



## 2024 Application

### *Core Program*

Farming, growing food, is critically important in this rapidly changing world. The life of a farmer is not easy, not predictable, and not glamorous. It involves the kind of hard work that can exhaust you even as it fulfills you. The Organic Farm School offers an 8.5 month, intensive, experiential “boot camp” for beginning farmers. The program requires commitment, a genuine interest in learning to work with different personalities, a radical willingness to learn about growing food for a community, and a strong physical/mental/emotional work ethic. Springs can be cold and wet, summers are hot and dry, fall can be anyone’s guess. Learning takes place in the classroom and in the field. The field is a 5+ acre annual vegetable farm. The production goals will challenge you, but they are appropriately scaled for a training cohort led by experienced farmers.

We do not teach permaculture, silvopasture, alley-cropping, biodynamics, etc. We DO teach basic annual vegetable crop production because it can provide a beginning farmer with enough revenue to keep growing and learning on community-scaled acreage.

Not every individual method we use is “regenerative” in and of itself, but we are committed to a regenerative approach to our long-term farm management. We use judicious tillage, incorporate cover crops and tarps, manage broiler chickens and sheep for soil/fertility development, produce and process seed, and our vegetable crops are certified organic by WSDA.

If all of this appeals to you, please completely answer the following questions and return the form to [judy@organicfarmschool.org](mailto:judy@organicfarmschool.org). In your email, include a resumé and contact info for three references who can speak to your farm/work experience, work ethic, and ability to function within a team.

What about farming draws you to it? Describe what you believe the life of a farmer is like.

Describe the farm work you have already done. What was hard? What was rewarding?

What is it about the OFS that attracts you?

Growing food for a community can be a deeply rewarding profession. It requires planning, budget management, weed management, propagation, bed prep, succession planting, irrigation, pest/disease management, harvesting, processing, marketing, interfacing with customers, and never-ending decision-making and problem solving. As you imagine learning how to do such things, describe your learning style.

As climate, weather, culture, and economy change rapidly, farming becomes even more challenging. Why do you want to farm NOW?

Working alongside the same group of people for 8.5 months, there will be interpersonal dynamics. When you find yourself annoyed by someone else's behavior, what do you do?

The schedule and intensity of working & learning prevent more than an occasional off-farm task. In other words, you won't have time and energy for even a part time job. How will you handle your personal living expenses during the 8.5 months of the program?

We are working toward a wholistic/regenerative vision of farming, but not every single step along the way may seem absolutely regenerative. Often compromises offer a way to get past a challenging situation so you can move on to better options in the future. How will you maintain an openness to learning as you confront some of the compromises made in annual vegetable farming?

We live and teach on an island. Taking care of individuals and community is important to us. Covid vaccinations and tetanus shots are required. Do you have these immunizations?

