2013 Farmer's Manual



Headwaters Incubator Program

East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District



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Welcome

East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD) would like to welcome you to the inaugural season of *Headwaters Incubator Program* (HIP)! We are pleased to have you, our client, on board as we seek to aid the establishment of new farms and farmers and provide a host of resources to those within the District.

Purpose of Farmer's Manual

This *Farmer's Manual* is designed to be your first stop reference to the policies, costs, guidelines, and expectations of HIP. It is also intended to be a resource for the type of information you should be considering as you launch your fledgling business. Like your Farm Business Plan, the Farmer's Manual is a living document that will evolve from year to year. Please share your thoughts on what additional details you'd like to see included in this document.

Why is East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District Interested in a Farm Incubator?

The mission of the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD) is to conserve and restore the natural resources of the district for current and future generations. So, it shouldn't be surprising that EMSWCD has a stake in making sure good farmland is kept in production and that a new generation of farmers is prepared and capable of managing natural resources in a responsible manner.

About Headwaters Farm

Headwaters Farm is a 60-acre property in Orient, Oregon that is owned by EMSWCD. The term 'Headwaters' refers to tributaries that feed a larger moving body of water. One of the more notable features at Headwaters Farm—and a primary reason EMSWCD purchased the property—is the North Fork of Johnson Creek. In this instance, Headwaters also serves as a symbol for incubator farmers, who will have relatively small operations during their tenure in the Headwaters Incubator Program, but will eventually move off and become much more robust and dynamic farms.

One of the primary objectives of Headwaters Farm is to use the site to demonstrate the relationship between conservation agriculture and watershed health. In light of this, the North Fork Johnson Creek has been put into EMSWCD's StreamCare program, which will restore the riparian buffer and improve onsite natural resources.

Conservation Agriculture

In addition to launching successful business, HIP is designed to expose clients to the benefits of conservation agriculture:

An application of modern agricultural technologies to improve production while concurrently protecting and enhancing the land resources on which production depends.¹

As you'll learn, conservation agriculture can have positive impacts on both watershed health and the farm's bottom line. EMSWCD looks forward to working with HIP clients and partners to provide a well-rounded conservation agriculture experience.

¹ Dumanski, J., R. Peiretti, J. Benetis, D. McGarry, and C. Pieri. 2006. The paradigm of conservation tillage. Proc. World Assoc. Soil and Water Conserv., P1: 58-64.

Headwaters Incubator Program

The four-year Headwaters Incubator Program is designed to help launch sustainable farm businesses by temporarily providing land, infrastructure, and other basic agricultural resources to skilled and innovative individuals that otherwise would not be able to establish a farm business.

There are numerous goals of this program, including to:

- Cultivate new farm businesses and farmers with strong stewardship ethic and expertise;
- Demonstrate the connection between conservation agriculture and watershed health;
- Help facilitate the generational transition in local agriculture;
- Keep good farmland in production and well stewarded;
- Foster new local farm products and marketing strategies;
- Manage onsite natural resources; and,
- Aid local economic development.

Land Use

EMSWCD utilizes the following land use guidelines to improve the overall quality of the farm—building soil, reducing the weed seed bank, and controlling pests—for current and future HIP clients. These include:

- Organic Practices Incubator farmers will work within the standards set by the National Organic Program
 (NOP) meaning: no synthetic fertilizers, no Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO), and only OMRI-listed
 pesticides. It will be up to incubator farmers to decide if they would like to seek certification. This may be hard
 initially, as Headwaters Farm is still transitioning to organic practices. However, EMSWCD is working with
 Oregon Tilth to explore opportunities in which all fields at Headwaters Farm could be certified.
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) This is a series of evaluations, decisions, and controls that are used in conjunction to suppress or eliminate pest problems. It's based on the premise that least-impactful pest management solutions (e.g., prevention, monitoring, physical barriers) should be used before more broad approaches (biological or chemical controls). In accordance with IPM strategies, even OMRI-listed pesticides should be a last resort, not the first line of defense. All incubator farmers are expected to have a written IMP strategy and apply it.
- Fertilizers and Compost While the district will provide and maintain basic fertility of the farm (pH buffer, P, K), it will be the responsibility of incubator farmers to apply Nitrogen. Since synthetic fertilizers are not allowed, clients should consider various plant- and animal-material options, which can be applied directly to the bed or plant. Compost is another viable option, but it's important to make sure that composted is organic and purchased from a reputable source. NRCS and OSU Extension staff will be able to help farmers determine appropriate amounts of Nitrogen. Testing can be done after the season to determine if there was over application.
- **Spring & Fall Tillage** EMSWCD will provide spring tillage, but, like any farm operation, it will be weather dependent. Breaking the ground in spring will not happen until the soil is sufficiently dried down.

