**Farm Support Services: Resources to Assist Incubator Farm Operations**

***Government programs:***

* **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** – County offices across US. Relevant programs include: Environmental Improvement Programs (examples: EQIP, AMA); Stewardship Programs; Community Assistance Programs; Technical Resources (Conservation Planning Services), connections to local Conservation Districts, and more. See: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs>
* **USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) –** County offices across US. Relevant programs include: Farm Loan Programs – ownership and operating; Emergency Disaster Programs (ie, NAP – Non Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program); and more. See: [http://www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing)
* **USDA Rural Development (RD)** – County offices across US. Relevant programs include: cooperative development resources, loans, grants, and technical assistance. See: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Home.html>
* **USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education** **(SARE)** – Maintains a rich, diverse “learning center” and resource library of funded projects with information on production and agricultural research. There is a SARE Coordinator in every state – connect with them. SARE Farmer or Partnership Grants can be used to implement or demonstrate new/innovative techniques on incubator farms. See: <http://www.sare.org/>
* **National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and ATTRA –** They maintain an English-language ATTRA toll-free hotline at 800-346-9140 or the Spanish-language ATTRA hotline at 800-411-3222 for expert technical advice. Service providers (and farmers) can also use the [**Ask An Ag Expert**](https://attra.ncat.org/ask.php) tool to send them an electronic note. See:<https://attra.ncat.org/>
* **State agency programs:** 
  + **Extension / Land Grant University –** traditional service providers to offer technical assistance to farmers/community gardeners. Look for available resources on e-eXtension, see: <http://www.extension.org/>
  + **Departments of Agriculture (and Markets) –** many state agencies or departments of agriculture also offer producer outreach, training, grant programs, energy services, marketing support, and other programs/services.

***For Profits / Private Companies:***

* **Agricultural Supply Companies**: Don’t overlook the technical assistance that can be offered by for-profit agricultural suppliers. Invite a company representative to serve as a guest speaker or develop a good working relationship with a staff/owner who is willing to assist new farmers (spread the wealth so as not to appear partial to a particular brand/company with a vested interest in a sale).
  + Irrigation / Fencing / Seed Companies / Equipment Dealers

***NGO’s:***

* **Organic Certifiers**: Many organic certifying bodies offer technical assistance, workshops, or other resource networks to secure additional technical assistance. See examples at: MOFGA / NOFA’s, PASA

***Grassroots Farmer Groups/ Trade Associations:***

* **CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training) networks**: Grassroots farmer groups usually in support of intern/apprentice training. Groups usually schedule seasonal farm visits, workshops, or social events to network with other young farmers. See examples at: <http://www.emasscraft.org/> (Eastern Mass CRAFT), or <http://www.craftfarmapprentice.com/> (Hudson Valley CRAFT), or <http://www.learngrowconnect.org/what/training/craft> (Angelic Organics CRAFT in Illinios).
* **Farm Bureau**: Each state has a chapter and there are county committees in each state. Often they have young farmer programming. See: <http://www.fb.org/>
* **National Farmers Union**: There are regional chapters of the National Farmers Union and they also are a legislative/advocacy group with programming and networks across the US. See: <http://www.nfu.org/>
* **Statewide Beginning Farmer Networks**: More statewide organizations in support of new farmers are emerging, see: <http://nesfp.nutrition.tufts.edu/resources/bfaa.html> for an example of New Entry’s network in Massachusetts.

***Consultants:***

* There are an abundance of consultants who specialize in agricultural (or cross-industry) technical consulting in areas such as:
  + business planning, marketing, branding, financial management, insurance, legal (attorneys), CPA (accountants), commodity specific consultants, media and public relations, agritourism and more.
* **SCORE** – is a nonprofit association that helps small businesses (including agricultural businesses) get off the ground through education and mentorship. They offer mentors, tools, counseling and workshops. See: <http://www.score.org/about-score> to find a local chapter.

***Other Resources: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

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