



GoFarm Incubator 2021 Incubator Farmer Application

[GoFarm](#) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to increase the supply of and access to affordable, fresh, healthy, local food in Colorado. A large component of fulfilling this mission is providing farmer assistance through the GoFarm Incubator program and by providing local farmers with access to a wholesale market through our Local Food Share Program.

Table of Contents

The GoFarm Incubator	2
Who Should Apply	2
Equity and Inclusion	2
Selection Criteria	3
Application and Selection Schedule	3
Program Benefits	4
Program Fee	5
Incubator Farmer Requirements	5
Program Schedule Overview	5
Whole Farm Planning Course Schedule	6
Production Standards	7
Application	9

The GoFarm Incubator

The GoFarm Incubator offers a two-year Incubator Farmer track that is designed for beginning farmers who, upon graduation, are expected to launch or continue an independent urban or small scale farm business producing specialty crops. Incubator Farmers are provided year-round training, mentoring and technical assistance, as well as access to an urban farm plot, water, and equipment. The program is designed to allow Incubator Farmers to maintain a part-time job outside of the Incubator Farmer track.

The Incubator also offers a one-year externship that is focused on education around operating a farm business. The GoFarm externship is designed for people who are interested in learning more about local agriculture and/or who may want to start or scale up their own farm in the future. The externship is a great way to gain the necessary knowledge to become an Incubator Farmer. You can find the information [for the externship here](#) if you think this position is a better fit for you. Please reach out to us if you have any questions about which track may best fit your goals.

Seasonal paid internships are also available. Interns work in the field with Incubator Farmers, assist with the Local Food Share, and attend workshops with incubator farmers and externs. For more information you can see the 2021 job description [here](#).

Who Should Apply

Beginning and aspiring farmers! We encourage anyone to apply who has any farming experience (volunteering, interning, or work experience) or has completed another farmer training program like Veterans to Farmers. We also encourage beginning farmers who have already begun their own businesses and have been in operation for 1-5 years to apply. Anyone who has completed the internship or externship through the GoFarm Incubator is also encouraged to apply. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), as well as members of the LGBTQIA+ community, refugees, immigrants, people with disabilities, and veterans are given priority in the application process.

Equity and Inclusion

We acknowledge that there is injustice in the current food system and that land and resources have been stolen and withheld from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color both in the present and historically. In order to provide land and capital to those who have been historically denied, we give priority admittance to those who identify as BIPOC farmers.

We support farmers of all backgrounds within the program and we work to ensure that we are prioritizing the experiences of BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ farmers. Therefore, we are seeking values aligned farmers to participate in this program who acknowledge the importance of anti racist work and who do not just accept but celebrate our LGBTQIA+ community.

You can read GoFarm's full equity statement [here](#).

Selection Criteria

Minimum requirements:

- 18 years or older
- Understanding of issues around equity and racism in the food system **or** openness to learning more about these issues and willingness to attend and participate in racial equity workshops.
- 1 season or more of farming/production experience. We will also consider applicants with extensive gardening experience.
- Demonstrated commitment and desire to begin a farm enterprise.
- Commitment to using sustainable farming practices.
- Ability to work independently.
- Ability/ commitment to completing coursework and attending workshops.
- Ability to commit to the program for 2 years.
- Local housing and transportation

Beginning farmers who meet the following will have the most competitive applications:

- Farmers with 2-3 seasons of experience.
- Priority admittance for BIPOC, women, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, refugees, immigrants, and veterans.
- Farmers who are already operating a farm enterprise that has been in business for 1-5 years.
- Participants of the Mile High Farmers, Black and Brown Growers Collective, RMFU, or NYFC.

Application and Selection Schedule

July 6th	Applications released
Saturday, July 31st 10am-11:30am Lakewood (Address will be sent after RSVP)	Meet and Greet Farm Tour - to meet some of the GoFarm Staff and meet current incubator participants and get your questions answered! RSVP here . We have a limited capacity so RSVP early if you want to participate!
August 10th	Applications due
August 16th-August 27th	Interviews
August 27th- September 10th	Applicants informed of their acceptance
September 29th	Welcome and Orientation!
October 13th	Classes start

Program Benefits

- **Land Access**
 - Access to $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of land with seasonal fee of \$150-\$300 within Jefferson County and water (with fee based on usage).
 - Or use property you own or lease already
 - GoFarm covers the initial cost of developing **leased land** (tilling, compost, irrigation, etc)
 - At the end of the two years farmers may choose to repay the site development costs and remain on the site. Average site development costs are \$1,500-\$2,000.
 - Help with field prep and irrigation installation at all sites
- **Supply stipends**
 - Need based
 - Sliding scale of up to \$3,000 for farmers who are leasing land
 - Sliding scale up to \$1,500 for farmers who own their land
 - Offering stipends on a sliding scale allows us to support more farmers and work towards economic justice
- **Tools**
 - Access to the tools in the GoFarm Equipment Rental Program for a 50% discount. See our library [here](#).
- **Education**
 - A 17 week Whole Farm Planning Course the first winter in the program
 - Advanced Farm Business Course the second winter in the program
 - Monthly farm workshops March- October.
 - 40-50 hours/year of mentorship
- **Labor**
 - 6-8 hours per week of assistance from paid GoFarm interns May-October
 - Only available to Incubator Farmers located in Jefferson County or close by
- **Post graduation**
 - 25 hours of mentorship from a local farmer the first year after graduation
 - 20 hours of mentorship in the 2nd year after graduation
 - Opportunity to audit up to 3 classes each winter in the Whole Farm Planning or Advanced courses.