- Cover Crop The use of both summer and winter covers will be a primary tool for suppressing weeds and building soil throughout the farm. Except in areas of active production, farmers must have a cover crop of legumes and cereal grains planted by October 1st. There may be opportunities for bulk purchasing of cover crop with other incubator farmers.
- **Crop Rotations** Incubator farmers and the Farm Incubator Manager will consider two levels of rotations— fertility and pest. Fertility rotations involve not growing plants with similar edible parts (leaf, root, flower, and fruit) in the same place consecutive years. Pest rotations involve avoiding successions of plants within the same family. The Farm Incubator Manager will be sensitive of individual investments (e.g., soil quality, perennials, reduced weed pressure) made to the land by each client and look to keep farmers producing on the same plot year after year. However, in the event that a farmer is not able to rotate crops effectively—for both fertility and pests—they may need to be allocated a new plot on an annual basis.
- **Soil Testing** Incubator farmers will be responsible for taking one soil sample at the end of each growing season at paying for analysis (under \$20). This will be to help farmers monitor their usage of Nitrogen, and also help the Farm Incubator Manager rotate farmers appropriately.

2013 Costs & Payment Schedule

EMSWCD will make available land, equipment, infrastructure, and some services to incubator farmers. The cost of these items and the time of which payment is due will vary. Below is a list of the pricing for the 2013 growing season.

Program Amenities and Associated Costs

Many of the items to rent are optional and will be determined by the farm operation and the resources incubator farmers already have available. The goal of charging for equipment and infrastructure is three-fold:

- Encourage joint-ownership and responsible usage;
- Encourage incubator farmers to invest in personal equipment when appropriate; and,
- Recoup the cost of the items prior to exhausting their usefulness.

2013 Fee Breakdown and Payment Schedule

	Fee	Payment Due	Fee Includes
Land Lease	\$600/acre/yr Adjustments made for year in program (see below)	June 1 st – September 1 st (four monthly installments)	 Spring tillage (when weather permits) Sanitary facilities Access to wash station Very minimal dry, secure storage Basic Fertility (pH buffer, P, & K) Main line and water for drip irrigation Access to office and basic kitchen
Land Management Fee	\$200/year	June 1 st – September 1 st (four monthly installments)	MaintenanceSite improvements
Equipment Fees	varies	Monthly	See Equipment & Costs below
Infrastructure Fees	varies/given space/month	Monthly	See Infrastructure & Costs below
Service Fees	\$50/hour	Monthly	See Services & Costs below

Incubator farmers will be given a monthly invoice for their expenses amassed in the previous calendar month. Invoices will be sent out within the first week of each month. Farmers will have the remainder of the month to make the payment. For example, if *Farmer X* racks up \$30 in equipment rental fees and \$100 in land lease fees for the month of July, they will receive that bill within the first week of August. The full balance will be due by the last day in August (see Section 1.H, *Penalties* in the lease).

Graduated Land Cost-Structure

Land will be leased in 2013 at \$600/acre/year. This will include a number of amenities (see 2013 Fee Breakdown and Payment Schedule Table for a complete list). Land costs will incrementally increase each year a participant is in the program. The first year a participant is in the program, land rent will be charged at a quarter of market value (i.e., 25% of \$600/acre/year, or \$150/acre/year) and increase an additional 25% each season. By the fourth—and final—year of the program clients will be paying market value for their land. This graduated cost structure only applies to land. Charges for equipment, infrastructure, and services will be set at a fixed annual rate.

