

2024 FARMER MANUAL



New Entry Sustainable Farming Project is a program of
Tufts University, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy Agriculture Food
and Environment Program

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Purpose of Farmer Manual

The purpose of the New Entry Farmer Manual is to provide the information you need to participate in our Incubator Farm Training Program. It outlines policies, costs, guidelines, as well as the expectations and requirements to be a member of the business incubator.

The New Entry Farmer Manual provides:

- Basic information on the fees, schedules, and rules of the New Entry Incubator Farm.
- Training schedule for this season.
- Expectations.
- Basic New Entry policy guides.

The New Entry Incubator Farm Training Program helps you:

- Access land at our farm at affordable rates.
- Access basic farm tools, training, and technical assistance so you can start on a farm right away.
- Work on your vision to transition off the incubator.
- Become a successful farmer who farms in a safe, legal, and responsible way.

Please read each section very carefully and make sure you understand what we expect from you and what you can expect from us. If you have any questions, please talk to New Entry's staff.



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New Entry Incubator Farm Training Program Description



The goal of the **Incubator Farm Training Program** is to help you to start a successful farming business. You will receive assistance all year long for up to three years to help you grow your crops and grow your business. We will help you to implement your farm business plan, learn production and business skills, connect you to resources, and find markets to sell your products.

New Entry Training Team:

- Leah Jurman, Incubator Farm Manager - Contact: leah.jurman@tufts.edu and (203) 513-1224
- Emily Round, Technical Assistance Manager - Contact: emily.round@tufts.edu and (978) 270-7350
- Ben Zoba, Beginning Farmer Educator – Contact: benjamin.zoba@tufts.edu and (315) 729-6755
- Julien Barrere, Farmer Training Manager – Contact: julien.barrere@tufts.edu and (617) 909-2594
- Sara Davis, Food Hub Manager – Contact: sara.davis@tufts.edu

Incubator Farm Training Program – what we provide for you:

Land to farm:

You can access land at our Incubator Farm in Beverly. We will help with primary tillage, access to irrigation, equipment, storage, and other services.

Before the season:

We help you one-on-one with:

- Planning your crops and markets.
- Ordering seeds and seedlings.
- Getting permits and insurance.

Training and on-farm assistance:

We offer hands-on training so that you can learn to:

- Plant crops.
- Set up irrigation systems.
- Control weeds, pests, and diseases safely.
- Use farm equipment.
- Establish cover crops.

New Entry also hosts a variety of workshops that farmers can attend and will communicate about other educational opportunities in the area or online.

Markets:

We help you identify places to sell your crops and get the best prices for them. You can also join the New Entry Food Hub to sell your crops.

Managing your farm business plans:

We provide technical assistance with recordkeeping, financials, bookkeeping, and business planning. We can help update your business plan as you progress through the incubator program.

Incubator Farm Training Program – what we require from you:

New Entry Incubator is a training program, this means that it will require certain commitments from your end. By joining the incubator, you enroll in an education program which will require you to attend workshops, participate in farm tours and other events organized by New Entry. As a participant you will be expected to take part in some of the research that New Entry is leading, which will include filling surveys and writing letters of support.

Completion of Business Training Course & Business Plan:

You must complete The Farm Business Planning course and produce a viable business plan, to be considered and approved by our farmer training team before you begin to farm. If you are returning for a second or third season, you will need to update and revise your business plan to fit your goal for the year and send it in for review.

Required Trainings & Attendance at Trainings:

You can find the list of mandatory and optional training in the table below. While attendance isn't mandatory for some trainings, participation is essential for accessing certain resources. For instance, you must attend the tool safety workshop to use New Entry-owned tools like the BCS rototiller. Similarly, training is required before setting up an irrigation system, using pesticides, or utilizing the wash station.

In addition, we highly recommend that you attend New Entry's workshops and training sessions scheduled for the Spring and early Summer.

Date	Workshop	Description
Sunday March 17th 1-3pm	*Season Orientation for Incubator Farmers, Nutrient Management Plans and Food Safety Plans. MANDATORY	Join us for our opening season meeting. We will review the Incubator Farmer manual & farm policies for the season, go over all safety policies, and review guidelines for the mandatory Nutrient Management and Food Safety Plans.
TBD at orientation	Equipment, Tool safety and maintenance.	We will review proper usage, handling, and storage of all New Entry tools available to you. You will also be required to do a one-on-one safety training before you can use the BCS tractors or flame weeder.
TBD at orientation	Irrigation	Learn how to set up drip and overhead irrigation systems. Understand the water needs of your crops and best practices for conserving water.
TBD at orientation	Pesticide safety	Learn what chemicals controls are available to you on the incubator farm and how to safely apply them.
Sunday November 16th	End of Season Gathering MANDATORY	Join your fellow Incubator farmers to celebrate the end of the season!

The content covered in these workshops is essential to growing on the incubator farm. If you're unable to attend a workshop, it's expected that you arrange a makeup session with the farm manager. This should be completed within two weeks of the missed workshop.

Case Management meetings with staff:

You will be required to regularly meet with the training team. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure your success. The farmer training team will reach out to each incubator farmer to schedule three annual meetings:

1. **Pre-season meeting between March – May.** During this meeting we will assess skills, set season goals, review business plans, and plan for season record keeping.
2. **Mid-season meeting between July – August.** During this meeting we will check in on progress towards goals, discuss challenges, provide feedback on crop quality, and check in on record keeping management.
3. **End-season meeting between October – December.** During this meeting we will reflect on season goals, review sales, fill out basic financial records, analyze the results of season record keeping, and discuss winter planning.

