



Gaining Ground Project-

Farm Incubator Participant Assessment tool*

Please complete this assessment, and be as truthful as possible about yourself and your family situation! If you answer 2 or more YES, move to the next box down. If you answer 2 or more NO, move to the box to the right

Step 1: Seed phase – Thinking about Farming	YES	NO
I have a slight understanding of organic and sustainable agriculture		
I have worked or participated in farming activities (including community gardens) in the past 2 years		
I have attended conferences or workshops about sustainable agriculture (in US and in my country)		
I would like to explore the possibility of growing for market		

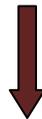


Other Resources

Attend area workshops hosted by the Farley Center, Spring Rose Growers' Coop, and other partners.

Gather information on farming resources available at the Farley Center, as well as opportunities to visit farm operations in the area.

Talk with staff about opportunities to visit farms or arrange meeting with farmers working in an area that interests you.



Move to Step 2

Seedling phase – Farley Center Apprentice**	YES	NO
I have dreamed about having my own farm business for a long time. I feel this is a path I want to take for my family and me.		
I feel confident about my production skills, have been involved in growing for at least 2 of the last 5 years, and have the time to work at least 15 (?) hours a week during the growing season as a part time farmer		
I am interested in learning more about farm production, management and marketing from farmers and others with more experience		
I have at least a slight understanding of the process involved in starting a farm business (business plan, financing, types of certification, etc)		



Step 2: Farm Apprentice

You have the possibility of participating in the Farley Center Apprentice Track, where you will have hands-on opportunities to work on the farm as a volunteer and learn from an experienced organic grower.

Apprentices need to commit 10-15 hours a week for at least one growing season. Sometimes the apprenticeship is extended, as apprentices need to learn not only about production but also about business planning and marketing. Gaining your own plot to farm will be determined based on evaluations from staff, farmer mentors, and your cohort.

Attend "Farm Dreams " one day workshop: participate in interactive exercises, self-evaluations, and talk with other participants exploring similar paths. Required for Apprentices.



Move to Step 3

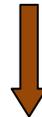
Step 3: Transplant phase – Incubator Farmer**	YES	NO
I am ready to commit to course work and field trips required to learn more about sustainable agriculture practices, business planning, and marketing		
I feel confident about my production abilities and have a firm business plan.		
I would like to be connected with a mentor farmer		
I agree to work with Farley Center staff and use available resources and support to keep records as part of my marketing and business plan.		



Step 3: Incubator Farmer

You are welcome to apply for the Farm Incubator Program! This is a 10 month track, involving course work, field trips, and conferences. Some of these activities are part of the core requirements of the incubator and attendance is very important. Incubator Farmers have access to ¼ to 3 acres to cultivate organically, and typically grow at the Farley Center for a 2-3 year period.

Other courses are electives and the student can attend if desired. You will be required to begin a draft business plan before the growing season, to keep records of your practices during the growing season, and to create a more comprehensive business plan after the growing season.



Move to Step Four

Step 4: Growing season -- Incubator Mentor Farmer	YES	NO
I have a business plan		
I am confident about applying for organic certification on my own and have a robust marketing plan		
I have the knowledge needed to start my own farm business		
I am using available assistance finding land to farm (rent or buy)		
I have been working for my and other farm business in the US for 3 yrs (requirements for asking for a loan)		



Farley Center Mentor Farmer and Graduate

You are closer to your dream! Check our Land-Link program and stay tuned for matching events.

Understand your responsibilities for being a farmer Mentor at the Farley Center.