Equipment & Costs

Handtools/Wheelbarrows — \$70/year

Basic handtools (shovels, hoes, rakes, forks) and wheelbarrows will be available without any training or clearance needed.

Wheel hoe — \$20/year or \$4/hour

Valley Oak wheel hoe with 8" oscillating blade. No training needed.

Backpack Sprayer — \$5/hour

The backpack sprayer will be primarily for foliaring starts and crops, however, it may be available for certain OMRI-listed sprays, such as Neem. Those will need to be cleared with Farm Incubator Manager prior to usage with this piece of equipment. A basic training of this tool will be needed prior to client usage.

Infrastructure & Costs

Irrigation — \$1/hand-line/hour (for overhead watering only); water for drip irrigation is free!

The irrigation system will be configured to accommodate both drip irrigation and overhead watering. It is the goal of EMSWCD to promote and encourage the use of conservation practices, which is why water for drip irrigation will be provided for free if incubator farmers purchase their own laterals and drip-tape. Depending on the configuration of each farmer's individual drip system, there may be a need to allocated dates and/or times for each farmer to irrigate. This point will be worked out when more information is known. EMSWCD will seek to improve the irrigation system during one of the first seasons of the program. Clients will need to work with the Farm Incubator Manager at the onset of the season to dial in the irrigation protocol.

Wash Station — cost included in land fees

Access to a basic station to wash and process produce will be included in the cost of land. It will, however, be critical that incubator farmers keep the facility clean and coordinate their harvest schedule with other participants. A more detailed clean up and maintenance protocol will be established as well as wash station etiquette guidelines.

Cooler — \$20/3' x 4' x 8' space/month

A walk in cooler will be available for incubator farmers. Roughly a pallet-sized space with approximately eight-vertical feet for farmer usage can be rented on a monthly basis.

Propagation House — \$5/2' x 10' table space/month; add \$5/month for each heating mat (provided by farmer)

A space for starts and general propagation can be rented. This includes table space for trays and other plants, in addition to areas where soil mixes and seeding trays can be stored. While there will be certain pieces of equipment used to help regulate temperature (shutters/fans), it will be the responsibility of the users to ensure that roll up sides and doors are utilized appropriately to ensure ideal propagation conditions. Clients are encouraged to coordinate a watering schedule with other incubator farmers or the site caretaker.

A 'germination station' may be constructed to help facilitate speedy, even propagation. In this case, shelving space will be available for rent on a monthly basis. A detailed protocol will be developed for prophouse upkeep and etiquette.

Storage — \$10/6' x 5' space/month in storage container; varying costs for other storage options

Each farmer will be provided a small space in the office to contain personal belongings and small items, such as seed. If a farmer seeks to store larger items onsite (t-tape, reemay rolls, tools, etc.) they may rent storage within the shipping container or other appropriate areas on the farm.

Office Space — cost included in land fees

All participants will have access to the office, as space that includes a restroom and tables to do paperwork or other farm-related activities. It is yet to be determined if internet will be available to incubator farmers. Electricity will be available for all items deemed to be a negligible cost—e.g., charging a phone, camera, or laptop—as determined by EMSWCD. The office may have a basic kitchen with a refrigerator and microwave.

Services & Costs

Custom Tractor Work — \$50/hour

Spring tillage will be included in the cost of land. However, depending on what implements are available and how much time the Farm Incubator Manager has for these projects, incubator farmers may choose to hire EMSWCD to do custom tractor work.

Learning Objectives

EMSWCD will coordinate between partners to put together valuable agricultural experiences for clients. This will include workshops, classes, hands-on projects, and farm tours. They will be distributed throughout the year with emphasis given to exposing farmers to key learning tools prior to seasonal need. Program participants will be expected to participate in all safety and equipment trainings, as well as attend workshops, classes, and tours. The Farm Incubator Manager will work with participants to set up times that hopefully accommodate everyone's schedule.

Safety and Equipment Trainings

New farmers will need to successfully complete trainings prior to being cleared to use any equipment. Trainings will be given to show proper techniques for cleaning and maintaining general farm tools. General safety trainings will be provided as needed.