Monthly Crop Production Meetings:

You will be required to meet with the farmer training team once a month from May to October. The purpose of these meetings will be to track progress, adjust plans, address pest issues, and generally trouble shoot crop production. This meeting will be accompanied by a field walk. The mid-season meeting will include the monthly crop production meeting to avoid redundancy.

Before these meetings, we might ask that you complete a questionnaire, self-assessment, and/or feedback forms. We request that you fill these out in advance to ensure our meetings are as productive and efficient as possible.

If you do not attend a scheduled meeting, you will receive a notification that you have missed the meeting. You will have two weeks to reschedule and attend the meeting. **If you do not reschedule and attend the meeting within that 2-week period, you will be considered noncompliant with the Incubator Farmer Training Agreement (please see the [Consequences and Probation](#) section for more information).**

We encourage you to schedule other regular or impromptu meetings with the Incubator Farm Manager and other New Entry staff to discuss anything you would like. Don't be shy!

Recordkeeping:

Records are a crucial part of farm and business management. As such, we require you to maintain a variety of records and will assist you in developing strategies that

work for you. Important records include production details like bed preparation, fertilizer application, planting, seeding, cultivation, harvest, and pest and disease observations and treatments. Business records such as sales, income and expenses, and profit and loss statements are also vital for improving your skills and business. These records are crucial for establishing a production history, qualifying for federal and state programs.

We expect you to keep good records of:

- Business Plan.
- Crops planted with a map of crop locations.
- Pesticide use.
- Nutrient and amendment inputs.
- Sales and expenses.
- Food safety plans and monitoring associated with plans.
- Harvest records.
- Equipment use (for maintenance scheduling).

Records For New Entry:

New Entry requires you to report certain key records in our logbooks. These are essential for meeting our food safety and USDA Organic Certification requirements. New Entry will show you how to use the record-keeping logs and will oversee the logs to be sure they are complete.

The required records are:

- Fertilizer and amendment applications (including compost)
- Pesticide applications
- Machine/equipment usage

Fertilizer and amendment applications, and pesticide applications **must be recorded the day of their application in the wash station Log Binder**. You will need to log where, what, when, how much, and by whom.

Machine/Equipment Usage must be recorded in the equipment bay log books.

Participation in New Entry events:

Please do your best to be available to participate in occasional farm tours, speaking events, New Entry events and Incubator farm community work days. We will give you as much notice as possible. While we don't require you to participate in every event, you are expected to attend a few of them each year.

Communications:

There are a lot of people and moving parts at New Entry and it is important, as people sharing this space, to be able to easily communicate.

As such **every incubator farmer will need to:**

- Become part of our group email.
- Join our Slack channel.

The Slack channel enables us to categorize discussions by topic, share pictures, files, and other content either with the entire group or between individuals. It serves as a platform for disseminating vital property information, such as updates on pump and irrigation use, wash station, greenhouse details, and property closures. Additionally, it is a valuable tool for reporting pest sightings, identifying plant diseases collectively, and sharing resources. If using Slack is absolutely not feasible for you, please discuss alternatives with the farm manager.

Fees / Payments



	Fee	Due Date	Fee Includes
Program Agreement	\$1000/acre (\$250/per 1/4 acre)	April 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring/fall primary tillage. • Cover crop consulting and supplies. • Landowner fees. • Access to irrigation & electricity. • Basic field-scale fertilizer and application
Sanitary and trash fee	\$150	April 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For portable toilet facilities for the duration of the season and a dumpster rental for end of season cleanup.
Technical Assistance	\$350/ season One-on-One Support: March- December	April 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any one-on-one Technical Assistance. • Disease identification. • Insect identification. • Training topic follow ups. • Best practices information. • Printed materials on farm and production related topics. • Record keeping advice. • Business Planning

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookkeeping and Financials • Marketing
Custom Tractor Work	\$35/hour	Upon completion of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tillage (outside of the initial primary tillage included). • Disc and harrow. • Raised beds. • Mowing. • Cultivation (if beds are set up to fit the tractor and the equipment).
Plastic Mulch Supplies	\$100/1000 bed feet	At start of season or completion of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available in 1000 bed ft. increments (roughly 1/8 acre). • Includes plastic mulch and two drip irrigation lines. • Cost of custom tractor work is included. • Farmer must be present to assist in plastic laying. Coordinate with farm staff to schedule.
Equipment Fee	\$200 / season	April 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of BCS two-wheeled tractors and implements (tillers, mowers, rotary plow). • Scheduled maintenance and fuel included (repairs due to misuse are not included in this fee). • Use of flame weeder. • Use of string trimmers. • Use of backpack sprayers. • Use of hand tools and wheelbarrows. <p>You must follow all Equipment Use guidelines.</p>
Pesticide Fee	\$60 / season	April 30th	<p>Use of pesticides and fungicides approved of and provided by New Entry staff.</p> <p>You must follow all Pesticide Safety and Pest Management guidelines.</p>
Cooler Use	\$200 / season	April 30th	You must follow the Cooler Use guidelines .
Greenhouse Rental	\$400/ season	April 30th	<p>This price includes five 60-quart bags of potting soil for seedling propagation.</p> <p>You must follow all Greenhouse Use guidelines.</p>

General Farm Guidelines



All incubator participants, employees, staff, and visitors are to be treated with respect and dignity at all times. We require participants to comply with laws regarding discrimination in hiring and employment practices. We expect all parties to maintain a workplace free of discrimination, harassment, and any other form of inappropriate behavior or abuse on any grounds, including but not limited to age, disability, ethnic or social origin, gender, gender identity, nationality, race, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, pregnancy, political convictions, religious beliefs, union affiliation, or veteran status.

