



BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP-BASED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM FOR BIOREGIONAL FOOD SOVEREIGNTY





AGROECOLOGY COMMONS

A Worker Self-Directed Non-Profit



Agroecology Commons cultivates knowledge sharing, community action, and global solidarity for decolonized land stewardship, collective healing, and justice within the food movement.

WHY

Reestablishing a sustainable scale of stewardship

Our philosophy is that we need more people to farm on a small scale. The designs of our programming encourage many opportunities for participants to learn tangible skills, gain visceral experience, and find their niche to support in creating a food sovereign bioregion.

“At the start of the 20th century, 41 percent of Americans made their living in connection to some form of agriculture. One hundred years later, less than two percent of the population can make this claim”

-Eric and Joy McEwen



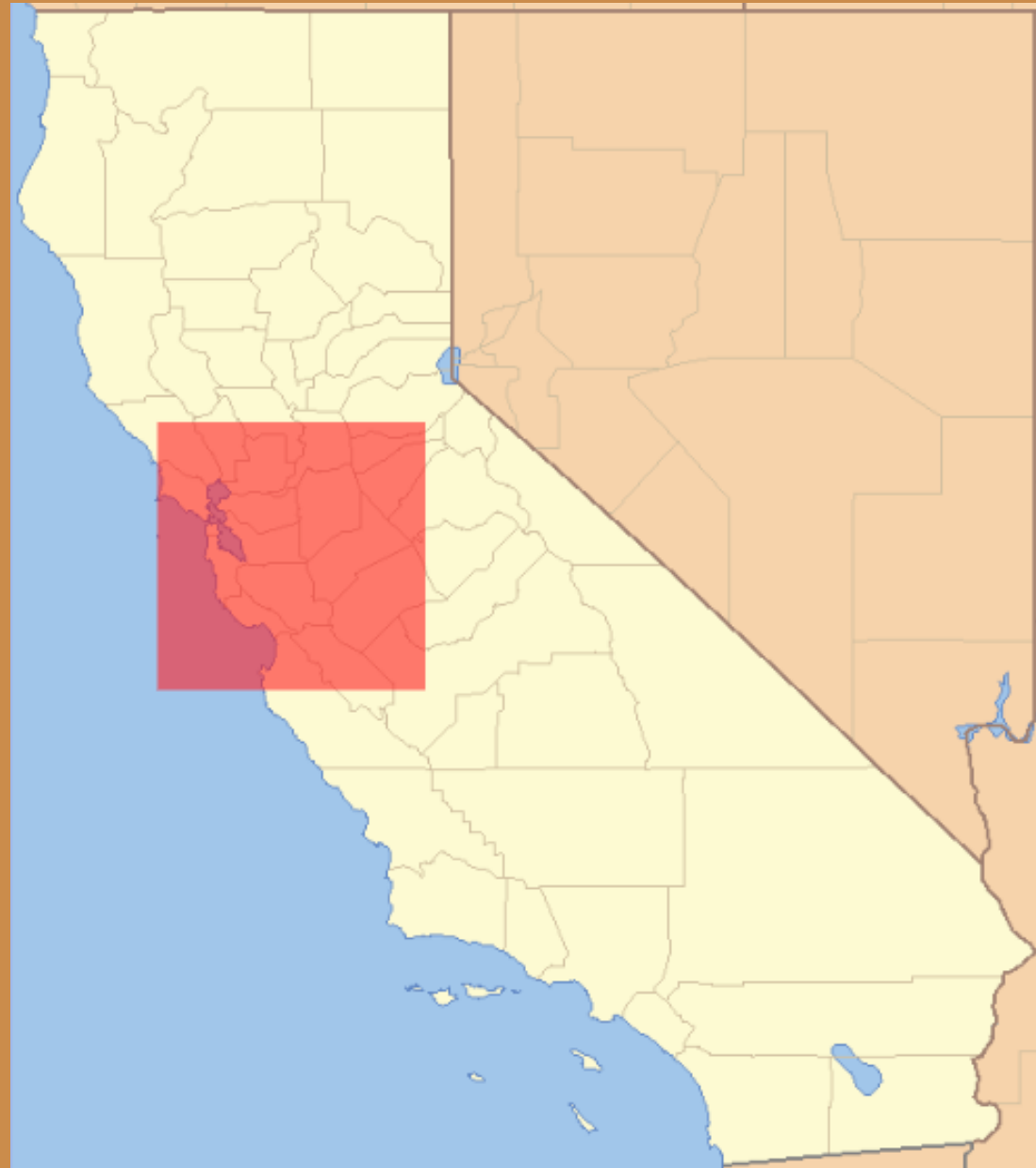
BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP BASED FARM NETWORK



For us, creating a bioregional network of farmers, means relationships are at the center.