Classes

EMSWCD will work with partners, including OSU Extensions and their Growing Farms Course, to provide access to a range of new farmer educational opportunities. However, given the lateness of this year's application process, this year's offerings may be limited.

Workshops

Various partners, including OSU Extension Service, NRCS, Xerces Society, Zenger Farm, Friends of Family Farmers, Oregon Tilth, and other groups will provide information on a number of relevant farm topics.

Farm Tours

The Farm Incubator Manager will coordinate with various local farms to give participants an opportunity to meet farmers and learn about different farm operations.

Farm Business Plan

All accepted participants have created and shared a Farm Business Plan. This is expected to be a living document that clients will revisit with the Farm Incubator Manager at the onset of each growing season. Incubator farmers will follow their Farm Business Plan as closely as possible. EMSWCD recognizes that farming is a fluid activity and that farmers must adjust throughout the season when situations change. In these instances, incubator farmers may adapt accordingly. However, major deviations from one's Farm Business Plan—those that take the farm in a different direction, for example, growing crops that weren't in the original plan—must be granted approval from the Farm Incubator Manager.

Participants should keep in mind that one of the major objectives of HIP is to add to the diversity to East Multnomah's farm landscape. This means that incubator farmers should craft their Farm Business Plan to:

- Selling farm products close to the incubator farm;
- Explore innovative marketing strategies; and,
- Cultivating crops that don't have saturated local markets.

Additional Details

The following are other pertinent details.

Program Partners

There are a number of aspects of the Headwaters Incubator Program that will be managed or assisted by partner organizations. The current list can be found below, although it is expected that additional partnerships will be added over time.

Organization	Role
Natural Resource Conservation Services	Cost share; Resource management
Oregon State University Extensions Service	Growing Farms course; Workshops
Friends of Family Farmers	Farmer offsite transitions (iFarm); Outreach and advocacy
Mercy Corps Northwest	Loans; Small business classes; Individual Development Accounts
Oregon Tilth	Determining model for incubator certification; Workshops
Xerces Society	Pollinator habitat development
Zenger Farm	Commercial kitchen; Potential access to local markets

Required Meetings

As in all situations with shared space and facilities, it will be critical that incubator participants communicate effectively and work with a cooperative spirit. Incubator meetings will be set up to help facilitate open dialog and to develop schedules, determine protocols, resolve conflicts, building community, and improve the overall HIP experience.

Lease Agreement

All participants will sign a lease prior to entering each growing season. The lease will be a legally binding contract and cover issues pertaining to land allotment, payment, termination, and other pertinent issues. Incubator farmers are encouraged to review the lease agreement and refer to it as needed. In some instances the lease notes legally binding sections of the Farmer's Manual.

Common Areas

Incubator farmers will lease specific plots of land—as noted in individual's lease agreement—but will also have access to various other areas on the farm. This will either be through renting or general access. Both of these styles of common areas will have protocols for renting, payment, standard care, maintenance, etiquette, and safety. Rental and payment information can be found in this document, whereas details pertaining to usage and safety will be clearly displayed within each common area.

General Use Common Areas	Rental-Based Common Areas
Wash Station	Propagation Greenhouse
Office	Walk in Cooler
Shared Roadways, Parking	Storage Facilities

Insurance Coverage

All farmers are required to carry at least a \$1,500,000 general liability insurance policy that covers both their farm and products. Incubator farmers will provide EMSWCD with a Certificate of Liability Insurance that lists the District as 'additionally insured.' Recommendations can be made on affordable local plans and when it's appropriate to carry a larger liability plan.

Water Usage

Incubator farmers will have access to a reasonable amount of water (as judged by EMSWCD). The Farm Incubator Manager and program partners will work with individual farmers on determining the appropriate amount of irrigation. Access to irrigation water will be available adjacent to each field block. Water will be free if incubator farmer purchase and configure a drip system. This style of irrigation is highly encouraged.

Drinking water will be available at both the wash station and office.

Food Safety Requirements

Food safety is a critical component of agricultural operations. Incubator farmers will need to ensure that their practices work to minimize contact and spreading of food borne illness. EMSWCD will work with program partners to provide annual workshops on food safety and post-harvest food handling.

