



ROGUE FARM CORPS

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With the average age of U.S. farmers approaching 60 and only 1% of the U.S. population directly participating in agricultural production, on-farm internships and apprenticeships that provide quality opportunities for future organic farmers are more important than ever. Well-trained interns and apprentices are primed to become successful employees, managers, and producers, which increases the pool of farmers, especially younger ones. There are many compelling social and educational reasons to incorporate internship and apprenticeship programs into small farm operations. However, these programs entail a great deal of negotiation, patience, energy and time. Are you ready to make mentoring part of your life and your business?

Rogue Farm Corps' internship and apprenticeship programs are designed to train the next generation of farmers and ranchers through a structured, educational framework that includes on-farm training, classes, farm tours, discussion groups, and independent projects. These programs are designed to meet the legal criteria for unpaid internships and apprenticeships. Host farmers partner with Rogue Farm Corps and serve as primary mentors for the interns and apprentices on their farm. Host farmers are required to adhere to Rogue Farm Corps' Standard & Guidelines (included below) and be committed to the mission of training new farmers and ranchers. The focus of Rogue Farm Corps' training programs is mentoring new farmers. If you are primarily seeking labor, these programs are not for you.

This packet is designed to help you think through what it means to become a mentor and Host Farm for Rogue Farm Corps. Our staff is available to talk this over with you more thoroughly, and to answer any questions you might have. If you are interested in proceeding with us, please let your local RFC staff-person know, fill out the Host Farmer Application (below) and return it to us via mail or email, and we will be in touch to set up a farm visit. Once the application and farm visit are completed, your application will be sent to our Board of Directors for approval. If approved, we will work with you to complete a Farm Synopsis (last page of this packet) for our website and give you access to our online application system.

The applications open in November for the Internship and Apprenticeship positions to begin the following spring. RFC staff will lead the promotion and recruitment process, and conduct initial screening of all applicants. Once applicants pass through the initial screening process, host farmers will have access to all approved applications.

You will attend a Host Farmer meeting in November that will orient you to the program and introduce you to the rest of the farmers in your chapter. You will also participate in mentor development trainings in the winter. We are happy to answer any questions you might have in the meantime.

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Benefits of Hosting:

For Host Farmers, Rogue Farm Corps will:

- Promote all open positions on farms and ranches as part of the Rogue Farm Corps program;
- Handle the intake of all applications and first round of screening;
- Provide a database of currently available applicants including background, contact information, references, and previous experience;
- Co-create an on-farm skills curricula for your Internship / Apprenticeship positions(s);
- Organize annual pre-season and end-of-season debrief meetings for mentors;
- Provide a peer-to-peer network of mentor farmers across the state;
- Provide trainings to partner farmers on best practices for mentorship;
- Provide resources and check-ins to ensure positive mentorship is happening on-farm;
- Provide interpretation of labor and employment laws;

For Program Participants, Rogue Farm Corps will:

- Organize annual program orientation;
- Provide class outlines, reading materials, and additional resources;
- Conduct classroom and on-farm educational sessions to complement on-farm/ranch learning;
- Facilitate farm/ranch tours to other operations;
- Facilitate peer-to-peer networking and discussions;
- Provide Internship and Apprenticeship certification;
- Coordinate an alumni network to support graduates of our programs;

For both Host Farmers & Program Participants, Rogue Farm Corps will:

- Conduct on-site orientations, bi-annual facilitated evaluation sessions, check-ins, and exit evaluations to help ensure successful experiences for mentors and program participants.

“ARE YOU A GOOD FIT?” GUIDE

This section is provided to help you decide if you are a good fit for being a host/mentor farmer/rancher with Rogue Farm Corps.

Farm Mentors have some essential aims and values:

- They encourage respect for what it takes to make farming a career
- They encourage respect for nature
- They model and teach others to work hard and effectively
- They model and teach others the principles of stewardship and cooperation
- They convey a sense of process (both natural and economic)
- They work to develop mentoring relationships based on mutual trust and respect, with clearly defined boundaries
- They nurture trainee self-development
- They respect and exemplify the mentoring tradition
- They honestly convey the realities (both satisfactions and frustrations) of small-scale, “sustainable” farming as a vocation or career

Ask yourself these questions to help you determine if you’re a good fit:

