

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Meet Beginner Farmer Training Program alumni successfully operating farms and contributing their powerful voices to agriculture in the Chesapeake region.



Brian Knox, Where Pigs Fly Farm
Class of 2015



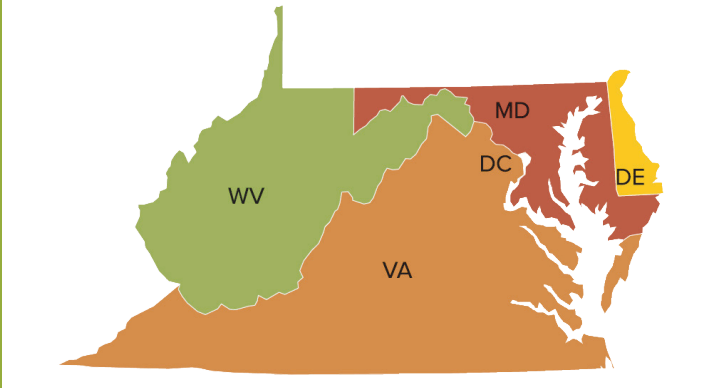
Future Harvest's Beginner Farmer Training Program was founded by Jack & Beckie Gurley (above) and Cathy Tipper (right). Since 2009, the BFTP has trained over 350 new farmers across the Chesapeake region. The Tipper-Gurley Grow a Farmer Fund helps to sustain this program for years to come, with funds going directly to farmer start-up mini grants.



Farmer Lewis
Dreaming Out Loud
Class of 2021



Shoshana Nachman
Communitas Farm
Class of 2020 and 2021



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The Chesapeake Region's premiere peer-to-peer farmer training for small- to mid-scale farmers interested in biodiverse, sustainable, regenerative agriculture



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Future Harvest's Beginner Farmer Training Program (BFTP) is a FREE 12-month immersive educational experience that combines a comprehensive classroom curriculum with hands-on learning at some of the region's leading sustainable farms.

Three training levels, designed to meet the specific needs of beginning farmers at different stages in their careers, welcome participants with varying experience - from beginners to experts seeking mentorship.

The program runs with the calendar year, kicking off at Future Harvest's annual conference in January. Coursework and classroom training follows throughout the winter and on-farm training events begin in the spring.

Applications for the next calendar year are open in late summer in the year prior.



ABOUT THE BEGINNER FARMER TRAINING PROGRAM

- All three levels of the program are FREE and trainees receive a host of benefits including:
 - Complimentary one year membership
 - Free admission to our annual winter conference
 - Free admission to year-round field days
- A diverse, inclusive network of new and experienced farmers! Future Harvest is committed to building a safe, supportive network for all trainees. The vast majority of trainees did not grow up on farms.
- This is a region-wide program, open to beginning farmers in MD, VA, DE, southern PA, DC, and Eastern WV, that offers farmer-to-farmer training opportunities throughout the Chesapeake region.
- Programming covers a wide variety of farming operation types, including vegetables, fruit, cut flowers, herbs, and livestock at urban, peri-urban, and rural farm settings.
- Designed with built-in scheduling flexibility to allow new farmers to further their training while maintaining their own farms or other work.



WHICH LEVEL OF THE PROGRAM IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

LEVEL ONE

Designed for folks just getting started on their farming learning journeys. Online classroom learning during the winter is followed by on-farm, hands-on events to introduce Level One trainees to diverse farm operations and practical beginner farmer skills.



LEVEL TWO

Level Two is the flagship level of our program. This level requires the greatest time commitment from trainees, requiring 200 hours of on-farm training with one of our training farm partners. Trainees must also submit a business plan. Level Two is ideal for folks who have started their own farm, are managing someone else's farm, or are actively pursuing their own farming project.

LEVEL THREE

Created to support farmers who are running their own businesses and seeking ongoing mentorship support from an expert farmer. Future Harvest facilitates custom matches with an experienced farmer consultant whose strengths best match the trainees' needs.