General Farm Safety

It is critical that incubator farmers and their guests maintain safe practices at Headwaters. See *Headwaters Farm Rules* section below for more information on safe practices. Alert the Farm Incubator Manager immediately if dangerous conditions are observed.

Record Keeping Requirements

Keeping accurate records of pertinent farm activities is an important farm skill. Program participants will be expected to keep records pertaining to yield, finances, and successes/failures, and provide requested data to EMSWCD at the end of each season. The Farm Incubator Manager will meet with farmers to help determine what records must be documented.

In the future, if EMSWCD seeks to certify Headwaters Farm as 'organic,' farms would be required to document all inputs and save receipts. This, in general, is a good practice to get into for tracking expenses, setting up farm plans, and preparing taxes.

Site Improvement Hours

As part of the program, incubator participants will put in at least four hours per month toward the betterment of the incubator property and its facilities. This time could be front- or back-loaded in the season, and would be particularly useful for initial site development. Opportunities for pairing farm learning objectives and infrastructure developments will be maximized (e.g., greenhouse or wash station construction).

End of Season Responsibilities

Farmers will plant a winter cover crop in all appropriate areas of their allotted space—those *not* in active production—by October 1st. Each participant is also responsible for cleaning up their plot by this date. This includes removing all farm supplies, growing infrastructure, trash, and plant materials not incorporated into the soil. Approval from the Farm Incubator Manager is required if there is a need to leave items in the field past October 1st.

To help the continued improvement of HIP and to assist the accumulation of incubator data, all incubator farmers will participate in an annual 'exit interview' and fill out an end of season questionnaire.

Publicity

Each farmer will be asked to occasionally contribute to a Headwaters Farm blog or other EMSWCD-based social media outlet. This will be to help build the visibility of the program, but should also be used as a method for incubator farm advertising. Unless otherwise noted, HIP clients agree to allow EMSWCD to use photos containing their likeness.

Sales

All farmers will manage their own marketing and sales in accordance with their approved Farm Business Plan. Unless authorized by the Farm Incubator Manager, no on-farm sales are permitted.

Adaptive Management

Given that this is the first year of a new program and that the Headwaters Farm is still being developed, there are undoubtedly going to be some minor unforeseen hitches along the way. EMSWCD will work to minimize these complications and ensure that they are resolved in a fashion that meets all party's needs. While this may require some patience and understanding on the part of program participants, it is important to remember that there are some significant opportunities presented in this inaugural HIP season. Most notably, incubator farmers will have the chance to:

- Participate in the development of farm infrastructure;
- Shape the incubator program for upcoming seasons and future HIP farmers;
- Have access to some of the best farmland at Headwaters Farm; and,
- Use the novelty and visibility of this program as a marketing tool.

Losses

EMSWCD will do everything within reason to ensure the continued functionality of all equipment and infrastructure at Headwaters Farm, most notably, the irrigation system. However, in the event of unforeseen circumstances that create temporary lapses in service, EMSWCD will *not* be held accountable for any losses incurred (see Section 2.B, *Indemnifications* and 2.C, *Hold Harmless* of the lease).

Headwaters Farm Rules

The following guidelines are necessary to ensure a good experience for all incubator farmers, EMSWCD staff, neighbors, and the surrounding community.

Cooperative Spirit — Incubator farmers are expected and encouraged to cooperate and coordinate with one another while working on the farm. Farmers will share parking, infrastructure, irrigation systems, and other EMSWCD-provided resources. If any problems arise that farmers are not able to mediate on their own, they should contact the Farm Incubator Manager for assistance with conflict resolution.

Legality — All farm activities on EMSWCD property will be in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. It is entirely the responsibility of the incubator farmer to maintain compliance.

Community Consideration — Farmers will be respectful of Headwaters Farm neighbors and any concerns they may have. Incubator Farmers will be cordial ambassadors of the program and District both on the farm and within the surrounding community.