Incubator Farm Hours:

The farm site is open from sunrise to sunset. Generally, no earlier than 6 am and no later than 8pm.

Tillage Schedule:

Spring: We begin field tillage in April depending on weather and soil conditions. **You will have access to your plot no later than May 1.**

Fall: We begin summer cash crop residue tillage in late September/early October. **Plant late-season crops in one location, so we can prep the remaining areas for fall cover crops.** Please discuss your plan with the farm-site manager about where you want to plant your late crops.

You must:

- Till and plant cover crop seed on any areas still planted after fall plowing.
- Remove all stakes and trellises by November 15th.
- Store or remove all your property by December 1st.

****Exception: pre- approved winter production****

Locks & Gates:

To prevent accidental deer entry, all gates in the deer fence must remain closed at all times. This includes times when you are working on the farm. It's crucial to make sure the gate is securely closed whenever you leave the field. Do not assume that someone else, even if seen elsewhere on the farm, will close the gate near your plot. Repeatedly leaving the fence unlocked or open may result in disciplinary action

Tool Shed + Storage:

There will be a small amount of space available to store your items. New Entry is not liable for any personal property stored at the farm.

Storage space will be designated under the barn, perpendicular to where the BCS tractors are stored and will be discussed at our first meeting of the season.

Keep all shared equipment and supplies secure (see [Equipment Use Section](#)) and use as follows:

- Keep storage areas clean and avoid items that bring insect pests, rodents, or mold. Keep such items if needed to be at the farm in rodent proof containers (metal garbage bins with lids work well).
- Keep walkways clean and open, store items neatly.
- Label personal supplies to avoid confusion among fellow farmers.
- Respect New Entry property and the property of your fellow farmers.

Structures and Buildings:

You are not permitted to build any structures on the incubator farm. New Entry must approve in advance the installation of any fences, and removal of trees/limbs.

Trash:

You are responsible for removing all trash from your farm site: stakes, trellis netting, and other supplies. The dumpsters located behind the food hub building can be used for small amounts of trash. When disposing of larger amounts of material (during end-of-season field clean-up for example) each farmer should coordinate with New Entry staff for proper disposal. We will rent a dumpster for one month for the end of year cleanup.

Everything must be removed from your plot and the farm site by December 1st.

- Keep your fields and all common areas clean and neat at all times.
- Remove all trash each day.
- Stack your farm supplies neatly and prevent them from blowing into the fields.

Entrance and Parking:

You must only enter the Moraine Farm property through New Entry's designated driveway. Please only park in approved spaces on the farm and do not block New Entry vehicles or tractors, cooler, or food hub area access. Please limit driving in the fields to picking up and dropping off supplies and check in with Incubator Site Coordinator at orientation first. All vehicles must stay within designated drive lanes—no personal vehicles are to enter any other field space for any reason. If you have employees or volunteers coming, have them walk out to you or pick them up. Limit vehicles to one per plot for traffic reasons.

Farm Help and Visitors:

Please give New Entry the names and contact information for all people working on your fields. You must be on your farm when visitors or helpers are there. Be sure your visitors understand the farm guidelines and make sure you have the proper insurance to cover these workers and volunteers. See details under **Worker's Compensation Insurance in the Insurance section** for more information.

Renting the Plot:

You are **NOT** allowed to rent out your plot to anyone else for any purpose.

Access to your plot:

New Entry staff are allowed to enter your field when necessary and without notice. We also host field visits, volunteer events, and educational tours. We will notify you in advance of these events and encourage your involvement.

Photographers and Media Requests:

Sometimes the media, photographers, students, funders, donors, or other organizations visit the farm and want to take photos of you or your crops in the fields. New Entry staff will do their best to notify you in advance, so that if you do not wish to be photographed, you can inform us. Otherwise, we respectfully request that you engage with visitors on the farm who may be learning about, writing about, or promoting you or the program.

Additional Rules:

- Always supervise children and visitors.
- No open fires.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs, and unregistered firearms are not permitted.
- Violent or aggressive actions -physical or verbal- towards others is forbidden.
- No pets.
- Please respect our neighbors. Stay off their land and refrain from loud noises and music.

Organic Certification



New Entry's farm site at Moraine Farm is certified organic. This allows each incubator farm individually to achieve USDA Organic certification without needing to wait through the three-year transition period.

We **require our growers to only use NOP (National Organic Program) compliant practices and amendments** on their site to preserve our organic certification and allow subsequent growers to pursue their own certification without a transitional period.

While New Entry's Organic Certificate covers the entirety of Moraine Farm, each incubator's field will be separated off (on paper) into its own field entity. Therefore, if you want organic certification for your farm, **you must apply for your own organic certificate**. Each individual grower who pursues organic certification will be responsible for his/her own compliance with the Organic standards and the Organic certifying agency.

Growers who choose to opt out must keep a certain standard of records to demonstrate that their practices are in line with NOP requirements.

To learn more about the Organic certification process visit the Baystate Organic Certifiers website: <http://baystateorganic.org/>.