STRENGTHENING OUR BIOREGION



FARMER WELLNESS DAYS

Honoring Those Who Put Food On Our Tables

Community Partners:

Young Farmers

California Alliance with Family Farmers

Freedom Community Clinic



Bay Area Farmer-to-Farmer Training Program

WEEK 1:

INTRODUCTION TO AGROECOLOGY, ANIMAL STEWARDSHIP, GOAT MILKING AND CHEESEMAKING

WEEK 2:

INDIGENOUS FOODWAYS AND SEED SOVEREIGNTY

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT & TRACTOR USE/SAFETY

WEEK 3:

AGROECOLOGY AND AGROECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE IN CUBA

HERBAL MEDICINE AND BEEKEEPING

WEEK 4:

HOLISTIC SOIL STEWARDSHIP

FARMING IN CLIMATE CHAOS AND MUTUAL AID



Bay Area Farmer-to-Farmer Training Program Cont.

WEEK 5:

BLACK AGRARIANISM, LAND ACCESS AND AGENCY

SEED STEWARDSHIP, ANCESTRAL FOODWAYS, VERMICOMPOST, AND PLANT PROPAGATION

WEEK 6:

GLOBAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR AGROECOLOGY AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

DISMANTLING RACISM WITHIN THE FOOD SYSTEM AND INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

WEEK 7:

