

Effective Support For Beginning Farmers And Ranchers Grounded In Stages Of Development

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Project Summary

Our long-term goal is to increase the number of beginning farmers and ranchers who achieve financial and environmental sustainability and “graduate” into their second decade feeling stable, confident, and successful. Our focus is on farm profitability and environmental sustainability. Our proposed project is significantly shaped by our research on the stages of development of farms and farmers, which identified four distinct stages in which farmers seek and are ready for different types of information, training, and mentoring.

Our current and proposed beginning farmer and rancher programs consist of basic and advanced instructional and experiential education that fit together based on our research on developmental stage of beginning farmer and ranchers and are underpinned by support from farming networks.

The Objectives

...for this project build on and expand our current program.

- 1) Develop new advanced-level online modules for instructional learning—online and classroom.
- 2) Continue current and add new advanced-level experiential learning demonstration projects at our three established teaching farms.
- 3) Continue successful facilitation of farmer networks organized by gender, geography and cropping system.
- 4) Support and actively engage with the statewide Beginning Farmer and Rancher Working Group of the Oregon Community Food Systems Network, a statewide organization of over 50 non-profit organizations focused on food, farming and communities.

Project Partners



Beginning Farmer & Rancher Working Group
of the
Oregon Community Food Systems Network
<http://ocfsn.net/>



Components of Our Beginning Farmer and Rancher Education Programming

Curricula—Online and Hybrid

- Basic farm management:
 - Growing Farms: Successful Whole Farm Management (course)
- Advanced farm and crop management:
 - Managerial accounting (course)
 - Ecological approaches to Pest Management (module)
 - Basic pasture management (module)

Curricula—Experiential

- Three Teaching Farms with basic and advanced specialized experiential programs:
 - Growing Agripreneurs (basic hands-on farming experience)
 - \$5000 pack house demonstration (advanced experiential)
 - Dry farming demonstration and farmer collaborative (advanced experiential)

Community—Farmer Networks

- 3 regional Women’s farming networks
- Hood River farming community network
- Dry farming collaborative
- North Coast F2F

