



NOFA-VT Journey Farmer Program

**NOW
ACCEPTING
APPLICATIONS
FOR 2012!!**

The Journey Farmer Program is a two-year program for beginning farmers who are in the first few years of running their own farming enterprise in Vermont. The program is largely shaped by the farming interests and goals of the Journey Farmers, and enables aspiring new farmers to advanced their farming skills and experiences, along with being a part of a learning community of other aspiring farmers and farmer mentors. What follows is a list of services and opportunities available to Journey Farmers.

Program offerings include:

- Farmer-to-farmer mentoring
- Access to technical assistance by NOFA-VT staff
- Free admission to NOFA-VT Summer Workshop Series
- Free admission to NOFA-VT Winter Conference
- Business planning support
- A \$500 educational stipend
- Access to NOFA-VT's Revolving Loan Fund
- Journey Farmer Network

Farmer-to-Farmer Mentoring

Each Journey Farmer participant will be matched with a farmer mentor. Farmer mentors are paid to provide up to 25 hours of mentoring throughout the year. Farmer mentors provide practical detailed knowledge that can help with a range of farming related topics.

Technical Assistance

NOFA-VT crop and livestock advisors are available to provide additional technical assistance as needed to address other production and business issues.

NOFA-VT Events

Journey Farmers receive free admission to a number of educational events including workshops and field days that are part of NOFA-VT's Summer Workshop Series along with free admission to the NOFA VT Winter Conference.

Business Planning Support

NOFA-VT will work with Journey Farmers to create programming to best meet their business planning needs.

Educational Stipend

Journey Farmer participants will receive an educational stipend of \$500 for pre-approved farm related courses, books, videos, computer software or travel.

NOFA-VT Revolving Loan Fund

Low-interest loans from NOFA-VT's Revolving Loan Fund are earmarked for Journey Farmer participants. Applicants will have to meet all other loan criteria, which are found on the web at: <http://nofavt.org/programs/farm-financial-resources/revolving-loan-fund>.

Journey Farmer Network

In addition to all these program offerings, Journey Farmers also become part of a supportive network made up of other beginning farmers and farmer mentors by participating in special gatherings, educational offerings, and other community events.

Expectations: NOFA-VT expects all Journey Farmers to enter into an agreement outlining their goals and objectives for the program; which includes participation in educational events and trainings, regular mentor meetings and completion of a farm plan.

Qualifications: Prospective Journey Farmers should be competent in a range of agricultural skills, have a solid commitment, and have reasonably clear and realistic plans for their future farming activities. The Journey Farmer Program is targeted towards farmers in the first few years of running their own farming enterprise.

Applying: NOFA-VT reviews Journey Farmer applications once a year with a February 29th deadline, and we will notify applicants at the beginning of March. Applications are available at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NOFA-VTJourneyFarmer2012> or in hard copy by request.

The Journey Farmer Program was started in 2011 with funding from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Agricultural Innovation Center, and is currently supported by the USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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