COTTAGE FOOD LAWS, BUSINESS PLANNING, LAND POLICY AND JUSTICE

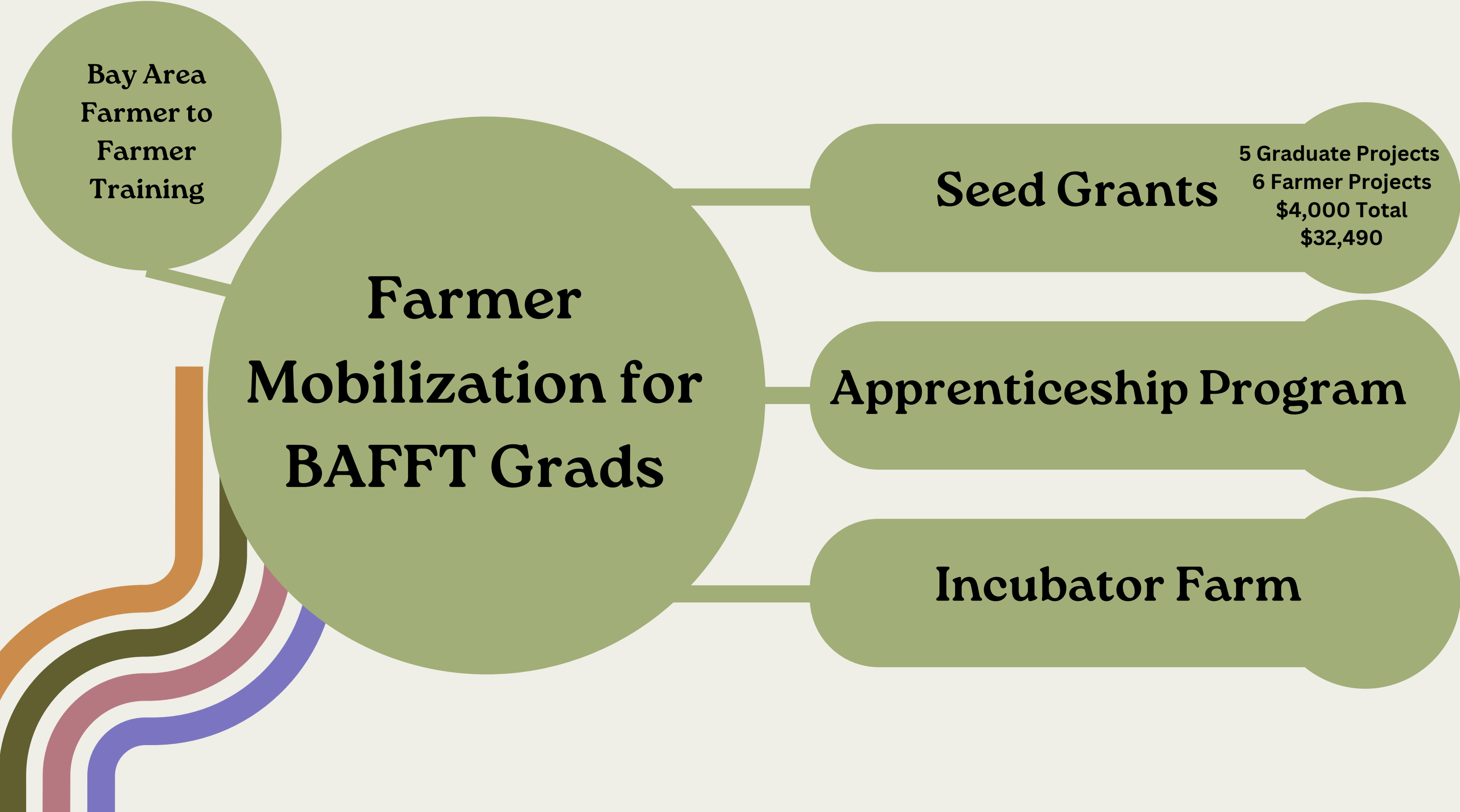
URBAN ROOFTOP FARMING, FARMERS MARKETS, AND COOPERATIVE ORGANIZING

WEEK 8:

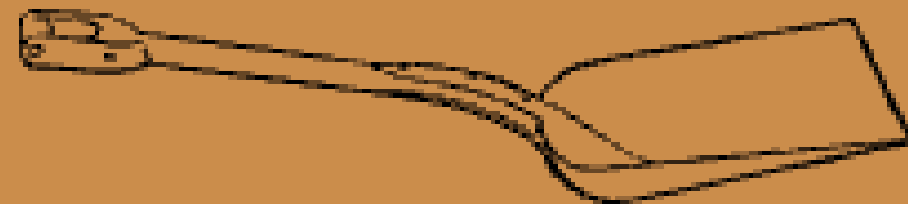
LAND-BASED HEALING, QUEER ECOLOGIES, AND MOVEMENT BUILDING

PREPARING YOUR MIND AND BODY FOR FARMING, VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS, AND COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Farmer Mobilization Pathways



On-Farm 250 or 500 Hour
Apprenticeships



PAID ON-FARM APPRENTICESHIP ORGANIZING

Farmer Mobilization

- Matchmaking Process
- Creating Farmer Profiles
- 13 apprentices across 9 farms in California
- Apprenticeship commencement gift boxes



FERAL HEART FARM



Located in Sunol

Farm Size
3 acres

Farm Practices and Philosophy

Minimal input, sustainable to regenerative, low till, seed saving, land honoring, experimental, diverse, BIPOC-owned and operated serving BIPOC community, hand-scale and tractor-scale.