Water Use and Irrigation



Irrigation Schedule

You and your fellow farmers will work out watering schedules together with New Entry staff. A spirit of cooperation is necessary as everyone will be sharing a common resource.

There is a minimum and maximum length of drip irrigation that must be in use when the pump is on to not damage the system. Coordinating with others on site via the Slack Irrigation Channel is vital to keep the system from breaking. Turn off all watering systems at night and before you leave the farm.

You must be trained by the Farm Manager on how to turn the pump on and off and to know the limitations of the irrigation system. Helpers and family are not allowed to touch the pump system until arrangements are made for them to be trained and approved of by the farm manager.

Conserving Water:

- Avoid watering on sunny, windy days between the hours of 10 AM and 4 PM to avoid wasting water — more than 50% can evaporate.
- Check the soil 6 to 8 inches below the ground (root zone), before and after irrigating to see how much water to apply and whether you watered the root zone.
- Watch the weather. Irrigate less on cool, cloudy, or foggy days. Measure precipitation amounts with a rain gauge.
- Use mulch, compost, hay, or plastic to conserve soil moisture.
- Excess watering causes weak roots and unhealthy plants. It also washes away fertilizers.

Fixing Irrigation

You are responsible for making repairs due to damage you cause or incidents that occur in your field (i.e., rodent or mammal damage, nicks, tears, or leaks). **It is important that you fix any leaks as soon as you notice them to avoid wasting water, time, and money.**

Please notify New Entry of major irrigation problems or failures, especially involving a wellhead or pump.

Limitation of liability:

New Entry does not guarantee continuous access to water at all times at its Incubator Farm located at 733 Cabot Street in Beverly, MA. New Entry has access to a deep well at the farm and maintains the necessary equipment and pumps to accommodate water access needs during the growing season. New Entry has invested in appropriate infrastructure to the extent possible. If an event beyond the financial or physical control of New Entry occurs that limits access to farm site water, New Entry cannot assume liability.

It is imperative that all irrigation and water connections (hoses, irrigation hookups) are removed every day in cold weather to ensure that equipment is not damaged due to freezing above ground.

Soil and Land Use



Incubator farmers are **required** to produce crops by following the organic standards set by the National Organic Program (NOP). If farmers want to pursue organic certification for their own business it will need to be pursued separately, though New Entry is happy to help assist through that process and share the necessary field records.

Seeds and Seedlings:

- Use certified organic seeds when available or untreated conventional seeds if organic seeds are unavailable.
- Buy certified organically raised transplants.
- Be careful when buying conventional potting mix. They have fertilizers and chemicals that are not allowed.
- Organic farmers are not allowed to use genetically engineered (GE or GMO) seeds or plants.
- Be sure to keep detailed records of seed purchases, especially when purchasing conventionally grown seeds (which must always be untreated).

Soil Testing:

Farmers must do a Standard Soil Test (with Organic Matter) of their plot every year. Sometimes grant funds are available for this and the Farmer Training Team will let you know if that is possible.

Farmers must submit soil test results to the farm manager. We will give you a brochure for UMass Amherst Soil Testing Lab and we will teach you how to test the soil.

Fertilizers and Compost:

Your soil tests will determine which fertilizers and compost you should use. Record the total amounts of fertilizer and compost you use in the farm record book kept in the wash station.

- Untreated soil amendments of animal origin must be applied at least 90 days prior to harvest for crops whose edible portions do not come in contact with the soil, and at least 120 days prior to harvest of crops whose edible portions do come in contact with the soil.
- Follow NOP guidelines on how to properly make compost and vermicompost. If buying compost, ensure the facility is producing Baystate Organic certifiers compliant compost. Many are not certified for use in organic production.
- Always refer to NOP standards to determine if a commercially made fertilizer is available for use on organic farms. Look for the OMRI (Organic Material Review Institute) seal on any amendments to ensure NOP compliance. Simply seeing “organic” on the bag or container is **not** adequate.

Cover Crops:

We will assist you in planting cover crops such as buckwheat, oats, or winter rye in bare areas to stop erosion, suppress weeds, and reduce soil disturbance. Once you finish harvesting a crop, inform the New Entry farm manager so we can follow with a cover crop or a green manure. Ideally each year your cash crops will be tilled in and planted to cover crops by the end of the season. Record all cover crop sowings with the New Entry record sheets.

Crop Rotation:

Crop rotation helps to lessen the impact of pests, diseases and weeds and improves uptake of nutrients between heavy and light feeding crops. You must **keep a field map of where you planted crops throughout the season**. Submit copies of your crop rotations to New Entry each season so we can advise future farmers how to allocate bed space from the history of previous crop records.

New Entry is implementing a three-year field rotation to ensure the long-term health of our soil. After three years of crop production, any given field will be removed from rotation for a minimum of one full farm season. The Farmer Training team will do their best to keep an incubator farm business on the same field for the duration of their time with New Entry. That being said, it is possible that farm sites will have to be moved from year-to-year to permit proper field rotation.

Weeds:

It is imperative that you control weeds by mulching, mowing, cultivating, or flame weeding. **Mowing edges of your field are your responsibility**. The farm manager mows the perimeter of the large farm field but the 5-10 feet from the edge of your beds should be managed by you.

You are not allowed to use synthetic herbicides (weed killers). Farmers should not grow any plants that are listed on the Federal Noxious Weed list. **Please check with New Entry staff before planting uncommon crops.**

Rocks and Stones:

The Moraine Farm fields are very stony. Large rocks damage farm implements and equipment.

