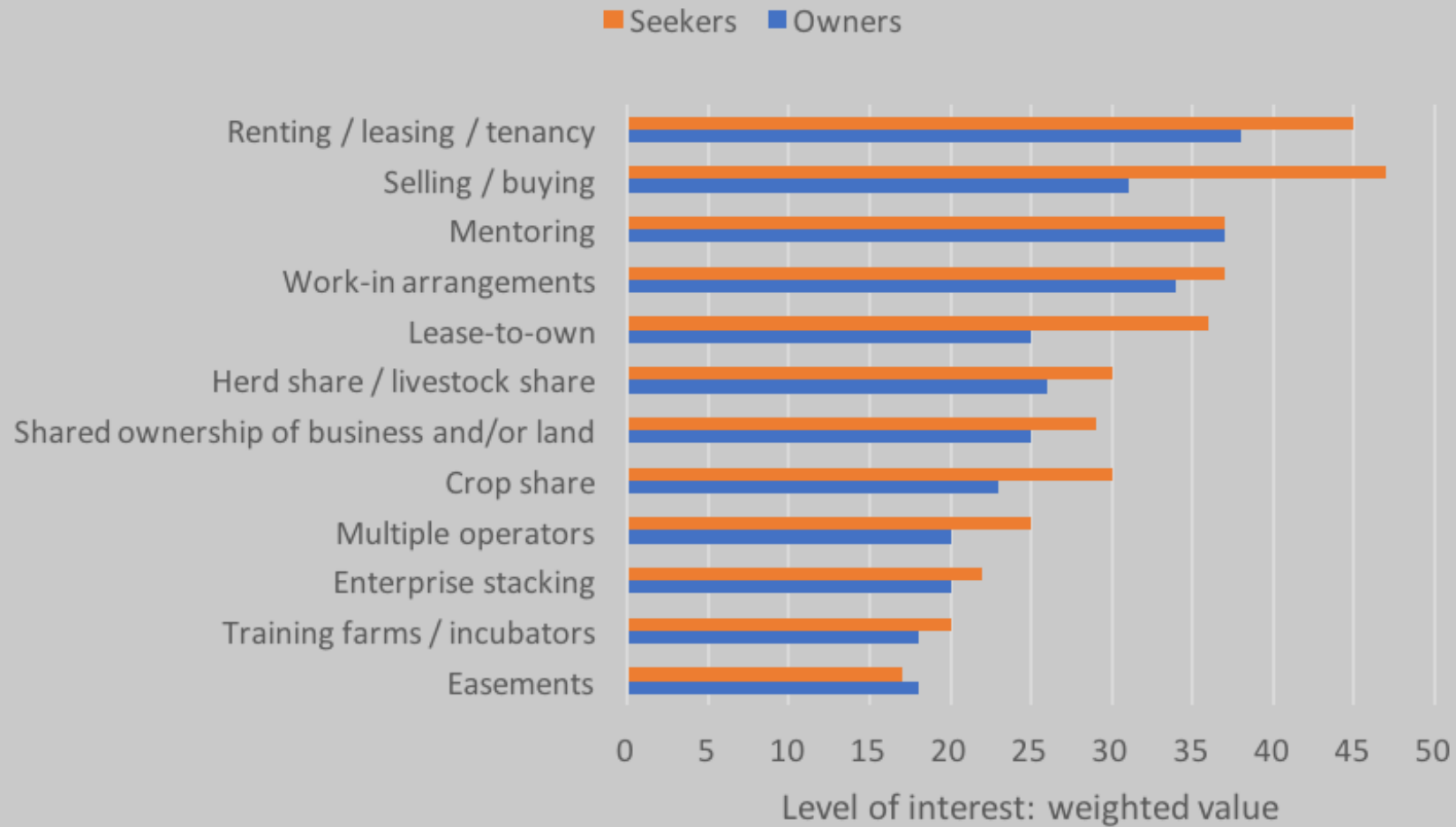


# Comparison: owners and seekers

## Amount of land owners/seekers aim to transfer



## Owner/seeker interest in models of transition



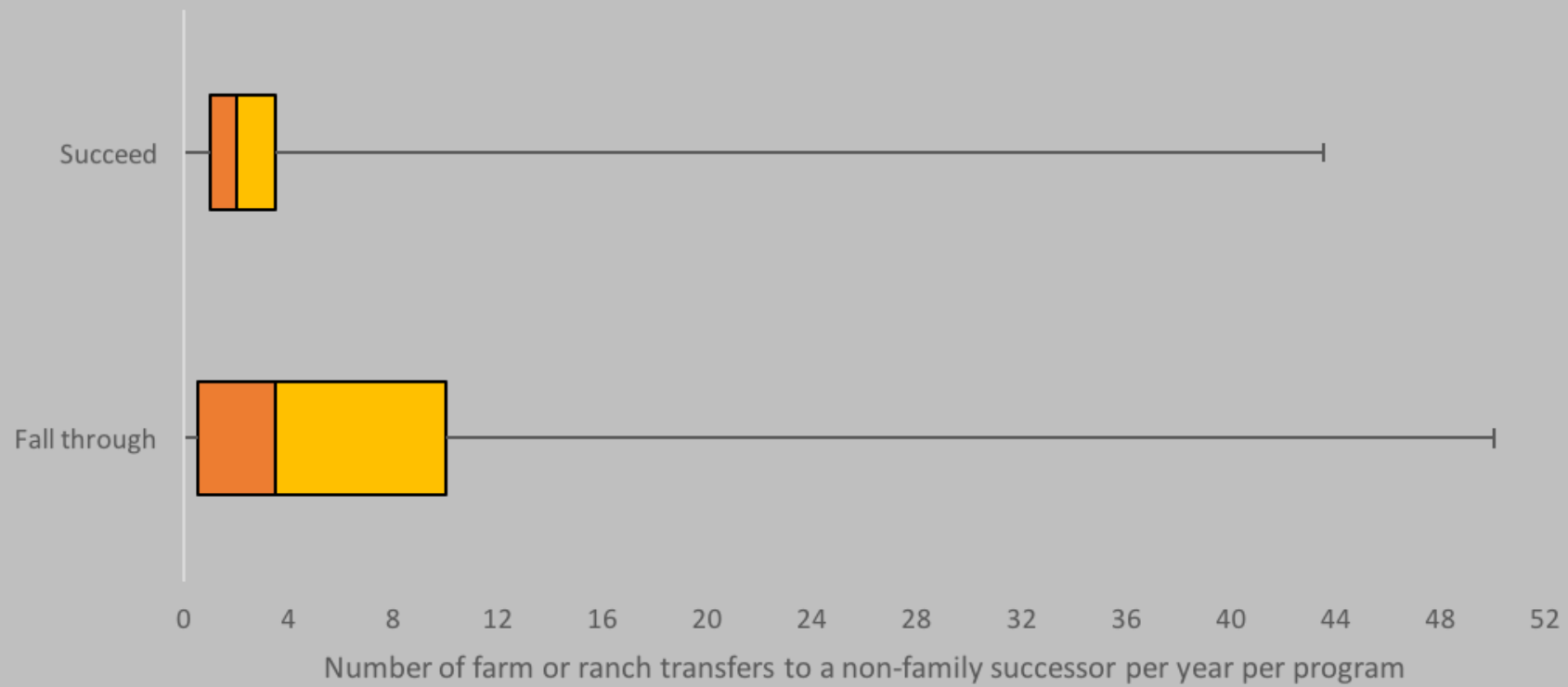
# Program effectiveness







Estimated number of transfers per year that these programs assist:  
Transfers that "make progress but fall through"  
and transfers that succeed



# Steps to a successful transition

## Most difficult

1. Owners clarify their goals
2. Owners and seekers find each other
3. Seekers clarify their goals
4. Owners complete a succession plan
5. Owners prepare a feasible financial plan

