



# Hands-On Module Overview



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**Beginning Farmer Rancher Development Program**

**Developing the Next Generation of Sustainable Farmers in Georgia Grant**



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## Purpose of the Hands-On Module

The purpose of the Hands-On module of the *Journeyman Farmer Certificate Program* (JFCP) is to provide you with...

- Access to on-farm education
- Technical assistance so you can get started on a farm the right way.
- Experience authentic on-farm workloads and gain growing experience.

There are many topics reviewed in this module, which foster the steps you can take to become a successful farmer, doing so safely, legally, and responsibly.

Many of the practices and guidelines you'll experience in this module come from the land-owning farmers while others come from the experience the JFCP partners who support the program. All of the guidelines are important for you to know so that you can be successful on the farm you train at.

**Please read the remaining application carefully to understand what we expect from you and what you can expect from us. If you have any questions, please talk to JFCP staff.**

## JFCP Program Tracks

- **Internship (No on-farm experience and no land - Track 1)**

The internship pairs you with a professional host site over the course of a growing season (six months). You will learn about agricultural production and marketing, food and farm safety, and soil and water conservation. The internship provides the most secure method of learning farming while experiencing all of the variables that come with the profession.

- **Mentorship (Some on-farm experience and land - Track 2)**

You may be ready to begin running your own farm and questions may surface, which go beyond the information you received in the preliminary training modules. For this reason, you can elect to receive individualized technical assistance by a mentor (32 hours) to offer support in areas such as the following and more:

- How to become certified organic
- How to set up deer fencing, drip irrigation or other unique farm enhancements
- In the field (how to trellis crops efficiently or identify and manage pests)
- How to become food safety certified

- **Incubator (Some on-farm experience and no land - Track 3)**

The Incubator combines the best of tracks 1 & 2, providing both a secure yet comprehensive experience. Learn directly from a professional farmer about production, marketing, food safety, and more while enjoying the independence of managing your own site within a secure farm environment. Additionally, take advantage of the opportunity of pre-established sales channels provided by your host farm, creating the perfect balance between risk and reward. There are limited spaces available.

## Program Expectations

### What we provide for you

- *Internship* - Intern trainees will receive a stipend to offset cost of living for six months.
- *Mentorship* – JFCP will cover the costs of your Mentor's travel and consultation honorarium.
- *Incubator* - Incubator trainees will receive a stipend to offset operational and educational costs for six months, including supplies, rental fees, equipment depreciation, and other costs. JFCP will cover the costs of the incubator's consultation honorarium.

### What we require from you

- You must follow an assigned schedule, agreed upon between you and your farm host.
- You will be required to communicate any issues to your host or mentor, which may prevent you from either attending a work session at your designated farm site or meeting with a mentor at your own farm site.
- For interns and incubator farms, you will follow the rules and guidance of your host farmer.
- You will be required to treat both your host or mentor and other fellow JFCP students with respect and courtesy.
- You will be expected to participate in regular evaluations so JFCP staff can assess your learning development.

### Training Topics

A variation of these training topics will be provided depending on the host farm, farmer expertise, and season of participation. In general, we expect you to gain experience in most of the topics below.

- **Seasonality, Crop Selection, and Propagation Management**  
Learn how to make your own potting mix, how to make a sanitary environment for propagation, and how to start and manage your own seedlings.
- **Small Farm Equipment**  
Learn about basic repairs and maintenance, and an emphasis will be put on the safe operation of rototillers, attachments (sickle bar, mowers, cultivators, hillers) and other small farm equipment and tools.
- **Irrigation and Water**  
Learn how to install systems such as drip irrigation and others. Additionally, learn about water conservation, water requirements for certain vegetable crops, and basic installation, maintenance, and teardown of a system.
- **Field/Bed Preparation**  
Learn how to best prepare your field, lay out your fields, and make rows/beds with small and large farm equipment. There will be an appropriate scale of tools and machinery. Depending on farm size you may be working with hand tools, walk behind tractors and full size farm equipment. Emphasis will be placed on soil/water conservation and bed orientation.

- **Amendments & Fertilizers**

Learn about taking soil samples for a soil test, interpreting soil test results, and how to apply the test recommendations through appropriate nutrient management. Additionally, learn how to manage nutrients using cover crops, soil amendments, and foliar applications.

- **Pest Management**

Learn about identifying and managing common insect pests in the southeast, including prevention, cultural controls, and the appropriate application of organic (OMRI listed) pesticides or other pesticides depending on farm.

- **Food Safety and Good Agricultural Practices**

Learn about appropriate harvest times and techniques with a focus on sanitation, good worker training, and the proper handling, washing, cooling and storage of many different crops.

- **Weed Management**

Learn how to identify the most common weeds that may be taking up residence in your fields. Learn how to effectively manage weeds, whether you have a large farm or a smaller market garden.

- **Disease Management**

Learn about how you can prevent, identify, and sustainably treat common (and not so common!) plant diseases in your fields.

- **Cover Cropping**

Learn about the importance of cover crops, how to select the covers that are right for you, and practice seeding a field of your own.

- **Composting**

Learn the beneficial role of compost in your soil, how compost is formed in a healthy compost pile, and some basic composting systems that are ideal for small farms. Also, learn the basic science of composting as well as the thought process behind designing your own system.

### **Consequences and Probation**

You must agree to follow both the aforementioned and following expectations or you may be asked to leave the program. Resulting consequences include:

- **Probation**

- Miss more than two (2) scheduled workdays without notification and/or more than three (3) with notice, unless due to an emergency or force majeure (internship and incubator).
- Miss more than 2 scheduled meetings with or without notification, unless due to an emergency or force majeure (mentorship).
- Miss one (1) evaluation with JFCP staff.
- Do not follow all the guidelines as documented in this Agreement.

If you are put on probation, the FSC will meet with you to discuss the reasons and will state the terms of your probation. To continue in the program you will have to acknowledge and sign a statement regarding the terms of your probation.

- **Removal from JFCP**

- If you have one further violation of the rules and guidelines of the program
- Do not meet the terms of your probation.
- Disrespect the property of a host farm.
- Miss more than one (1) evaluation with JFCP staff.
- Use alcohol, illegal drugs, or firearms on a host-farm property.
- Steal from farm sites or other JFCP farmers.
- Are violent or aggressive towards others.

### **Complaints and Appeals (Grievances)**

**STEP 1)** You can file a complaint against another farmer, host site, or JFCP itself. Your complaint should be in writing using the documents and steps outlined in the “Grievance Policy” (materials provided separately). Submit complaint as soon as possible after an occurrence happens.

**STEP 2):** The FSC will try to fix the problem directly with you, and/or seek other staff help to resolve the situation.

## Agreement to Participate in JFCP

**Enrolling in the JFCP:** After finishing both the *Small Farm Business Planning* and *Small Fruit and Vegetable Production* modules you can participate in the *Hands-On* module.

**Agreement to farm:** This document contains all the agreements and guidelines that are part of the JFCP. Please review this manual and talk about it with staff if there's any information you do not understand. When you sign your name below, it means you understand and agree with all the rules in the Hands-on Module Overview.

I \_\_\_\_\_-have reviewed this document, understand it and agree to participate in the 2016 JFCP.

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Farmer print name

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Farmer signature

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JFCP print name

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JFCP sign name