Everyone will contribute to the process of persistently removing rocks from the fields. **Put rocks into one neat, marked pile at the edge of your field.** Do not mix soil or weeds into this pile. When the rock pile gets big, notify the farm manager so they can move the rocks with the tractor to the rock pile outside the deer fence.

Do not use rocks to hold remay, row cover, weed mat, or ground cover in place. Rocks will rip and ruin these. You may use sandbags filled with rocks, as long as the rocks do not go back into the field once you are done using the sandbags.

Our fields are very stony. Larger rocks damage farm implements and equipment.

Equipment Use



After you attend the training workshops and demonstrate that you understand how to use the equipment, you will be allowing to use the following New Entry equipment:

- BCS two-wheeled tractor and attachments: rotary plow, roto-tillers, brush mower, flail mower, cultivation toolbar.
- Weed trimmers.

- Flame weeder with propane tank and tank cylinder dolly.
- Solo backpack pesticide sprayer.
- Pesticides (in storage cabinet):
- Hand tools: hoes, rakes, wheelbarrows, shovels, saws, hammers, etc.

Note: only New Entry staff may use the tractors and tractor-implements due to liability concerns.

Using equipment:

- Sign out equipment every time - fill in the logbook with the date, your name, how many hours the equipment was used, and if you identified any problems.
- You may only use equipment for 2 hours if other farmers are waiting.
- When finished, clean the equipment, and put it in equipment storage bays.
- Each farmer is responsible for ensuring that the fuel tank is refilled after use.
- Equipment must stay on the farm-sites.
- Let us know if the machines have problems or need maintenance.
- Get New Entry approval before repairing equipment.

Know the machine before working with it:

- Take the New Entry Equipment Training. Watch the BCS operating videos. Get a refresher of the information in the Online Training.
- Read the operator's manual.
- Be gentle with the machines.
- Learn all the machine controls.
- Be sure other people who are not trained do not use the machines.
- Reach out to the Incubator Farm Manager with any questions or concerns about equipment operation. Safety and proper equipment usage are integral to the success of a farm business.

Look for problems in the field:

- Walk the field and look for rocks, irrigation lines, hydrants, stakes, etc. before using machines.
- Exercise caution when operating machines near slopes and ditches.

Know the machine is in a safe condition before operating:

- Always have the rototiller kick guard in place.
- Check oil levels and fuel tanks before starting.
- Make sure all of the tines are tight.
- Look for leaks.

Protect yourself and others:

- Avoid loose clothes as they can get caught on control levers and knobs.
- Use safety goggles and hearing protection (ear plugs).

- Wear gloves and boots – no sandals.
- Never stand or reach under the machine when the machine is running.
- Keep small children away from farm machinery.

Equipment damage:

Please inform New Entry staff about equipment problems or damage ASAP (contact numbers will be provided at orientation). If you improperly use a machine and it breaks, you will be required to pay for repairs.

Greenhouse Use



The New Entry Greenhouses are a shared resource that serve to provide you with greenhouse training and experience, as well as space to rent for the growing of your own seedlings. Please see the fee page with information on rental prices.

The **Greenhouse is a shared space**. Label all your supplies and equipment that are yours and store them in designated areas of the greenhouse or tool sheds. In addition, please ensure that the shared seedling and potting spaces are cleaned after every use.

Pest and disease problems can intensify quickly in the greenhouse and spread to your neighbors. Scout for pests and disease weekly. Report findings on the Slack Greenhouse Channel and remediate the problem with guidance from the farm manager. See Pest and Disease Management for more information.

Greenhouse Duty:

If you participate in the Greenhouse Rental Agreement, you will need to sign up for several weekend days that you will be on "Greenhouse Duty" for the growing season. There is a morning shift and an afternoon shift.

Greenhouse Duty responsibilities are:

- Open greenhouse doors at the beginning of the day (before 9am) and close them at the end of the day (no earlier than 5pm) as the weather permits. Sometimes doors will remain open all night.
- Roll up sides on GH as weather permits. Good ventilation is integral to seedling health.
- Water the entire greenhouse and cold frame as needed, from zero to three times per day.
- Cover and uncover cold frame as weather allows

You will be responsible for the health and well-being of your plants and those of your fellow incubator farmers throughout the season. If an emergency keeps you from coming to the farm for your greenhouse duties, please contact the farm manager.

What we provide:

- The Farmer Training Team will coordinate weekday greenhouse watering and operations.
- Training in all aspects of greenhouse seedling production.
- Access to propane heat and city water throughout the season- March 21st- October 15th.
- Cold Frame area for hardening off plants.

Pest and Disease Management



Effective growing practices and preventative measures should be your primary strategy for managing pests and diseases. This includes:

- Selecting pest and disease-resistant varieties
- Practicing crop rotations

- Using row covers
- Regular pest and disease scouting

If pesticide application is necessary, it must be used strictly according to the label instructions for the specified pests or diseases, as the label is legally binding. Remember, pesticides are not a cure-all solution. If a pest or disease issue has been left uncontrolled, applying a pesticide won't miraculously restore the crop's health.

Before using any pesticides, please consult with New Entry staff and ensure you have attended a pesticide training session with the farm manager (see [Pesticide Safety Section](#)). Managing pest and disease issues effectively is crucial not only for the success of your own operation but also as a responsibility to your fellow farmers.

