

Old Fort Farm Incubator Program 2019 Growing Season Application Due Friday, December 7, 2018

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

Please list any additional partners who may contribute significantly to your farm business. They will need to attend educational sessions and receive appropriate training. We will provide curriculum for two people per business.

Name Description of Role

Which of the following programs have you completed?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Farmers | <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer in Training program (please describe) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backyard Food Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship (please describe) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master Gardener | <input type="checkbox"/> 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 remember that we have an approximately 90 day growing season at 7,600')?
6. Drip is primary method of irrigation. Do your crops require a different type of irrigation?
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 Gardens?
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 2019 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 training at end of April? And, one the second week of 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
 - o. _____ Organic Production
17. Have you read the Old Fort Market Garden Incubator Program information?
 - a. Any question on requirements for educational classes and workshops?
 - b. Any questions on fee structure and schedule?
18. Do you have local housing and reliable transportation?
19. 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?
20. Give an example of a project you have worked on independently.
21. 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.
22. Please include the name and contact information for three references including their relationship to you.

Please return application by Friday, December 7th at 5 pm to:

Beth LaShell

18683 Hwy 140

Hesperus, CO 81326

970-385-4574

lashell_b@fortlewis.edu

Additional Resources:

www.tinyurl.com/OIncubator

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

www.facebook.com/oldfortathesperus

Instagram: [_theoldfort_hesperus](#) and [#theoldfort](#)

<https://newfarmers.usda.gov/>