

Old Fort Incubator Project
2017 Growing Season Application
Due Friday, December 9, 2016

Description: Join the Old Fort at Hesperus Farm Incubator program to take the next step toward your goal of operating a farm in Southwest Colorado. This program provides educational classes, access to land, water and much needed infrastructure (irrigation, post-harvest sheds, coolers and root cellar). You will join a team of farmers on 6.5 acres who run independent businesses but also cooperate with each other to produce a variety of foods at 7,600 feet. Marketing assistance is available through the Old Fort Market Gardens brand to access Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares as well as providing produce to Sodexo, the campus dining service at Fort Lewis College.

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 rich resources for high elevation market farming.

Name:

Phone number:

email:

Mailing Address

Which of the following programs have you completed?

Building Farmers

Farmer in Training program (please describe)

Backyard Food Production

Apprenticeship (please describe)

Master Gardener

Farm Internship (please describe)

Please list and describe other Certificates or related programs

Please attach your TYPED responses to the following question:

1. How did you hear about the Old Fort Incubator program?
2. Explain your interest in the Old Fort incubator and how it fits into your future plans.
3. Please describe your experience farming (especially as it relates to specialty crop production)
4. Please describe the type of farm enterprise you are interested in creating.
5. What crops or value-added products do you plan to grow (please review program information for limitations on types of crops that can be grown)?
6. Describe the type of irrigation needed for your various crops.
7. How do you plan to manage weed pressure?
8. How do you plan to manage pests?
9. What markets do you intend to grow for?
10. Would you be interested in supplying produce to the Old Fort Market Garden CSA or Sodexo?
11. Please describe the following inputs you need to be successful:
 - a. Training
 - b. Equipment
 - c. Capital
 - d. Other

12. Do you have a written business plan? If so, please attach to this document.
13. Where do you see your business in three to five years?
14. Do you plan to stay in the Four Corners region?
15. Relative to educational training (10 classes over 4 months) provided by the program
 - a. Are you ready to begin in late January of 2017 with weekly training?
 - b. Do you have any weekly meetings/conflicts? If so, what night are they?
 - c. Can you commit to one all-day Saturday training in April? And, one in May?
16. Relative to educational needs, rank these topics from most important to least important.
 - a. _____ Business Planning
 - b. _____ Crop Culture
 - c. _____ Pests and Weeds
 - d. _____ Post Harvest Handling
 - e. _____ Irrigation
 - f. _____ Marketing
 - g. _____ Branding- Name and Label development
 - h. _____ Crop Planning
 - i. _____ Transplants
 - j. _____ Soils/Soil Fertility
 - k. _____ Recordkeeping
 - l. _____ Season Extension
 - m. _____ Food Safety/GAP Standards
 - n. _____ High Tunnel Production
17. Do you have local housing and reliable transportation?
18. With the high cost of living in the Durango region and the small beginning plots, how will you support yourself financially while working on your Incubator project?
19. Give an example of a project you have worked on independently.
20. Size of plot being requested (first year farmers have been awarded 1/16 or 1/8 acre depending on experience). Briefly explain why you have requested this amount.
21. Please include the name and contact information for three references including their relationship to you.

Please return application by Friday, December 9, at 5 pm to:

Beth LaShell

18683 Hwy 140

Hesperus, CO 81326

970-385-4574

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Additional Resources:

www.tinyurl.com/OIncubator

www.facebook.com/oldfortathesperus