



ROGUE FARM CORPS

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Host Farmer Standards & Guidelines

Rogue Farm Corps (RFC) requires that all farmers and ranchers who participate in our **FarmsNext** Internship program and our **FarmsNOW** Apprenticeship program to adhere to the following standards and guidelines:

Membership

- Host farms are required to abide by workplace laws regarding unpaid interns/apprentices. Host farms will not commit to hiring an intern/apprentice at the end of the training period, and the host farm will offer a written agreement to all interns/apprentices stating that no wages will be paid for the work performed. The work performed by interns/apprentices at the host farm supplements the intern's/apprentice's educational training, it provides experience for the benefit of the intern/apprentice, the work is performed under close supervision, and the work performed provides no immediate advantage for the host farm.
- Host farms are required to pay an annual fee of \$750 for one intern/apprentice, \$1000 for two interns/apprentices, and \$1250 for three or more interns/apprentices to RFC to contribute to the costs of program coordination, recruitment, promotion, and marketing. If a host farm has an intern continue on the following year as an apprentice, the annual fee is reduced to \$500 for one apprentice.
- A \$250 non-refundable deposit is due upon successful placement of an intern/apprentice. The remaining balance is due at the New Student Orientation Meeting. RFC may work with host farms to establish payment plans, if requested in writing.
- If the internship/apprenticeship is terminated during the 45-day trial period, membership fees will be refunded, with the exception of the \$250 deposit.
- Host farms are required to attend the Pre-Season Host Farmer Training (February/March), On-Farm Orientation Meeting (March/April), New Student Orientation Meeting (April), two Evaluation & Assessment Sessions (approximately

June and September), and the Post-Season Host Farmer Meeting (October/November).

- Host farms will sign a written Farm-Intern/Apprentice Agreement with their interns/apprentices outlining the expectations around training schedule, stipends, housing, food and meals, transportation, farm rules, etc. RFC will provide examples if requested.
- Host farms will share a copy of the Farm- Intern/Apprentice Agreement with RFC staff and perspective interns/apprentices prior to placing an intern/apprentice.
- Host farms will sign an RFC-Farm Legal Agreement outlining roles and responsibilities for each entity.
- Host farmers are expected to offer monthly stipends ranging from a minimum \$400-\$600 for an intern, and \$600-\$1000/month for an apprentice. Season-end bonuses are allowed. For host farmers that are not providing housing on-site, monthly stipends shall be increased to cover housing and food costs that meet the standards outlined below.
- Host farmers are required to maintain a safe and sanitary training environment for interns/apprentices at all times and must comply with all state and federal safety requirements.

Type and Scale of Agriculture

- The farm or ranch is in commercial production, providing specialty crops, meat, poultry, dairy, seeds, grain, or forage crops to the local and regional food system.
- The farm or ranch is sufficiently contributing to local and regional economies and employing efficient and effective techniques and methods to achieve farm profitability.
- The agricultural practices performed on the land are humane and ecologically sound, providing animals with a high quality of life while enhancing the soil quality, air quality, water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- Diversity and resilience are represented through a variety of plant and animal genetics, farm products, and the agricultural ecosystem.
- The farm provides fair wages and good working conditions to any employed labor.

Room & Board

- Interns/apprentices are provided a safe physical environment (sound structure/fire/electrical) that is weatherproof, has adequate ventilation, and is pest proof.
- Living structures have a natural source of light and a safe source of lighting (including instruction in the safe use of non-electrical lighting).
- Interns/apprentices are provided a reasonably clean, private, and cleanable space (including both personal and common spaces like kitchen and bathroom) with a space for personal cleaning and a sanitary bathroom or latrine.
- Interns/apprentices are provided access to potable water and a heated living area.
- Host farmers are required to clarify eating arrangements in their Farm-Intern/Apprentice Agreement (i.e. Do interns/apprentices eat separately or as part of farm household? Will cooking and cleanup be shared?).
- Host farmers are required to clarify household chores arrangements.
- Host farmers are required to provide or compensate for an adequate diet to fuel the strenuous activity of farming, provide ample time for regular meals (including prep time), provide adequate cooking facilities (stove, wash basin, refrigeration, food storage), and clarify ahead of time whether they are willing to provide for special dietary needs.
- Housing requirements can be waived if the farm or ranch lacks adequate housing for interns/apprentices and there is a reasonable supply of locally available housing within 30 minutes drive. In this case, host farmers are expected to increase monthly stipend to cover housing and food costs that meet the standards outlined above.

Education and Training Offered

- Host farmers are required to demonstrate a willingness to teach, act as an educational resource, provide access to farm's agricultural library, and offer a tour and class at their farm or ranch once a season for all interns/apprentices in the local RFC Chapter cohort.

- Host farmers are required to train, supervise, and provide feedback in accordance with the On-Farm Curriculum and Training Ethics Standards developed for their farm or ranch.
- Host farmers are required to abide by all RFC policies outlined in the Host Farmer Handbook (provided as a separate document upon acceptance into the program).
- Host farmers should have a minimum of 5 years experience farming, and/or demonstrated capability to mentor beginning farmers.
- Host farmers are required to be farming full-time or have a full-time on-site farm manager that serves as primary mentor.
- Host farmers are expected to schedule time to train alongside their interns/apprentices on a regular and consistent basis, train as a team with interns/apprentices and employees, and have interns/apprentices train independently.
- Interns/apprentices should be given a diversity of tasks over the course of the farming season to gain exposure to all aspects of running an agricultural operation.
- Host farmers shall seek out and take advantage of teachable moments on the farm on a regular basis.

Training Expectations

- Interns/apprentices shall train on-farm no more than an average of 40 hours per week, allowing for seasonal fluctuations in scheduling, totaling up to a maximum of 1,500 hours per season. A minimum of 1,000 hours is required to complete the program. Host farmers will sign off on their intern/apprentice's timesheets.
- Host farmers are required to allow time for interns/apprentices to attend all RFC classes, farm tours, potlucks, discussion circles, events, and allow 1-2 hours per week for independent projects and journaling.
- Host farmers are required to make on-farm training schedules clear in advance via weekly planning meetings or farm walks. Planning meetings shall include time to discuss farm planning, living arrangements, goal setting, and any interpersonal issues that arise.

- Changes in on-farm training schedules must be discussed in advance.
- Host farmers are required to offer a minimum of one day off per week, with two days off per week strongly recommended.
- Days off must include relief from any and all farm or household chores.
- Interns/apprentices are free to leave the farm without any obligations on days off.
- Host farmers are strongly encouraged to allow some vacation time during the season.

Grievances

- Conflicts should be addressed as they arise and be dealt with directly. RFC has a conflict resolution protocol outlined in the Host Farmer Handbook (provided as a separate document upon acceptance into the program).
- If resolution cannot be made between the host farmer and intern/apprentice, RFC staff should be contacted ASAP for assistance.
- If RFC cannot help create resolution, we will provide access to needed support and mediation.