Apprenticeship Programs

Agricultural apprenticeships offer hands-on experiential learning through intensive mentorship to the next generation of farmers and ranchers. New Entry Sustainable Farming Project works to coordinate the Ag Apprenticeship Learning Network (AgALN) to facilitate the growth of more mentorship opportunities to jointly train and support new agrarians.

We conduct a yearly survey of apprenticeship programs, and this data represents 45 program responses over three years of reported information (2017, 2018, and 2019). If an apprenticeship program responded to multiple years, the responses were averaged.

More info: www.nesfp.org/agapprentice

Total Annual Cost Per Apprentice

- 17% <$5,000
- 26% $5,000–$9,999
- 14% $10,000–$15,000
- 43% >$15,000

Former Participants

- 38% continue their education
- 15% in the same apprenticeship, 15% other sources, or 8% another program’s apprenticeship
- 25% Seek work as farm/ranch manager or labor
- 19% Work in other agriculture related business
- 18% Seek to develop their own business

Top 5 Program Categories

- 44% Vegetable Farm
- 24% Horticulture/Greenhouse
- 22% Mixed Animal & Vegetable Farm
- 20% Orchard
- 11% Permaculture

Apprenticeship Program Highlights 2017-2019

Apprenticeship Program Offerings Include:

Educational components and feedback from Mentors

- Hands-on training alongside a mentor: 100%
- Formal or informal curriculum: 84%
- Formal written or verbal evaluations: 80%
- Non-academic, technical workshops: 80%
- Land health and management issues: 78%
- Informal skills assessment: 75%
- Business planning & financial management: 73%
- Educational opportunities off the mentor ranch/farm: 69%
- On-farm educational opportunities/access to materials: 69%
- Farmers’ markets: 62%
- Direct sales and marketing: 58%
- Whole farm planning: 53%
- Formal or informal curriculum: 53%
- Financial management: 50%
- Business planning: 47%
- Weekly day(s) off: 47%
- Vehicle/Equipment maintenance, repair and operation: 44%
- Building, carpentry, and/or using tools: 40%
- Hourly wage: 40%
- Livestock health and management: 38%
- Housing: 38%
- Organic/biodynamic training: 37%
- Indirect distribution and marketing: 33%
- Stipend: 33%
- Some or all meals: 33%
- Workers compensation/unemployment insurance: 33%
- For-credit college or university classes: 27%
- Certificate or degree: 22%
- Paid vacation time: 13%
- Stipend for educational materials: 13%
- Policy/Advocacy training: 9%
- No compensation: 9%

Years in Operation

- Pre-launch: 31%
- >2 yrs: 24%
- 6-10 yrs: 19%
- 2-5 yrs: 19%
- 10+ yrs: 5%

Demographics

- 35% White/Caucasian
- 24% Latino or Hispanic
- 20% Black/African American
- 16% Asian/Pacific Islanders
- 5% Native American/First Nations

70% of Apprenticeship Programs have 0-4 participants at a time.

77% of Apprenticeship Programs are >12 months.