The estimated value for the program is over \$13,000 (not including potential supply stipend).

Program Fee

There is a one time fee of \$2000 for the Incubator Farmer Track that is due before classes begin unless a payment schedule is established. Scholarships are available!

Incubator Farmer Requirements

- **Prior to program start**
 - Criminal background check for certain plot locations. Please contact us about any concerns.
 - Signed Incubator Farmer Agreement
 - Submit a photo of yourself and bio for the website
 - Complete an entrance survey
 - Pay the program fee in full unless a scholarship or payment plan is established
- **To be completed/obtained/observed during program duration**
 - Participate in the Mile High Farmers [21 Day Racial Equity Challenge](#) discussions in April (Once a week in the evening, exact dates TBD)
 - Actively farm and market your products as a business
 - Keep farm business general and product liability insurance coverage¹ (\$25-\$125/year)
 - Have a signed agreement with landowner and comply with site guidelines
 - Compliance with [Production Standards](#)
 - Payment of all mandatory farm fees (i.e., land and water)
 - Monthly check-ins with GoFarm’s Farmer Assistance Program Manager
 - Complete the Whole Farm Planning Course Classes
 - Create a business management plan, crop plan, marketing plan, and food safety plan
 - Attend farm workshops March- October (dates and times TBD)
 - Complete the advanced Business Course in the second winter
 - Complete an end of program survey
 - Submit a transition plan in the second year.

Program Schedule Overview

Year 1		Year 2	
Oct 2020	Whole Farm Planning Course: Part 1	Oct 2021	Growing Season and Monthly Farm Workshops
Nov 2020		Nov 2021	Advanced Course

¹ Incubator Farmers can choose to be covered under Old Fort Market Coop, a farm trainee service cooperative that offers significantly discounted premiums for general and product liability coverage.

Dec 2020	Whole Farm Planning Course: Part 2	Dec 2021	& Transition Planning
Jan 2021		Jan 2022	
Feb 2021		Feb 2022	
Mar 2021		Mar 2022	
Apr 2021	Growing Season & Monthly Farm Workshops	Apr 2022	Growing Season & Monthly Farm Workshops
May 2021		May 2022	
Jun 2021		Jun 2022	
Jul 2021		Jul 2022	
Aug 2021		Aug - Oct '22	

Whole Farm Planning Course Schedule

Classes will be on Wednesday evenings from 5-8pm. Classes will be in person and will include dinner to enjoy and network. The location of the class is still TBD but will most likely be in North Lakewood or Golden.

Date	Topic	Date	Topic
10/13/2021	Realities of farming with a farmer panel	1/12/2022	Soils
10/20/2021	Building your mission, vision, and values	1/19/2022	Crop diseases and Integrated Pest Management
10/27/2021	Exploring farm business models and product pricing	1/26/2022	Weed management and managing on farm labor
11/3/2021	Branding and marketing	2/2/2022	Accounting and bookkeeping
11/10/2021	Planning for efficiency through farm design and systems	2/9/2022	Risk management
11/17/2021	Crop planning	2/16/2022	Harvest and post harvest handling and effective record keeping

11/24/2021	Break for Thanksgiving	2/23/2022	Food safety
12/1/2021	Break for Hanukkah	3/2/2022	Break- work on presentations
12/8/2021	Materials and supplies- What do you really need and building a budget	3/9/2022	End of class party and presentations
12/15/2021	Irrigation	Virtual	Optional Elective- Seed Saving
12/22/2021	Winter Break	Virtual	Optional Elective- Cut Flowers
12/29/2021	Winter Break	Virtual	Optional Elective- Growing starts under lights
1/5/2022	Winter Break		

Production Standards

All GoFarm Incubator Farmers must follow these standards while in the program. These are the same standards any grower who sells into the GoFarm Wholesale Market must follow. For full information on selling to GoFarm, click [here](#).

