MOFGA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM Meeting Prospective Mentors: Guidelines for Apprentices

Communication is the key to apprentice-mentor 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 ascertain about the farm, the farmer, 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

Mentor Farmer's teaching style and techniques

Educational plans and resources available

- Amount of time farmer can/will spend working alongside and training apprentices (does the farmer 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 your 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 you.

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

Health concerns

Any disabilities or chronic issues that may slow the farmer down or limit his/her activity

Allergies

<u>Personal</u>

Personal temperament Philosophies and ideologies Taste in music and art Approach to smoking, drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc

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Things to share with prospective mentors about you

Work

General attitude about work Work ethic and experience level Enthusiasm and desire to learn Strength and stamina – how well you know your body and your 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 you want to get out of your experience Your personal learning style – experiential, visual, auditory, autodidactic, etc Your appetite for reading and research Your intellectual approach to farming & agriculture Your motivations for apprenticing and plans for future

The exchange arrangement

Your financial needs Your insurance needs

The household & living arrangements

Your needs for interaction/privacy Your level of creature comfort needs Your cooking experience Your dietary restrictions Your household skills and organization Pets

Health concerns

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

<u>Personal</u>

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?