

FARM Organic Growers School BEGINNINGS®

Year-Long Farmer Training

1	Saturday October 15, 2016 10am-5pm	Starting on Solid Ground: Integrating Values & Goals	Session 1 introduces the Farm Beginnings program, gives you an opportunity to get to know your classmates and presents Whole Farm Planning and the Holistic Goal as proven tools for sustainable farm management. You will learn what Whole Farm Planning is, why it is central to Farm Beginnings, how it promotes farm sustainability and how to use it to increase the success of your farm.
2	Wednesday October 26, 2016 6-9pm	Holistic Goal: Future Resource Base	In session 2, Participants continue to develop their holistic goal, specifically, how our land, as well as our community and behavior must be in order to sustain our vision for generations to come. You will also learn how to use the Holistic Goal in whole farm planning to develop an effective framework for decision-making that reflects your personal values, goals and life vision.
3	Wednesday November 2, 2016 6-9pm	Introduction to Business & Economy of Scale	Session 3 explores the value of developing sound business planning skills - what is involved in business planning, what decisions should be considered, and how to approach developing the skills to successfully start and operate a farm business. Economy of scale is explored to help participants align and ground farm enterprise ideas with financial needs and with quality of life.
4	Saturday November 19, 2016 10-5pm	Agroecology 101 & Soil Health	Session 4 introduces food systems and how sustainability is crucial to the future of small farming. We'll also cover ecosystem processes, soil health, and incorporating on-farm observation and monitoring skills utilizing the water, mineral, and energy cycles, as well as community dynamics to gauge ecosystem health.
5	Wednesday November 30, 2016 6-9pm	Financial Planning 101	Session 5 examines your beliefs about money and introduces home and farm budgets. You will have the opportunity to see real numbers from an established farmer's financial plan and learn about the realities of planning the financial part of the farm business. Begin to evaluate enterprises and how to match numbers with your ideas.
6	Wednesday December 14, 2016 6-9pm	Financial Planning 102	Session 6 digs deeper into enterprise planning. Work with your own numbers to develop an enterprise plan.
7	Wednesday January 11, 2017 6-9pm	Business Start-up: The formalities of Operating a Farm Business	Session 7 provides how-to and lessons related to the being in the "business" of farming, to include business structures, registering a business name, incorporation, farm taxes, insurance, and other legal and business requirements. Learn from a farmer's perspective key steps for start-up and capitalization. Introduces the farm proposal and strategic business plan, action-oriented plans that help develop, grow, change, or actualize your farm business.

8	Saturday January 21, 2017 10-5pm	Financial Planning 103 & Agroecology 102	In Session 8, participants will dissect the different components of management that occur on a successful farm business. In the morning, the farmer presenter will illustrate the value of budgeting annual income and expenses as a tool to help make decisions and plan for profit, including cash flow templates. In the afternoon, we will delve deeper into ecosystems processes, on-site observation and monitoring.
9	Wednesday February 1, 2017 6-9pm	Introduction to Marketing	Session 9 introduces marketing concepts and how to put concepts together in a marketing plan that pursues one's goals. Participants develop knowledge of farm business trends - what customers want and how to make the marketplace work for farmers.
10	Saturday February 11, 2017 6-9pm	Agroecology 103 & Land Access	Session 10 provides exposure to strategies and issues around farmland access including leasing, buying, conservation, land management and use. In the afternoon, we will cover last section of ecosystem processes, on-site observation and monitoring.
ASAP's BOF	Saturday February TBD	Business of Farming Conference	Participants attend Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's one-day conference with workshops on business planning and financials, direct and wholesale marketing, agritourism, food safety, social media, etc, meetings with regional buyers, and one-on-one business, legal and marketing consulting.
11	Wednesday March 1, 2017 6-9pm	Realities from the Field & Networking	Session 11 invites a panel of farmers to share realities from the field around agricultural business and production. Regional businesses who support local farms through purchasing are invited to answer specific questions about what their product needs are, how to best communicate with them, and the challenges and expectations they have when working with local producers.
Spring Confer- -ence	March 10-12, 2017	Beginning Farmer Track	OGS Spring Conference offers a wealth of organic focused practical education opportunities. Over the course of two days participants can choose from over 100 different workshops. Students are encouraged to participate in the Beginning Farmer Track workshops, and other workshops that align with your farm plan.
12	Wednesday March 22, 2017	Growing Season Plan	In session 12 participants will take time to reassess skill areas and identify the top five you need to develop this upcoming season, in addition to identifying a specific farm enterprise you will focus on and research for your farm proposal in September.
Harvest Confer- -ence	September TBD 2017	OGS Harvest Conference	OGS's Harvest Conference, a fall event featuring fall & winter growing, home cooking, fermentation, and preservation. Participants will attend the Friday half or full day workshops, and Saturdays conference.
13	September 16, 2017	Final Project: Farm Proposal Presentations	This final session participants present their farm proposal in the context of their growing season experience, that synthesizes the work done throughout the course. It is also a final end-of-program celebration to motivate students as they move forward on their own in pursuit of their farm dream.
Farm Tours	April- October	CRAFT Farm Tours	Participants attend 10 farm tours hosted by CRAFT Farm Members. Topics change each year and cover practices like cover crops, vegetable production, livestock, marketing, production planning, and more. Schedule TBD.
Field Days	April- November	SAHC Incubator Farm	Participants attend 8+ farm production oriented field days hosted at the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy Incubator Farm. Schedule TBD.