

Labor Readiness: Pathways for Farmworkers to Start Up and Advanced Beginners to Scale Up New Farm Businesses

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Project Summary

Labor readiness - being prepared to manage and hire skilled employees - is crucial for beginning farmers (BFs) to mature their skills, scale up their businesses and reach the milestone of 10 years in operation. To address this need, the project team will create a "Labor Ready Farmer" program for:

1. Hispanic farmworkers wanting to climb the ladder from labor to management to ownership.
2. Advanced beginners who have been farming for 3-10 years and need to improve their labor planning and management to scale up their businesses.

Project Goals & Focus

The project's long-term goal is to ensure that all new farmers in our region can access high-quality information, supportive networks and proven tactics essential to starting and scaling viable farms.

The project's immediate goal is to create focused, community-based training programs and farmer to farmer networks to address the emerging needs of two underserved BF groups.

Efforts will focus on enterprises for fruit and vegetable production.



Objectives

- Support advanced beginning farmers to scale up through improved labor readiness
- Create new pathways for Hispanic farmworkers to climb the ladder from labor to management to ownership of farms

Activities

- Broad outreach campaign featuring articles, webinars, and workshops
- Development of a dynamic "Labor Ready Farmer" curriculum which will be distributed at workshops and through a manual
- Customized labor planning support provided through "Smart Farming" consultant teams

Training will be delivered in both English and Spanish, and also include video and plain language guides for limited English proficiency audiences.

Core Leadership Team

- Anu Rangarajan, Cornell Small Farms Program (CSFP), Project Director
- Kat McCarthy, CSFP, Project Coordinator
- Elizabeth Higgins, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), Co-PI
- Ethan Grundberg, CCE
- Christopher Wayne, GrowNYC FARMroots, co-PI
- Gabby Pereyra, GrowNYC FARMroots
- Mario Miranda Sazo, CCE



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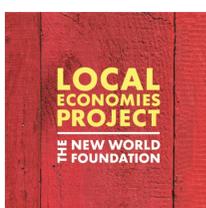
Core Curriculum

- Marketing your farm as a great place to work
- What is my job? Hiring, training and evaluating employees effectively
- The compliance and safety workshop. Are you managing your risks as an employer?
- Keeping good staff when money is tight & managing conflict in the workplace

Anticipated Outcomes

- 250 BFs and 100 Farmworkers will report new knowledge about strategies to improve labor management
- 100 advanced BFs document specific actions around labor management
- 50 farmworkers demonstrate improved management skills
- 15 advanced BF and 5 farmworkers implement new 5 year labor or advancement plans and changes to meet their goals.

Through this project, new resources will be tested within New York State, leveraging existing networks and connections to these BF communities. Final curriculum and materials will be distributed widely through the NBF platform, FarmAnswers.org and customized for other BF audiences.



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