- What are your long-term goals (think: “mission statement”) of your agricultural operation?
- How might adding an internship/apprenticeship program to your farm help fulfill your farm’s mission?
- Who were the teachers or mentors in your life that helped you? What did you appreciate about their mentoring style?
- What prior experience do you have with educating/mentoring?
- What skills and personal qualities do you have that you think will serve you as a mentor?
- How might you make room for a new person to learn and participate in the critical operations on your farm or ranch?
- Given that mentor/mentee relationships are mutual learning opportunities, what are you excited to learn and what are you excited to teach?
- Are you set up to host interns/apprentices (Do you have appropriate resources on-hand for housing interns/apprentices (i.e. telephone/internet connection, laundry/kitchen/bathroom facilities, etc)?)
- How much time/energy/patience do you realistically have?
- In what ways are you interested in adapting your schedule, operation and daily routine to include an intern/apprentice? How comfortable are you with accepting critique, criticisms or suggestions from an intern/apprentice?
- How might you check in with the intern/apprentice to assess if their learning is progressing or has halted?
- Can you serve as an advisor/mediator as well as educator?
- What makes you a good farmer/rancher?

- Do you have the experience and expertise to truly provide a valuable education to an intern/apprentice?
- What impact will having an intern/apprentice have on your personal and family situation?
- How might you motivate an intern in the middle of a challenging farming season?
- Are you open to the potential opportunities that might come as a result of working with someone who might be very different from you?

Programs At a Glance

RFC offers several farmer training levels: an entry-level Internship program for people without significant prior experience, and an advanced Apprenticeship program for people who have at least 1 full season of prior farm/ranch experience and are ready to start taking on more responsibility. Here are the major differences between the programs to help you decide which program may be a better fit for you:

	Part-Time Internship	Full-Time Internship	Apprenticeship
Prerequisite	None	None	1+ full season of experience or equivalent
approximate Start / End Dates	March 15-April 15 through Oct 1- Oct 31	March 15-April 15 through Oct 1- Oct 31	Feb 15 - Mar 15 through Nov 1 - Dec 15
Recommended Stipend	flexible - see HF guidelines	\$500-700/month	\$700-1000/month
Type of Training / Education	Introductory - Intermediate	Introductory - Intermediate	Intermediate - Advanced with focus on deepening skills and system management
Room / Board	flexible - see HF guidelines	generally host farm provides	generally host farm provides
On-Farm Hours/Week (seasonal average)	14-24	32-40	32-40
Host Farm Annual Fee to RFC	\$500 for 1, \$250 add'l (\$150 add'l if also hosting a full-time intern/apprentice)	\$1000 for 1st, \$250 add'l	\$1000 for 1st, \$250 add'l

Host Farmer Standards & Guidelines

*Rogue Farm Corps (RFC) requires that all farmers and ranchers who participate in our **Internship Program** or **Apprenticeship Program** adhere to the following standards and guidelines:*

Membership

- Host farms are required to abide by workplace laws regarding unpaid interns/apprentices. Host farms will not commit to hiring an intern/apprentice at the end of the training period, and the host farm will offer a written agreement to all interns/apprentices stating that no wages will be paid for the work performed. The work performed by interns/apprentices at the host farm supplements the intern's/apprentice's educational training, it provides experience for the benefit of the intern/apprentice, the work is performed under close supervision, and the work performed provides no immediate advantage for the host farm.
- Host farms are required to pay RFC an annual fee to contribute to the costs of program development, coordination, outreach, recruitment, and evaluation. The current fee schedule is:
 - \$1000 for one full-time intern/apprentice and \$250 for each additional full-time intern/apprentice (\$150 for each additional part-time intern).
 - If **only** hosting part-time interns, the host farm fee will be \$500 for the first and \$250 for each additional.
- A \$250 non-refundable deposit toward the annual host farm fee is due upon successful placement of an intern/apprentice. The remaining balance is due when programming starts in the spring. RFC may work with host farms to establish alternate payment plans, if requested in writing.
- If an internship/apprenticeship is terminated during the initial 45-day trial period, applicable membership fees will be refunded, with the exception of the \$250 deposit. After the 45-day trial period, full payment of the remaining balance is required regardless of whether or not the intern/apprentice finishes the season.
- Host farms are **required** to attend the Host Farmer Training (February/March), Pre-season Meeting with Chapter Coordinator (February/March), On-Farm Orientation Meeting (March/April), New Student Orientation Meeting (April), two evaluation & assessment sessions (mid-season & late-season), and the Post-Season Host Farmer Meeting (November).
- Host farms will sign a written Farm-Intern/Apprentice Agreement with their interns/apprentices outlining the expectations around training schedule, stipends, housing, food and meals, transportation, farm rules, etc. RFC will help host farms develop these agreements.
- Host farms will share a copy of the Farm-Intern/Apprentice Agreement with RFC staff and perspective interns/apprentices prior to placing an intern/apprentice.

