

Beginning Farmers Training Program

Hands-On Training on Working Florida Farms | Funded by Neighborhood Farms USA

Thank you for your interest in the Beginning Farmer Training Program, a community impact initiative funded by Neighborhood Farms USA (NFUSA) and an appropriation from the State of Florida. The program is designed to give aspiring growers practical skills and real-world experience in regenerative agriculture and small-scale food production.

Training takes place on working Florida farms. Applicants may select from the participating host farms listed below this information on the application page. Each farm has its own location, cohort dates, and schedule, so please review those details before applying.

What Makes This Program Unique

- **No Cost to Participate:** NFUSA funds the training so there is no program fee for selected trainees.
- **\$1,000 Completion Scholarship:** Each trainee who successfully completes the program and required documentation receives a \$1,000 scholarship paid directly by NFUSA.
- **Hands-On Training:** Learn on an active farm through instruction, observation, and supervised practice.
- **Learn From Working Growers:** Each host farm adapts the NFUSA curriculum to its own crops, systems, and growing practices.

What You Will Learn

The eight-week curriculum covers the core systems used in small-scale food production:

- Orientation and farm systems
- Soil health, composting, and fertility management
- Crop and succession planning
- Nursery management and seed starting
- Organic pest and disease management
- Field management, bed preparation, and turnover
- Irrigation basics and troubleshooting
- Harvesting, post-harvest handling, packing, and distribution

How the Training Works

Each week focuses on one of the program's eight modules. Training is designed around the work of an active farm, combining preparation before each session with instruction, observation, and hands-on practice in the field. Participants will see how each topic is applied within the host farm's actual crops, systems, and day-to-day operations.

THE WEEKLY RHYTHM

PREPARE → LEARN → OBSERVE → PRACTICE → REFLECT

Participants prepare with assigned materials, learn the concepts behind the week's module, observe those concepts in practice on the farm, apply them through supervised hands-on work, and reflect on what they learned. The emphasis is on learning by doing on a working farm, not just in a classroom.

Program at a Glance

Duration	8 weekly sessions
Contact Hours	Approximately 64 hours total
Format	In-person, hands-on training on a working farm
Location & Dates	Varies by participating host farm
Program Cost	No cost to selected trainees
Trainee Scholarship	\$1,000 paid directly by NFUSA upon documented completion

Who Should Apply

You do not need previous farming experience. We welcome applicants who are:

- At least 18 years old and living in Florida
- Curious about growing food and interested in regenerative agriculture
- Motivated to learn through active, physical participation on a working farm
- Reliable and able to commit to the full eight-week schedule for the host farm selected
- Interested in carrying practical growing knowledge into their community, career, or future projects

What Participation Requires

Trainees are expected to attend all eight sessions and complete approximately 64 contact hours and an additional 1 to 2 hours of pre-session work at home. Sessions take place outdoors on a working farm and include physical, hands-on learning. Attendance is documented throughout the program.

The \$1,000 scholarship is paid by NFUSA after the host farm confirms successful completion and NFUSA receives the required documentation. The host farm does not handle or pay the scholarship.

How to Apply

Review the participating farms listed below this information on the application page. Each listing will include the farm location and available program dates. Select the farm you would like to apply to and complete the application for that cohort.

- Choose a host farm. Review the location, dates, and schedule for the available cohorts.
- Submit your application. Tell us about your interests, availability, and goals.
- Application review. NFUSA will review applications and forward qualified applicants to the appropriate host farm.
- Next steps. If selected, the host farm will contact you directly with next steps and program-specific information.

Before the Program Begins

Selected trainees will receive the participation requirements and forms needed before the first session. These include the NFUSA Trainee Participation & Scholarship Agreement, Form W-9, and other program documentation.

Important: Applying does not guarantee placement. Space is limited, and each host farm will select participants based on fit, availability, and commitment to the program schedule.

We look forward to the possibility of growing with you.

Neighborhood Farms USA