Pesticide Safety Guidelines



New Entry has developed the Pesticide Safety Guidelines for incubator farmers to safely manage pests in their fields with the use of OMRI-approved pesticides. These guidelines are for your protection as well as the other people who use the farm site.

Pesticide Safety Workshop:

You must attend one of New Entry's pesticide safety workshops before applying any pesticide to your fields. Nobody other than the farm owners may apply pesticides to your site.

Talk to New Entry staff:

If you decide to use pesticides to control a pest, first talk to New Entry staff about your decision. Only OMRI-approved pesticides are allowed.

Read and understand the label:

The label is the law. Please follow the label instructions carefully. Be sure that the product you intend to use is listed for the pest or disease you hope to treat for. **It is illegal to use a pesticide for something it is not listed for on the label.** Or in an application method it is not listed for.

The most important information on the pesticide label is:

- Brand name, type of pesticide, and danger level.
- Active Chemicals.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Environmental hazards.
- First aid.
- Directions for use, storage and disposal.
- Time before you can go back into the field (re-entry interval (REI)).
- Days to harvest.

Please do not use pesticides without a trained person to help you.

Wear safety equipment (PPE)

Read the pesticide label to learn what safety gear (PPE) is required. **It is a law to wear the proper safety gear when you are using pesticides.** Always check that PPE is working properly before any handling or spraying.

The most important safety equipment includes:

- Chemical resistant gloves.
- Safety goggles.
- Shoes plus socks.
- Masks.
- Rubber apron, coveralls, Tyvek suit.
- Long pants.
- Long-sleeved shirt.
- Have appropriate amount of water available for emergency decontamination (eye rinsing, hand washing, etc.) Soap and single-use towels should be available.

Measure and mix in pesticide area only

Please be very careful when you are measuring and mixing pesticides in the pesticide mixing area.

The most important things to remember are to:

- Follow the pesticide label instructions.
- Use the pesticide steps you learned in the Pesticide Training Workshop

Spray safely

Please remember to keep your safety and the safety of other people in mind when you are using pesticides.

The most important things to think about are:

- **The weather:** It is best to spray on cloudy days (unless otherwise noted on the label) with low winds.
- **The time of day:** It is best to spray late in the day when pollinators are less active and UV light is less likely to denature the applied chemicals.
- **Other people at the farm:** Alert other farmers in the area that you will be spraying pesticides and keep a 25 feet exclusion zone.
- **FOR EMERGENCIES: Call 911. GO TO A HOSPITAL QUICKLY. PLEASE REMEMBER TO CARRY THE NAME OF THE PESTICIDE THAT YOU WERE USING.**
- Always report any accidents to New Entry staff within 24 hours.

After Spraying

It is important to inform others after you have sprayed so that they can take safety precautions around your field. You must:

- Put a pesticide sign in your field after spraying pesticides.
- Take down the sign when it is safe to go back into the field.
- Do not harvest the crop until it is safe to harvest. The pesticide label states how long to wait.

Clean-up & storage

The most important things to remember for pesticide **CLEAN UP** are:

- Always wash with soap and water after using pesticides; before eating, drinking, smoking, using the bathroom, before touching your eyes or mouth, or before getting into your personal vehicle.
- Change into clean clothing as soon as possible. Be mindful of contamination from shoes – remove before entering your home.
- Wash clothing you wore when spraying separately from other clothes. Decontaminate washing machine.

- Shower with soap and water and shampoo hair as soon as you can after work.
- Clean and store all PPE and sprayers.
- Use clean water to rinse empty sprayers.
- Rinse and clean the sprayers three (3) times each time you use it.
- Spray clean water through the sprayer when you are done using the sprayer.
- Use pesticide equipment for pesticides only. Do not use pesticide equipment for anything else.
- Do not throw pesticides or pesticide bottles away in the trash.
- Do not store pesticide containers or sprayers or measuring tools in containers you use to harvest crops.

The most important things to remember for pesticide **STORAGE** are:

- Keep all chemicals in the locked pesticide cabinet at the farm. Typically, pesticides used in agriculture are not to be used at home.
- Never take pesticides or pesticide containers home.

Always write down what you spray

Record all applications in Application Log Book, located in the wash station. If you need help writing on the sheet, please ask a New Entry staff member.

You should also be recording any pesticide applications in your own records. Be sure to follow up and assess efficacy of your pesticide application after the product's "reentry interval" has passed.

Pesticide Safety Guidelines Enforcement:

It is your job to protect all farmers and their families from pesticides. You need to protect the people who eat your vegetables and the staff that help you on the farm. It is very important to follow pesticide safety rules and to always obey the law when using pesticides.

If you do not follow these guidelines, then New Entry will need to take the following actions:

First time breaking the rules: You will meet with a New Entry staff member to talk about the reasons for the mistake. We will review the pesticide safety rules together. You will not be allowed to use pesticides without New Entry permission until we are sure that you have learned to use pesticides correctly.

Second time breaking the rules: You will be dismissed from the farm site and New Entry programs. **Please refer to the Consequences and Probation section of this manual for further details.**

Insurance Requirements



There are three main types of insurance for farmers:

- Farm and Product liability insurance.
- Workers' compensation insurance.
- Crop insurance.