- Host farms will sign an RFC-Farm Legal Agreement outlining roles and responsibilities for each entity.
- Host farmers are required to maintain a safe and sanitary training environment for interns/apprentices at all times and must comply with all state and federal safety requirements.
- Host farmers are prohibited from discriminating based race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any programs, activities, or admissions. All host farmers must comply with federal and state laws regarding discrimination.

Type and Scale of Agriculture

- The farm or ranch is in commercial production, providing specialty crops, meat, poultry, dairy, seeds, grain, or forage crops to the local and regional food system.
- The farm or ranch is sufficiently contributing to local and regional economies and employing efficient and effective techniques and methods to achieve farm profitability.
- The agricultural practices performed on the land are humane and ecologically sound, providing animals with a high quality of life while enhancing the soil quality, air quality, water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- Diversity and resilience are represented through a variety of plant and animal genetics, farm products, and the agricultural ecosystem.
- The farm provides fair wages and good working conditions to any employed labor.

Room, Board, & Stipend (Full-time interns/apprentices: avg 32-40 hrs/wk)

- Host farmers are encouraged to offer monthly stipends ranging from a minimum \$500-\$700 for an intern, and \$700-\$1000/month in year one of the apprenticeship, and minimum wage or more in year two of the apprenticeship. Season-end bonuses are allowed. For host farmers that are not providing housing on-site, monthly stipends shall be increased to cover housing and food costs that meet the standards outlined below.
- Interns/apprentices are provided a safe physical environment (sound structure/fire/electrical) that is weatherproof, has adequate ventilation, and is pest proof.
- Living structures have a natural source of light and a safe source of lighting (including instruction in the safe use of non-electrical lighting).

- Interns/apprentices are provided a reasonably clean, private, and cleanable space (including both personal and common spaces like kitchen and bathroom) with a space for personal cleaning and a sanitary bathroom or latrine.
- Interns/apprentices are provided access to potable water and a heated living area.
- Host farmers are required to clarify eating arrangements in their Farm-Intern/Apprentice Agreement (i.e. Do interns/apprentices eat separately or as part of farm household? Will cooking and cleanup be shared?).
- Host farmers are required to clarify household chores arrangements.
- Host farmers are required to provide or compensate for an adequate diet to fuel the strenuous activity of farming, provide ample time for regular meals (including prep time), provide adequate cooking facilities (stove, wash basin, refrigeration, food storage), and clarify ahead of time whether they are willing to provide for special dietary needs.
- Housing requirements can be waived if the farm or ranch lacks adequate housing for interns/apprentices and there is a reasonable supply of locally available housing within 30 minutes drive. In this case, host farmers are expected to increase monthly stipend to cover housing and food costs that meet the standards outlined above.

Room, Board, & Stipend (part-time interns: avg 14-24 hrs/wk)

- Host farms have options as to what they provide to part-time interns. RFC will help Host Farmers reflect on their stipend/food/accommodations package honestly in order to evaluate what they are offering, and approve that they feel fair and in-line with full-time equivalents. Example offerings could be:

1) Stipend only (recommended range \$400-\$700/month), no accommodations or food

2) Farm-produced food + stipend (recommended range \$250-600/month), no accommodations

3) On-farm accommodations, farm-produced food, basic staples, + stipend (recommended range \$0-300) - NOTE: This situation may require participants to have a part-time off-farm job, school, or other regular activity.

- Any accommodations provided must meet the standards detailed in the section above for full-time participants.

Education and Training Offered

- Host farmers are required to demonstrate a willingness to teach, act as an educational resource, provide access to farm's agricultural library.