Safety — All farm activities will be done with specific consideration to safety, including that of the individual, other farmers, neighbors, District staff, or any visitors to the farm. Farmers must participate in all safety trainings and be cleared to use equipment prior to usage. Basic safety includes—but is not limited to—wearing appropriate clothing (sturdy, protective, not too loose, and good coverage), appropriate footwear (no open-toe shoes or bare feet; boots preferred), well versed knowledge of tools prior to use, wear eye and ear protection when operating machinery, wear a hat and use sunblock (but wash hands thoroughly after application). Farmers are responsible for purchasing and using their own safety equipment.

Plot Assignments — Farmers will not enter another farmer's plot without permission. Determination of plot size and location will be by EMSWCD staff. Farmer plots may vary in size and location from year to year.

Attendance — Farmers agree to attend meetings, trainings, workshops, and tours. This is estimated to consume one to eight hours a week, depending on time of season and farmer needs. The Farm Incubator Manager will be respectful of clients' time during the growing season.

Farm Access — Farmers have access to the incubator property seven days a week during daylight hours. Clients may request after-hours access from the Farm Incubator Manager if specific needs arise.

Vehicles — Anyone driving onsite must have a valid driver's license. Parking is limited to specific, designated areas approved by the District. Until otherwise noted by EMSWCD staff, this is limited to the area around the Headwaters Office. The speed-limit anywhere on the farm is 10 mph.

Tools/Equipment — Farmers are responsible for the incubator tools that they rent. Inappropriate use or failure to properly care for or clean rental tools will result in fines and/or limits on future use. Farmers will need to replace—at their own expense—any tools or equipment that is lost, broken, or damaged with a new tool of comparable quality and utility, as determined by EMSWCD. Some rental items will require trainings. Due to this, farmers will not be allowed to use rental tools or equipment until they are cleared to do so. There will be a clipboard associated with each rental item which program participants will use to document their usage.

Trash — Farmers are responsible for containing and promptly removing all trash generated onsite. Fines will be incurred if anything is left in the field beyond October 31st (e.g., driptape, trellises, row cover, t-posts, stakes, large plant residues, or other debris) without permission from EMSWCD staff. Only farm related items are allowed in the fields or at Headwaters Farm.

Sanitation — The participant and guest restroom facility can be found in the Headwaters Office. Everyone is required to wash their hands after using the restroom.

Pets — Clients are not allowed to bring pets onsite.

Water — Farmers may be allocated days and/or times in which they have permission to water field crops. They may switch dates or co-water with other incubator farmers only if given permission by that farmer(s). See Water Usage in the Additional Details section above for more information.

Visitors — Clients are responsible for any visitors or helpers they bring to Headwaters Farm. Visitors are required to abide by the same rules and regulations as farmers. Uninvited visitors are not allowed at Headwaters Farm.

Children — Children should always be accompanied and supervised by a guardian.

Fines and Access

Agreement to Participate

EMSWCD Staff Print Name / Date

EMSWCD reserves the right to assess fines to farmers who violate the above rules and farm policies. Fine charges will be dependent on the severity of the violation, number of violations incurred by an incubator farmer, and cost of any equipment or infrastructure damaged by the violation. Fines will be submitted to clients in writing with an explanation on why the fine was incurred. Bills for the fine must be payable within the subsequent monthly invoice.

Access to incubator farmland at Headwaters Farm is contingent upon payment standing and satisfactory abidance to program policies. This will be strongly factored into future farm expansion requests. Continued failure to follow guidelines or egregious violations of farm policy can result in the termination on one's lease agreement (see Section 3, *Termination* in the lease).

Agreement to runticipate	
I	, have reviewed the Farmer's Manual and agree to participate in the
Headwaters Farm Incubator Program	for the 2013 season.
Farmer Print Name / Date	Farmer Signature

EMSWCD Staff Signature

Authorization for Photo Release

Farmer Print Name / Date	Farmer Signature
including but not limited to the promotion of the EM	ISWCD and its programs.
likeness on videotape, and (3) photographic pictures	of the individual named on this form, for any purpose whatever,
absolute right and unrestricted permission to copyrig	ght and/or use and/or publish (1) the name, (2) the image or
successors, agents, and assigns, without compensation	on to the individual named on this form, from any party the
I irrevocably give, grant, and convey to the East Mult	tnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD), its