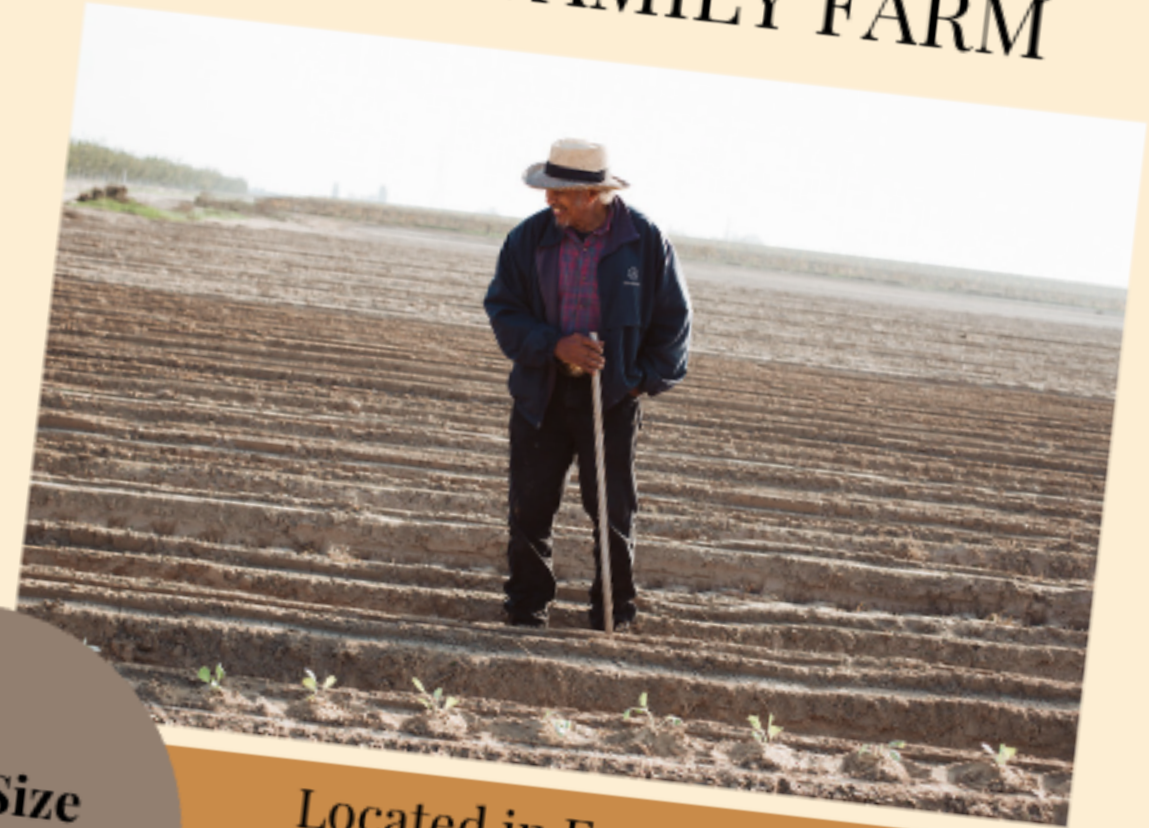
Main Market Outlets

Restaurant sales, sales to CSA programs, potential CSA

Main Crops

Vegetables
Pan-Asian Diaspora
Heritage Crops
Culinary and Medicinal
Herbs
Flowers

SCOTT FAMILY FARM



Located in Fresno

Farm Size
45 acres

Farm Practices and Philosophy

Chemical free farming, Black legacy crop producer, organic, healthy culturally relevant and affordable food

Main Market Outlets

Farmstand, Farmers Market, CSA, Grocery Stores, Chefs, Restaurants and Universities

Main Crops

Crowder Pea Varieties,
Okra,
Heirloom Tomatoes,
Sweet Potatoes,
Watermelon,
Leafy Greens Varieties,
Broccoli,
Cauliflower,
Peppers and a variety
of Fruit

FARM MENTORS

Bringing Together A Diversity of Ancestral Food/Farming Practices



CATALÁN FAMILY FARM

Hollister, California



SCOTT FAMILY FARM

Fresno, California



FERAL HEART

Sunol, California



GOAT WILD COLLECTIVE

El Sobrante, California



BERKELEY BASKET

Berkeley, California



CULTURAL ROOTS NURSERY

Winters, California



RAISED ROOTS

Livermore and Sunol, California



SOUL FLOWER FARM

El Sobrante, California



RED H FARM

Sebastapool, California



HONORING FARMERS AND ASPIRING FARMERS

Building a compensated farm apprenticeship program

- Creating pathways for future agrarians who have been historically marginalized
- Farmers paid for their dedication and devotion to passing along agrarian knowledge



FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

Building a compensated farm apprenticeship program



ON & OFF FARM LEARNING

Pedagogical Approach

- Individualized learning plans
- \$200 Learning Stipends for Mentors and \$400 for Apprentices



Individualized Learning Plans

About the skill level scale

Please note that it's more than ok if you don't have experience with certain skills. We see that as an exciting opportunity for growth and learning! When filling out the scale you can think of the following metrics:

- 0- I have never done this before
- 1- I have dabbled in this before or have seen this skill demonstrated
- 2- I have some experience with this skill but still feel like a novice
- 3- I am actively building this skill
- 4- I feel confident in this skill with the support of a mentor
- 5- I have multiple years of experience in this skill and feel confident in doing it on my own