- Host Farmers will offer a tour and class at their farm or ranch once a season for all interns/apprentices in the local RFC Chapter cohort.
- Host farmers are required to train, supervise, and provide feedback in accordance with the On-Farm Curriculum and Training Ethics Standards that RFC develops with the host farmer.
- Host farmers are required to abide by all RFC policies outlined in the Host Farmer Handbook (provided as a separate document upon acceptance into the program).
- Host farmers should have a minimum of 5 years experience farming, and/or demonstrated capability to mentor beginning farmers.
- Host farmers are required to be farming full-time or have a full-time on-site farm manager to serve as primary mentor.
- Host farmers are expected to schedule time to train alongside their interns/apprentices on a regular and consistent basis, train as a team with interns/apprentices and employees (if applicable), and have interns/apprentices train independently.
- Interns/apprentices should be given a diversity of tasks over the course of the farming season to gain exposure to all aspects of running an agricultural operation.
- Host farmers shall seek out and take advantage of teachable moments on the farm on a regular basis.

Training Expectations

- Full-time Interns/apprentices shall train on-farm an average of 32-40 hours per week, allowing for seasonal fluctuations in scheduling (**not to exceed 50 hours in any particular week**). Host farmers are encouraged to consider a ~36 hour/week schedule to allow full-time participants to have enough time and energy to participate fully in the off-farm educational aspects of the program (classes, tours, discussions, reflective journaling, projects, etc.).
- Full-time Internships will include a minimum of 840 hours and a maximum of 1,400 hours of on-farm training (~6-8 months). Apprenticeships will include a minimum of 1,150 hours and a maximum of 1,700 hours per season of on-farm training (~8-10 months).
- Part-time Interns shall train on-farm an average of 14-24 hours per week, allowing for seasonal fluctuations in scheduling.
- Part-time Internships will include a minimum of 350 hours and a maximum of 840 hours of on-farm training (~6-8 months).
- Host farmers will regularly monitor and sign off on their intern/apprentice's timesheets.

- Host farmers are required to allow time for interns/apprentices to attend all RFC classes, farm tours, potlucks, discussion circles, events, and allow 1-2 hours per week for independent study. (RFC staff identify regular event times that work best for each chapter's host farmers.)
- Host farmers are required to make on-farm training schedules clear in advance via weekly planning meetings or farm walks. Regular meetings shall include time to discuss farm planning, living arrangements, goal setting, and any interpersonal issues that arise.
- Changes in on-farm training schedules must be discussed in advance.
- Host farmers are required to offer a minimum of one day off per week, with two days off per week strongly recommended.
- Days off must include relief from any and all farm or household chores. Interns/apprentices are free to leave the farm without any obligations on days off.
- Host farmers are strongly encouraged to allow some vacation time during the season.

Grievances

- Conflicts should be addressed as they arise and be dealt with directly. RFC has a conflict resolution protocol outlined in the Host Farmer Handbook (provided as a separate document upon acceptance into the program).
- If resolution cannot be made between the host farmer and intern/apprentice, RFC staff should be contacted ASAP for assistance.
- If RFC cannot help create resolution, we will provide access to needed support and mediation.

NEW HOST FARMER APPLICATION

Note: Please decide if you are a good fit for our program before filling out this application by reading through the “Are you a Good Fit Guide” and “Host Farmer Standards & Guidelines” (above). If you would like to fill out this form electronically please do so. RFC staff can also send you just this application not embedded within the larger packet if you wish.

When complete, please email or mail this application to the Rogue Farm Corps Chapter Coordinator for your region. Emails can be found at roguefarmcorps.org/staff

Farm Name:

Primary On-Farm Mentor(s):

Phone #(s):

Mailing Address:

Best time to call:

E-Mail(s):

Website:

Number & Type of Participants Sought

Ideal Start and End Dates

Part-Time Internship:

Start: End:

Full-Time Internship:

Start: End:

Advanced Apprenticeship:

Start: End:

1) Why are you seeking an internship/apprenticeship program on your farm?

2) Describe the physical setting of your farm and the nature of the community in which you live (example: acreage, woods/fields, buildings, near town/remote area, recreation available, number of people on land, etc):

3) Describe your farm operation in terms of:

a) Enterprises, (livestock, vegetables, grains, honeybees, herbs, forestry, greenhouse, etc)

b) Marketing (e.g. farmers market, CSA, wholesale, etc.)

c) Level of mechanization

d) Personnel (i.e. who currently works on the farm and what are their responsibilities?)

e) Are all your products organically produced? _____ If not, to what degree are organic methods used on your farm?

4) Describe the training offered and the skills to be learned by an intern or apprentice (example: care of livestock, planting, cultivation, harvesting, selling at market, use of equipment, carpentry, food preservation, forestry, etc.). Remember that participants are usually looking to get as well-rounded an experience as possible.

