



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

# A comprehensive new farmer training program for Maine

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Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development

Program Award No 2015-70017-24119



# Project Audience

MOFGA's Journeyperson Program best serves new farmers in Maine who are in the start-up or early growth stage of their farm business.

To generalize, most participants are:

- 'First generation' farmers
- Women
- Mid- to late-20's
- From Maine
- Lacking secure land-tenure
- Have farmed 1-5 years

MOFGA Journeypeople run a wide range of direct-market, cooperative, wholesale and value-added farm operations including all types of crops, livestock, forest products, and their combinations.



# Partners/Collaborators

## Key Project Staff

### MOFGA

- Daniel MacPhee, Project Director, Educational Programs Director
- Dave Colson, Agricultural Services Director
- Katy Green, Organic Transitions Coordinator
- Heather Omand, Marketing and Business Coordinator
- Eric Sideman, Organic Crop Specialist

## Key Project Partners

### Land For Good

- Jo Barrett, Maine Field Agent/Land Access Specialist
- Kathy Ruhf, Land Access Specialist

### Maine Farmland Trust

- Erica Buswell, Land Access Specialist
- Elizabeth Sprague, Business Planning Specialist



# Journeyperson Program Approach

MOFGA's 2-year long Journeyperson Program is designed to provide new farmers with the education, technical support and close mentorship critical to establishing a successful and lasting farm business.

JP Benefits include:

- Annual educational stipend
- Pairing with a paid farmer-mentor of their choice
- Free access to more than 50 workshops, trainings, conferences
- Access to the MOFGA Farm Beginnings® intensive whole-farm and business planning course
- Personal technical assistance from MOFGA staff and referrals to other service providers
- Assistance with land access and tenure issues through partnerships with Land for Good & Maine Farmland Trust
- Discounts on seeds and supplies
- A supportive network of established farmers and JP alumni
- Farmer-in-Residence incubator at MOFGA headquarters



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# Overall Target Outcome

By the end of this project, we will have helped 150 new farmers to establish their farm businesses and develop the skills, experience, and resources necessary to keep those farms viable





# What do you have to share?

- Farmer-to-farmer peer education programming
- Integrated New Farmer Programs pipeline:  
Ag Aware -> Apprentice -> Journeyperson -> Continuing Education
- Mentorship Model



# What do you hope to learn from other projects?

- Legal framework for apprenticeship
- Incubator models with successful transition to independent farming
- Addressing part-time farming



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