Liability insurance:

Farm (general) liability insurance protects you from being sued if you hurt someone or damage their property. Farm liability insurance covers medical expenses, first aid, the cost of a lawyer, bodily injury and property damage, farm chemical transportation coverage, and more. Product liability insurance protects you from customers that sue you if they get hurt or sick from eating your crops. Product liability insurance is required for all farmers that sell to markets and make value-added products. Workers' compensation insurance (also called workers' comp) is required if you hire workers on the farm. Workers' comp can be purchased through the state and the rates are determined by the employee salary and "risk level" of their work (see more info on workers' comp below). As a farmer at any of the New Entry training sites or if you are selling produce through the New Entry Food Hub, it is required that you carry **both** farm liability insurance and product liability insurance up to \$1,000,000 in coverage. Typically, these policies cost around \$400 per year to maintain if your production is at the scale of the training site plots. If you are unable to provide New Entry with proof of your farm and product liability coverage, you will not be eligible to use land at a New Entry training site or sell through the CSA. If you hire workers to help you at your farm plot, you are also required to carry workers' compensation insurance.

There are many insurance companies that sell different types of liability insurance. Choose an insurance company that is familiar with and sells farm insurance for farmers. Farm Family Casualty Insurance Company, [**Special Farm Package 10® (SFP 10®)**] gives you many insurance choices. Farm Family Casualty Insurance Company is in

Northborough, MA and has many branches in Massachusetts. Talk to an insurance agent and explain how you plan to farm. Learn about the best types of insurance to protect you and your assets. The cost of your insurance premium can be related to your income from farming.

NOTE: If you want to be eligible for farm insurance, you need to be a member of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau. The Mass Farm Bureau has different levels of membership. Their most basic membership package is the **Associate Membership** that costs approx. \$70.00 a year.

Massachusetts Farm Liability Insurance Contacts: Farm Family Casualty Insurance Company

Agent: Jason Charette, Topsfield, MA 01983
Phone: 978-887-8304
Email: Jason.charette@american-national.com

Agent: Don Ludwig, Westford, MA 01532
Phone: 978-467-1001
Email: don@ludwiginsuranceagency.com

Agent: Andrew Brodeur, Westford, MA 01532
Phone: 978-467-1001

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, Inc.

249 Lakeside Ave, Marlborough, MA 01752
Phone: 508.481.4766 Toll Free: 1.866.548.MFBF
Website: mfbf.net

Workers' compensation insurance:

According to the Official Website of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development:

All employers in Massachusetts are required to carry workers' compensation insurance covering their employees, including themselves if they are an employee of their company. This requirement applies regardless of the number of hours worked in any given week, except that domestic service employees must work a minimum of 16 hours per week in order to require coverage.

Employers are required to notify their employees of the name of the workers' compensation insurance carrier. A [NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES](#) poster must be posted in a common area of the work place in English and other appropriate languages. The poster can be obtained by calling the Department of Industrial Accidents (DIA), downloading it from our website, or from your insurance company. Failure to post this information may subject the employer to a fine of \$100.

Members of a Limited Liability Company (LLC), partners of a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), and partnerships or sole proprietors of an unincorporated business are not required to carry workers' compensation insurance for themselves. However, under a change to the law in 2002, such members, partners and sole proprietors may now choose to purchase their own workers' compensation insurance coverage. To obtain coverage, the member or partner should contact an insurance broker and state that they wish to obtain a policy. Please be advised that optional coverage applies ONLY to such members, partners or sole proprietors. Any employee of such an entity, who is not a member or partner in the business, **MUST** be covered by workers' compensation insurance.

And from a local insurance agent:

The minimum premium a vegetable grower can pay to open a Worker's Comp policy (no reported payroll), is \$304/year. The owner would exclude him or herself from payroll. If the owner had labor costs, they would report on their audit at the end of the policy term, and the premium would be adjusted accordingly. If volunteered or donated labor, they need to keep track of hours worked. For WC purposes, volunteer labor will equal the hours worked multiplied by the minimum wage (100 volunteered hours, \$12 minimum wage equals \$1,200 reported payroll on WC policy). The rate for this particular class code is \$2.15/\$100 of payroll. To give you an idea, \$5,000 of reported payroll increases the premium to \$343, and \$10,000 of payroll increases the premium to \$546.

The MA Worker's Compensation website is <https://www.wcribma.org/mass/>, for your reference. Hover over 'Tools and Services --> Algorithms --> Voluntary Market. Plug in employer name, policy effective dates, and Employer's Liability limits (500/500/500). Enter the amount of payroll 'not subject to waiver' if you want to see other premiums based on the payroll. The class code you will use is 0008, FARM: GARDENING-MARKET OR TRUCK & DRIVERS.

We encourage farm businesses to have Worker's Comp insurance but understand startup financial challenges. If you're an LLC, LLP, unincorporated partnership, or sole proprietorship, you're not obligated to carry it for **yourself**.

However, if you employ anyone, even part-time or are getting regular help from a non-family help, **it's legally required**.

Growing Practices and Food Safety Plan



All produce must be grown without the use of synthetic pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, or fertilizers.

Every farmer must attend the Food Safety Workshop and develop a Food Safety Plan. Include this food safety plan in your business plan; additionally, the New Entry Food Hub will require submission of a food safety plan for their purposes.

Produce Safety Requirements of New Entry Incubator Farm:

All incubator farmers must abide by any requirements dictated by the 2017 Food Safety Modernization Act (See FDA's flow chart at end of agreement to determine if you are subject to the produce rule). Any produce crate delivered to the New Entry Food Hub must contain a label with the name and complete business address of the producer's farm.