5) What is your experience or background in educating, mentoring, and supervising?

6) What do you expect of an intern/apprentice? (example: hours of training in a day, days of training in a week, heavy physical exertion, time off, previous experience, etc.):

7) Explain how you intend to provide instruction, mentorship, and training to an intern/apprentice (example: teaching core concepts, train along with the student, demonstration, gaining independence, reading to be done, extent of supervision by yourself or others, etc.):

8) Are you a full-time farmer? _____ If not, describe what other occupation(s) you have:

FULL-TIME POSITIONS: (skip #9-10 if only wanting part-time)

9) Are you able to meet the stipend guidelines as outlined in the Host Farmer Standards & Guidelines? **Choose: Yes / No**

What is your proposed monthly stipend?

10) Are you able to meet the room/board requirements outlined in the Host Farmer Standards & Guidelines? **Choose: Yes / No**

If "Yes," explain the room and board arrangements (example: would the intern/apprentice live with the family, live apart but eat with the family, are there young children, what household duties would the intern/apprentices share, are you a vegetarian household, would you provide vegetarian meals, are there rules about smoking/drinking/drugs, are there any other important considerations?):

If you are not able to meet the room/board requirements, are you able to increase the stipend by an appropriate amount to offset these additional living expenses?

Choose: Yes / No

(If Yes, by how much?):

PART-TIME POSITIONS: (skip #11 if only wanting full-time positions)

11) What is your proposed package of stipend, room, and/or board you would like to propose offering to a part-time intern? Please add any explanations that may be helpful for RFC to understand how you come to this proposal.

12) Do you require a prospective intern/apprentice to visit your farm before a final arrangement is made?

13) Describe yourself, your family, background, farming experience, philosophy, goals & interests, and number of years as an established farm/ranch operation.

14) Do you have reliable internet service at the farm/ranch and would it be accessible to the intern(s)/apprentice(s)?

15) Can you correspond with RFC staff in a timely manner via email, text, and/or phone? Please describe the best ways of communicating with you and other primary farm mentors.

References:

Farm supervisee references should be someone that you have supervised in a farm setting for an extended period of time. Please let these references know they will be contacted.

Farm supervisee reference (1)	email	phone
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Farm supervisee reference (2)	email	phone
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Personal or other Professional reference	email	phone
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FARM SYNOPSIS FORM

(To be filled out after acceptance into the program for your farm description page on Rogue Farm Corps' website. We will also need two high quality photos of the farm and farmers.)

Please write a synopsis of your farm in 450-750 words or so. This synopsis will be posted on RFC's website and will serve as the primary way to advertise your farm to prospective interns and apprentices who are interested in RFC.

In an effort to give prospective interns and apprentices a better understanding of the unique nature of each RFC member farm, please speak to the following questions (roughly in this order) when writing your synopsis (you can use wording from your application as appropriate):

- 1) Location and physical setting of your farm (i.e. acreage, woods/fields, buildings, near town/remote, recreation available, etc.);
- 2) Nature of the community on your farm (i.e. family structure, number of people/projects on the land, etc.);
- 3) Describe your farming operation (i.e. acreage under cultivation, primary crops & products, scale of operation, livestock, marketing strategies, level of mechanization, etc.);
- 4) Describe the training offered and skills to be learned by an intern or apprentice (i.e. care of livestock, planting, cultivation, harvesting, marketing, use of equipment, food preservation, carpentry, forestry, etc.) Please break the season into 3-4 major time chunks and list the major skills to be learned & tasks to be performed during each section;
- 5) Expectations of an intern or apprentice (i.e. hours of training in a day, week, month; time off, previous experience, heavy physical exertion, etc.);
- 6) Explain how you intend to provide instruction and training to an intern or apprentice (i.e. train along with intern, demonstration, gaining independence, extent of supervision, etc.);
- 7) Description of room and board offered (i.e. type of housing, utilities, phone/internet, laundry, kitchen, bathroom, food from farm or staples supplied, household responsibilities, shared meals, rules about smoking, drinking, visitors, etc.);
- 8) What are the conditions of the internship or apprenticeship (i.e. experience needed, duration of commitment, pre-placement visit required, etc.)
- 9) Any other pertinent information about your farm's internship/apprenticeship experience.
- 10) Details about stipend offered.