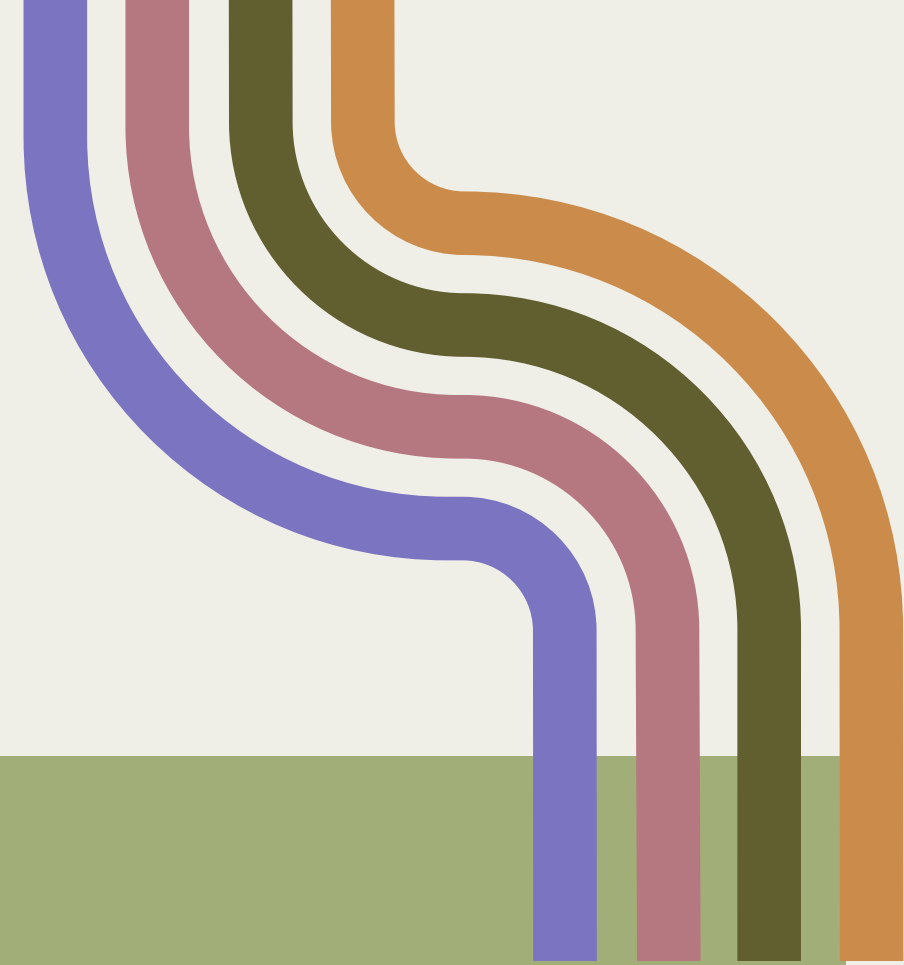
Plant Cultivation and Management				
Learning Objective	Desire to learn skill (0-5)	Current Skill Level (0-5)	Notes	Learn on the farm or at another educational event (*column to be filled out by host farmer)
Plant ID (crops and weeds)				
Weed control strategies				
Plant pathology and pest ID (insects, diseases, etc.)				
Plant pathology and pest ID (insects, diseases, etc.)				
Pest management strategies				



FUNDING SOURCES

Building a compensated farm apprenticeship program

- BFFTP - Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training (CDFFA)
- Western SARE (In partnership with UC Berkeley Agroecology Lab)
- CFP-Community Food Projects (USDA)
- UAIP-Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (USDA)
- BFRDP- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (USDA)



FARM VISITS

Relationship Based Organizing

- Supporting with on-farm tasks
- Sitting down with one another over a meal
- Creating space for reflection and feedback



MID SUMMER APPRENTICESHIP GATHERING

Providing Space for Feedback and Growth

- Sharing a meal and the summer harvest together
- Break out groups with apprentices and mentors



WHATS ON THE HORIZON

Program Evolution

- Creating a more robust conflict resolution plan
- In-person workdays as part of the matchmaking process
- Orientation for farm mentors and apprentices
- More robust training for farm mentors
- Learning goals in the apprentice profile for matchmaking
- Evolution of a Farmer short film



THANK YOU!

Stay in Touch & Questions



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COMMUNITY DIALOUGE

1. How are you providing culturally appropriate models for beginning farmers? If not how could you strengthen this part of your programming?

2. What are unique ways you are leveraging funds to directly support apprentices and farm mentors? If not what are creative ways you could leverage funds?