Cooler / Refrigeration Use Policy



New Entry operates and maintains a cooled shipping container and a walk-in cooler at the Incubator Farm, for use by New Entry incubator training site farmers and by the Food Hub. The outdoor coolers will be available for use by those farming on the incubator. Every farm entity will get a predetermined area of roughly one 48"x 40" pallet. All other space needs must be negotiated with the Farm Manager and other incubator participants.

The coolers inside the Food Hub will only be available for farmer use if fulfilling an immediate Food Hub order. Farmers should coordinate with the Food Hub manager if planning to transfer produce into one of the interior coolers.

Regardless of which cooler produce is in:

- All boxes in any cooler must be labeled with the following:
 - Farmer name.
 - Crop name.
 - Date of harvest and when put in the cooler.
- Load and unload quickly and be sure that the cooler door is firmly closed when leaving to avoid letting the cool air out.
- Only raw, uncut vegetables may be stored in the cooler.
 - No prepared foods, meats, dairy or other products allowed.
 - No boxes, dirty harvest bins, containers, marketing materials, supplies, or farmers market materials

Unlabeled boxes will be disposed of. Farmers are responsible for the removal of spoiled crops. **All produce and boxes must be removed from the coolers by November 15th.**

Failure to follow the guidelines will result in a warning then losing cooler access.

Consequences and Probation



You and New Entry staff will agree to follow the guidelines in the Farmer Manual or you may be asked to leave the farm and the New Entry program. No refunds of rental fees will be issued if you are asked to leave the program.

You will be on probation if you:

- Miss more than 2 mandatory workshops or monthly meetings.
- Consistently miss meetings with New Entry staff.
- Do not complete record-keeping materials.
- Do not follow all the guidelines as documented in this Agreement.

If you are put on probation a member of the Farmer Training Team will meet with you to discuss the reasons and set the terms of your probation. To continue in the program, you will have to agree to the terms of your probation.

You will be removed from New Entry Incubator Farm Sites if you:

- Do not meet the terms of your probation.
- Do not cooperate with other farmers or New Entry.
- Disrespect the farm property - such as damage or neglect equipment, or litter.
- Do not use pesticides properly or use non-organic pesticides or fertilizers.
- Do not communicate with New Entry staff.
- Use alcohol, illegal drugs, or firearms on New Entry property.
- Steal from farm sites, other farmers, or neighbors.
- Are violent or aggressive towards others.
- Violate discrimination and harassment policies.

Complaints and appeals (grievances):

STEP 1) You can file a complaint against another farmer, landowner, or New Entry itself. Your complaint should be in writing if possible. Write or speak about your complaint as soon as possible after the problem happens.

STEP 2) The Incubator Site Coordinator will try to fix the problem directly with you, and/or seek other staff help to resolve the situation.

New Entry Incubator Farm Training Program Contract

The New Entry Incubator Farm Training Program helps you start and build a farm business.

This program includes:

- Farm business planning course.
- Access to farmland and infrastructure for 3 years.
- One-on-one technical assistance.
- On farm field trainings and workshops.
- Help with producing crops.
- 3 meetings per season of individualized case management and goal setting.
- Help finding markets for your products.
- Help with setting up your own farming business.
- Assistance with transition off the incubator farm site.

Enrolling in the Incubator Farm Training program:

After completing the Fall or Winter farm business planning course you can apply to the New Entry Incubator program.

To apply you will need to submit:

- Your farm business plan
- A simplified budget for year 1 on the incubator
- The 2024 Incubator Farm Application,

Applications will be reviewed mid-January and applicants will be notified of our decision at the beginning of February. Candidates in the 2024 Winter Farm Business Planning course can be admitted to the program, contingent upon the submission of their farm business plan and simplified budget.

The 2024 Program Application can be found here:

Agreement to farm:

This document contains all the agreements and guidelines that are part of the New Entry Farmer's Manual. Please review this manual and talk about it with staff. When you sign your name below, it means you agree with all the rules in the New Entry Farmer Manual, including:

- Farmer plot assignments and land rental payments.
- Payments for other services received as listed in the fee schedule.
- Completing New Entry training program and farm business plan.
- Participation in trainings and farm visit schedule.
- Farm rules, requirements and guidelines:
 - (a) General farm guidelines.
 - (b) Water use and irrigation.

- (c) Soil and land use.
- (d) Equipment and greenhouse use.
- (e) Pest management.
- (f) Pesticide safety.
- Recordkeeping and reporting.
- Liability and workers' compensation insurance.
- Consequences and probation.
- Discrimination and harassment policies.

I _____ (name of incubator farmer) have reviewed this document, understand it and agree to participate in the 2022 New Entry farmer program.

IN NO EVENT WILL NEW ENTRY OR TUFTS UNIVERSITY BE LIABLE TO THE YOU OR ANY THIRD PARTY FOR ANY CLAIM, DAMAGES OR OTHER LIABILITY, WHETHER IN AN ACTION OF CONTRACT, TORT OR OTHERWISE, ARISING FROM, OUT OF OR IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW ENTRY SUSTAINABLE FARMING PROJECT, AND YOU HEREBY AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS NEW ENTRY AND TUFTS UNIVERSITY FROM AND AGAINST ANY SUCH CLAIMS, DAMAGES OR OTHER LIABILITY.

Farmer Name

Date

Farmer Signature

New Entry Staff Name

Date

New Entry Staff Signature