

Communication is the key to apprentice-farmer relationships. Use this checklist as a guide during your initial meeting/interview to make sure everyone is clear about what they're getting into.

Things to tell prospective apprentices about you, the farm, and the experience

Work

The work schedule – hours/day, days/week, when & how often to expect to work overtime
Type of work to expect – repetitive, boring, independent
Time off – hours per week, days per season
Usual rising and quitting time
Allowance for emergency time off
Expectations of apprentices during time off, i.e., watering, stoking stoves, animal chores, child care
Work/safety clothing and tool requirements - boots, rain gear, ear protection, gloves, etc

Education and training

Your personal teaching style and techniques
Educational plans and resources available
Amount of time you can/will spend working alongside and training apprentices (do you work off the farm during the growing season?)
Use of machinery – unlimited, restricted, supervised, unsupervised
Access to Farm Training Projects – time off, transportation

The exchange arrangement

Stipend – fixed, graduated, reward for staying to end of season, profit-share, incentives
Room & board
Insurance coverage

The household & living arrangements

Housing, bathing & cooking arrangements
Meals – shared or separate, dietary restrictions, how much food is provided as part of compensation (which non-farm-raised items are provided? Which are the apprentices' responsibility?)
Expectations for cooking and clean-up chores, routine house cleaning
Terms of access to amenities in main house – phone, internet, laundry, tv/video, shower, hot tub, etc
Privacy needs of farmers and apprentices.
Visitor policy – length of stay, work requirement, paying for meals, etc

Health concerns

Any disabilities or chronic issues that may slow you down or limit your activity
Allergies

Personal

Personal temperament
Philosophies and ideologies
Taste in music and art
Approach to smoking, drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc

MOFGA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
Meeting Prospective Apprentices: Guidelines for Farmers, continued

Things to ascertain about prospective apprentices
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Work

- General attitude about work
- Work ethic and experience level
- Enthusiasm and desire to learn
- Strength and stamina – how well they know their bodies and their physical limits
- Availability for overtime & weekend work
- Feelings about selling & marketing
- Feelings about boring, repetitive work
- Feelings about working alone
- Time off and vacation needs

Education and training

- Expectations for learning and training – what they want to get out of their experience
- Personal learning style – experiential, visual, auditory, autodidactic, etc
- Appetite for reading and research
- Intellectual approach to farming & agriculture
- Motivations for apprenticing and plans for future

The exchange arrangement

- Financial needs
- Insurance needs

The household & living arrangements

- Needs for interaction/privacy
- Level of creature comfort needs
- Cooking experience
- Dietary restrictions
- Household skills and organization
- Pets

Health concerns

- Any disabilities or chronic issues that may slow you down or limit your activity
- Allergies

Personal

- Personal temperament
- Philosophies and ideologies
- Feelings about killing animals (if applicable)
- Taste in music and art
- Hobbies, interests, ancillary skills
- Approach to smoking, drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc

Special considerations for couples

- Length of relationship
- Commitment level
- Ever lived together?
- Ever worked together?