## Program effectiveness

1. Owners and seekers find each other
2. Seekers clarify their goals
3. Owners clarify their goals

# Interview data

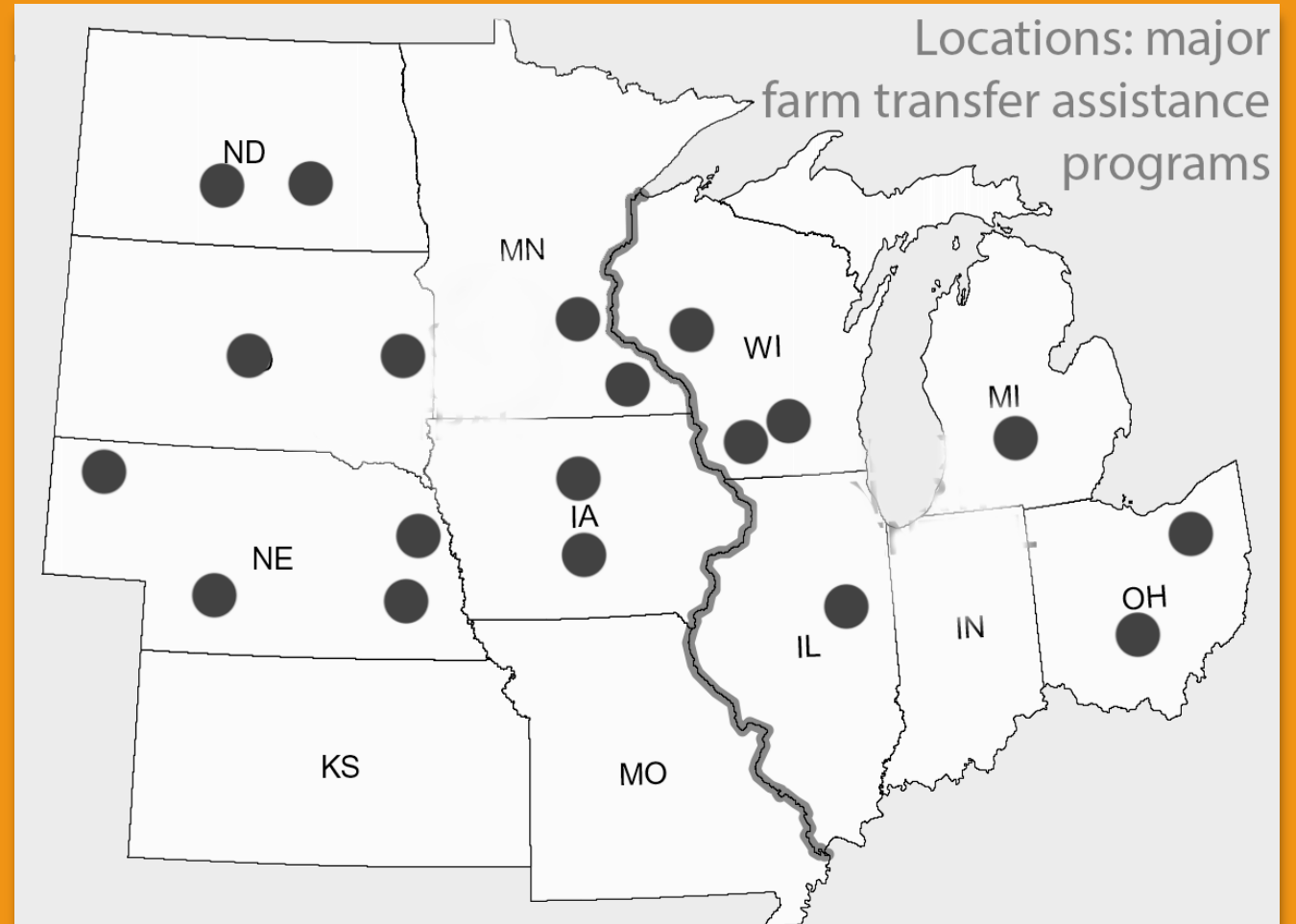
- Listing is valuable
- Networking events are awkward but valuable
  - Combine with existing agricultural events and an online discussion space
- Relationship building is central - how best for a program to facilitate?
- State tax credit programs are effective in two ways:
  - Financial incentive attracts owners to a long-term lease with a beginner
  - Endorsing and publicizing beginning farmers
- Mentoring - mentor training is a need, can provide one piece of a meaningful retirement
- Interventions with/for associated professionals



Next steps

## Phase 2: Kansas & Indiana

- Translate findings into recommendations tailored to Kansas and Indiana
- Stakeholder meetings and program development in KS and IN



# Phase 3: Outreach and education

## Transition stories

- Collect and broadcast stories of farm/ranch transitions between unrelated parties
  - Success, mixed success, and where something went wrong
  - Owners who anticipate transferring outside the family: what would help them
- Listening to farm/ranch owners and seekers
  - StoryCorps interviews
  - Phone interviews
  - Case studies
- Radio and podcast outreach
  - Commercial farm radio programs
  - Podcasters
  - Public radio networks
- Deliver transition stories to a large audience via broadcasts & social media announcements



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