



United States  
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# Groundswell New Farmer Training Programs

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Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

Award No 11674923



# Project Audience

- **Where:** Central New York State/Finger Lakes Region
- **Who:** Diverse participants – Incubator Farmers mostly New Americans. Other programs: 10-15% people of color and New Americans. Just started tracking veterans, but difficult. Ages early 20's to retirees
- **Types of farming:** Diverse enterprises – veg, fruit, flowers, livestock, poultry, value-adding. Primarily organic
- **Stages of farming:** Different programs for explorers, planners, early-stage beginners, advanced beginners





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# Partners/Collaborators

- Eight “Groundswell Partner Farms” (plus additional farmers) serve as instructors, mentors, and curriculum developers
- Monika Roth, Cornell Cooperative Extension of South Central NY Ag Team, Project Co-Director
- Devon Van Noble, Groundswell, Incubator Program Manager
- Becca Rimmel, Groundswell, Education Program Manager
- Matt LeRoux, Cornell Cooperative Extension of South Central NY Ag Team, Ag Marketing Specialist
- Leslie Ackerman, Alternatives Federal Credit Union Business Cents program, financial planning instructor & business coach
- EcoVillage at Ithaca, Inc., Incubator Farm host





# Key Approaches

- Finger Lakes CRAFT – network, farm visits-plus-workshops
- Technical Courses, e.g. Organic Orchard Management, Year-Round High Tunnels
- Farm Business Planning Course, 10 weeks, winter
- Incubator Farm Program -- micro-start-ups
- Farmer-to-Farmer Networks
- New: Farm Consultancy Program
- Problematic: Work2Learn Program





# Overall Target Outcome

By the end of this project, we will have helped:

- 45 new farm businesses get started (60 farmers)
- 12 of these businesses will be owned by socially disadvantaged farmers including veterans
- 120 early-stage farmers will improve their operations as measured by pre- and post-training self-assessments







# What do you have to share?

- Trials and tribulations of starting up a Farm Business Incubator Program
- Building relationships with “socially disadvantaged” communities; moving beyond “engagement” towards actual “empowerment”
- Getting beyond introductory level training to meet the needs of more experienced beginning farmers





# What do you hope to learn from other projects?

- How can we overcome legal barriers to farm internships and “Work2Learn” placements?
- How to run a “training farm” that can support trainees who need to make an income while learning how to farm?
- Successful models of cooperatively managed farm businesses? Is anyone looking at worker co-ops as an avenue for farm transition?





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# Keep in touch!

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