- I. Locally Grown; must comply with all of the following:
 - A. Food must be grown within the state of Colorado.
 - B. Only sell what you produce when selling to the Local Food Share.
- II. Organic Practices, Soil Health and Environmental Stewardship
 - A. Organic Practices; must comply with all of the following:
 1. Soil fertility and crop nutrients will be managed through tillage and cultivation practices, crop rotations, and cover crops, supplemented with animal and crop waste materials and allowed synthetic materials. Manage soil fertility through practices that promote healthy soil and use minimal synthetic inputs that meet organic standards.
 2. Crop pests, weeds, and diseases will be controlled primarily through management practices including physical, mechanical, and biological controls. When these practices are not sufficient, a biological, botanical, or synthetic substance approved for use on the USDA Organic National List may be used.
 3. The use of genetic engineering, ionizing radiation, and sewage sludge is prohibited.
 - B. Soil Health; must comply with all of the following:
 1. No Synthetic Inputs (including glyphosate) that are not on the approved organic list.

2. No GMOs or gene editing.
- C. Environmental Stewardship; must meet 8 out of 10:
1. Builds Soil Organic Matter.
 2. Conservation Tillage (no till to 2x per year).
 3. Protect soil from erosion when not in production (mulch, cover crop, tarps, etc.).
 4. Cover Crops.
 5. Crop Rotations.
 6. Promotes Biodiversity.
 7. Integrated Pest Management plan with emphasis on mechanical prevention.
 8. Composting of farm waste.
 9. Water conservation practices.
 10. Conserve resources by amending soil based on soil testing.
- III. Equitable Work Environment; must comply with all of the following:
- A. All employees should be compensated in a fair manner per state law through the [Agricultural Workers Rights Bill](#).
 - B. All employees have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
 - C. Goods bought by GoFarm are grown in safe conditions that work towards protecting the environment, building sustainable livelihoods, and empowering and uplifting communities.
- IV. Food Safety; must comply with all of the following:
- A. FSMA certification obtained by the end of your first season selling to GoFarm.
 - B. Documented food safety plan.
 - C. Allow GoFarm to conduct a site visit and food safety plan audit. Audits must be completed before selling to GoFarm.
 - D. Limited use of containers that cannot be sanitized (for example, wax boxes).

Application

Please apply by completing this [google form](#). You may use the document below to plan out your answers and copy and paste them into the form. Please be sure to pay attention to character limits. Google forms won't notify you that you are over the limit until you hit submit! If you need to complete this application over the phone or submit a printed version email Katie@gofarm.org.

Name: _____ Pronouns: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

- 1) How do you identify (**select all that apply**)(optional)? The following demographic information is voluntary and confidential, and helps us measure our success in including various segments of our community.
- 2) What does equity in the food system mean to you? *Character limit 1500*
- 3) How did you hear about the GoFarm Incubator? *Character limit 500*
- 4) Explain your interest in the GoFarm Incubator and how it fits into your future plans. *Character limit 1000*
- 5) How many seasons of farming experience do you have (**multiple choice question**)?
- 6) Please describe your farming experience (especially as it relates to specialty crop production and irrigation). *Character limit 1500*
- 7) Please upload your resume. (**File Upload, optional**)
- 8) Are you currently farming (**multiple choice question**)?
- 9) Please describe your current farm business or the type of farm enterprise you are interested in creating. *Character limit 2000*
- 10) What crops or value-added products do you currently or plan to grow/ produce? Please review program information for limitations on types of crops that can be grown. *Character limit 1000*
- 11) Have you read and do you agree to follow the Grower's Standards (**multiple choice question**)?
- 12) What sales markets do you intend to pursue? *Character limit 1000*

- 13) Where do you see your business in 3-5 years? *Character limit 1500*
- 14) Describe what you will need from this program in order to be successful. Include topics for mentorship, tools, resources, etc. *Character limit 1500*
- 15) What do you expect to gain from this experience? *Character limit 1000*
- 16) Do you have local housing and transportation (**multiple choice question**)?
- 17) Are you ready to begin coursework on October 13th, 2021 (**multiple choice question**)?
- 18) How do you plan to support yourself financially while participating as an Incubator Farmer? *Character limit 1500*
- 19) Do you have start-up capital to begin your business? Our sliding scale supply stipends may help to cover *some* upfront costs. You should anticipate spending an additional \$1,000-\$3,000 to start your farm business. (**multiple choice question**)
- 20) If accepted into the program, will you farm a GoFarm Incubator Plot or will you farm on your own property or property you lease on your own (**multiple choice question**)?
- 21) If you will be using land you secured on your own (land that you own or lease) please tell us 1) The address of the property 2) the size of the property 3) has the site been in production before 4) what kind of infrastructure is in place 5) would you be open to hosting an additional Incubator Farmer (**optional**) *Character limit 2000*
- 22) Will you need a partial scholarship to participate in the program? Needing a scholarship will not have any negative impact on your application.
- 23) Are you willing to complete a background check? Background checks may be required by some land owners. Please contact us if you have any concerns about this. (**multiple choice question**)
- 24) Please share anything else you would like us to know! Thank you for applying and we will be in touch soon (**optional**). *Character limit 1500*

Please apply by completing this [google form](#).