

Old Fort at Hesperus

2019 Farmer-In-Training Program Application

Please return application as soon as possible to the Old Fort. Positions open until filled. Applications will be reviewed beginning December 10th.

Description: Join the Sustainable Agriculture Program at the Old Fort in Hesperus by becoming a Farmer-In-Training (FIT)! Begin in March with a weekly educational series, followed by orientation, classes, and training in April (1-2 days/week), then get hands on experience in the field through mid-October. From May through mid-October, FITs work 2-3 days per week co-managing a 1 acre plot under the supervision of the Program Manager. Crops in the FIT plot may include onions, winter squash, zucchini, snap peas, green beans, potatoes, carrots, beets, kale and broccoli.



The season's experiences will range from harvesting greens to fixing drip irrigation, from planting peppers to packing CSA bags, from managing farmer's market stands to estimating crop yields. Informal classes are offered throughout the season, including pump maintenance, harvesting and food safety, direct seeding, and more. Learning farming skills that will support their farming future, FITs will be able to plan and run irrigation, select varieties, manage weeds, and harvest, process and market many different crops all in the context of a supportive, close-knit team.

Participants will gain a thorough understanding of the Old Fort Incubator program, and be poised to join the program for 2020.

About us: The Old Fort at Hesperus is a growing and multi-faceted answer to farmer training in the Four Corners region. Welcoming everyone from college interns for brief summer experiences to incubator farmers ready to start a business, the Old Fort offers good (and challenging) growing conditions, supportive and knowledgeable staff, and diverse resources for high elevation market farming. The incubator field, where the FIT plot is located, includes 4 acres of rich deer-fenced soil, and the FITs' neighbors are lively young and hard-working farmers. The Old Fort also includes a half-acre education garden, two large high tunnels, and cattle and hay production.

Expectations: Ideal candidates will need reliable transportation to Hesperus and be able to work during the day on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and/or Saturdays, including some early mornings, totaling 2 to 3 days per week from April through mid-October. The final summer schedule will be determined in early spring. Beginning in March and continuing in April, FITs must attend weekly evening classes on farming topics, part of the winter education series. Other jobs must accommodate this schedule; FITs are

farmers, first and foremost. FITs will be expected to occasionally communicate as a team on some off days, so having a reliable form of communication and being willing to use it is essential. As farmers, FITs may be required to work in inclement weather (ranging from snow to 90-degree heat), and lift at least 40 pounds. Most of all, we're looking for people eager to farm, who love working in teams, who are driven to see projects through to completion, and who wanted to get started with farming as a career or as a passion.

Additional time beyond field activities may be spent in farm tours, field walks, personal development, mentorship, team building, and specialized workshops. Free attendance at the winter education series is included in the FIT program.

Compensation: \$3500 per person will be distributed during the 24-week field season from May through mid-October to support participants in their commitment to the program. FITs will be able to take home abundant produce throughout the season.

Recommended personal gear & tools: raincoat and rain pants, sturdy work pants (anything from jeans to carharts), hat and/or sunglasses, sturdy work shoes, rubber boots, lightweight work gloves, and a personal harvest knife.

Duration: Program begins with weekly evening classes in March, followed by training and orientation days in April, and fieldwork begins after May 1st and runs through October 15th. FITs can take one week off during the farm season, as arranged with the program manager, plus 3 nonconsecutive days off.

If you are moving to Durango for the program, please let us know if you'd like tips on places to live & work and we'll give you a few ideas to help you get settled!

Additional Information

<https://www.fortlewis.edu/oldfort/SustainableAgriculturePrograms.aspx>

www.facebook.com/oldfortathesperus

Instagram: [@theoldfort_hesperus](https://www.instagram.com/theoldfort_hesperus)

FIT APPLICATION 2018

please type responses

Name:

Email:

Phone number:

1. Why would you like to join the FIT program this summer?
2. Tell us about your farming experience. Why do you want to farm this season?
3. Do you see yourself farming in the future? Are you interested in the Old Fort Incubator program?
4. Tell us about your experience working in teams.
5. What is an experience that showcases your ability to work independently?
6. How would you describe your communication and leadership styles?
7. You are required to attend classes in the winter education series, beginning in March. Will you be able to participate?
8. How do you plan to support yourself during this part-time farming adventure? Will your work schedule be able to accommodate the FIT schedule?
9. FIT participants will need to drive Fort Lewis College vehicles to markets. Becoming an approved Fort Lewis driver requires taking online driving safety classes and maintaining a satisfactory driving record. Are there any issues that would prevent you from being approved?

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