

MOFGA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Meeting Prospective Apprentices: Guidelines for Farmers

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

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

Work

The work schedule – hours/day, days/week, when & how often to expect to work overtime

Type of work to expect – repetitive, boring, independent

Time off – hours per week, days per season

Usual rising and quitting time

Allowance for emergency time off

Expectations of apprentices during time off, i.e., watering, stoking stoves, animal chores, child care

Work/safety clothing and tool requirements - boots, rain gear, ear protection, gloves, etc

Education and training

Your personal teaching style and techniques

Educational plans and resources available

Amount of time you can/will spend working alongside and training apprentices (do you work off the farm during the growing season?)

Use of machinery – unlimited, restricted, supervised, unsupervised

Access to Farm Training Projects – time off, transportation

The exchange arrangement

Stipend – fixed, graduated, reward for staying to end of season, profit-share, incentives

Room & board

Insurance coverage

The household & living arrangements

Housing, bathing & cooking arrangements

Meals – shared or separate, dietary restrictions, how much food is provided as part of compensation (which non-farm-raised items are provided? Which are the apprentices' responsibility?)

Expectations for cooking and clean-up chores, routine house cleaning

Terms of access to amenities in main house – phone, internet, laundry, tv/video, shower, hot tub, etc

Privacy needs of farmers and apprentices.

Visitor policy – length of stay, work requirement, paying for meals, etc

Health concerns

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

Allergies

Personal

Personal temperament

Philosophies and ideologies

Taste in music and art

Approach to smoking, drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc

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Meeting Prospective Apprentices: Guidelines for Farmers, continued

Things to ascertain about prospective apprentices
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Work

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

Education and training

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

The exchange arrangement

- Financial needs
- Insurance needs

The household & living arrangements

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

Health concerns

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

Personal

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

Special considerations for couples

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