



MAINE ORGANIC FARMERS AND GARDENERS

MOFGA Apprenticeship Program Values

Education and Relationship Building

The host farmer commits to principles of mentorship including agreeing to share their experience and knowledge in all aspects of their farm on a regular basis. The host farmer commits to taking the time and thoughtfulness through regular check-ins to support the growth of the beginning farmer and build a relationship of mutual respect that may extend beyond the length of the apprenticeship. The host farm agrees to support their apprentice in accessing MOFGA educational programming.

Equity and Inclusivity

Prior to mentoring apprentices, host farmers are encouraged to acknowledge their own perspective including assumptions, privileges, and biases that may affect an apprentice's experience on their farm. MOFGA expects host farmers to support a more equitable and just food system for all and work towards creating a more inclusive farm learning and working environment for beginning farmers that are historically and currently under-supported in agriculture. This includes but is not limited to women, people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, veterans, low-income individuals, people of diverse religious and non-religious affiliations, immigrants, and asylum seekers.

Environmental Sustainability

In line with MOFGA's mission, host farmers are expected to be farming in an environmentally sustainable and regenerative manner and provide training in these techniques with the apprenticing beginning farmers. Host farms are not required to be certified organic, but their production methods should be in alignment with organic principles.

Safe and Fair

It is the host farmer's obligation to compensate the apprentice fairly and justly and to comply with all applicable laws including insurance and workers compensation. The application of other federal and state laws governing housing, safety and farm operations may also apply. The host farmer will have respect and dignity for the labor and service being provided by the apprentice and prioritize clear, respectful, and non violent communication on their farm. Host farmers agree to establish and respect physical and emotional boundaries communicated between the apprentice and the host farmer.

MOFGA expects that participating farms will:

- Review and renew their application each year with references that are no older than 2 years
- Pay fees associated with program participation
- Meet with agricultural mediation at the beginning of each season with other host farms and apprentices
- Participate in 1 communication skills workshop and 1 social justice training
- Sign a labor contract with the apprentice that outlines

- A work schedule that accommodates apprentices ability to attend all Farm Training Projects
 - A compensation agreement that adheres to all agricultural labor laws as well as a payment schedule
- Notify MOFGA staff promptly:
 - when apprentices are found
 - when an apprentice leaves your farm for any reason

Mentorship and employment relationships between Host Farmer and Apprentice must be carefully arranged, well-planned, and self-regulated. Any apprenticeship arrangement made is strictly between the Host Farmer and Apprentice. MOFGA reserves the right to refuse participation in the Apprenticeship Program to any farm or apprentice applicant, at any time, at our discretion with or without cause. In such a case, the farm's enrollment fee will not be refunded.