

# The Labor Ready Farmer Program

## Smart Farming Team Technical Assistance Grant Application

**About the Technical Assistance Grant:** Being prepared to hire and manage skilled employees is crucial to the success of any business. The Labor Ready Farmer Project is offering grants to provide up to 12 hours of Technical Assistance (TA) consulting services to farms who want to make improvements to their farms processes in hiring, training, managing or evaluating employees. Applicants will choose from one of the following four areas for TA assistance and identify a specific project. If selected they will be matched with a “Smart Farming Team” of consultants who will provide one on one technical assistance.

### **HIRING EMPLOYEES 101 – GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START**

Assistance for farmers who have never formally hired or managed employees or who are very new to employee management. Consulting services are available for setting up compliance and paperwork, general policy development, training and management resources and connections to agencies and support networks. This category could also apply to Hispanic farm employees who are moving into managerial roles who would like to understand the HR process on the farm or to a farm employee or family member who is being groomed for succession on the farm.

### **ONBOARDING & TRAINING EMPLOYEES QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY**

Assistance with improving your farm’s process for hiring and training new staff. Areas for assistance could include, help with streamlining paperwork and record keeping for new hires and assistance in maintaining good records to reduce compliance issues, developing a schedule and set of new hire trainings for your farm to help get workers up to speed and working independently more quickly.

### **FINE-TUNEING & IMPROVING THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

Assistance with developing employee manuals, policy development, receiving employee feedback and improving interpersonal skills as a leader and/or help in providing better feedback to employees to reduce problems on your farm.

### **H2-A READINESS**

If you are considering hiring foreign guest workers but are not sure what it would take to get your farm ready we can provide one on one assistance in assessing costs, housing, paperwork and compliance and managing cultural issues.

**Selection Process:** Each application will be reviewed for eligibility. Nicole will contact you by phone if your farm looks like a good fit for the project. Priorities for the grant include: (1) Beginning farmers (farmers who have owned and operated their farm for 10 or fewer years); (2) Farms in the process of succession with an identified successor working in the farm business who will be involved in this grant; (3) Farms with a manager who will be involved with the grant



who plans to own their own farm in the future; or (4) Farms with a Hispanic farm employee who will be involved in the grant who is being developed for a managerial role on the farm.

During the call, Nicole will help explore what specific issues would be most helpful to the success of your farm, as well as the types of consultant services available for your benefit. Participants will be asked to commit approximately 8 months to the project (up to 12 hours of time in consulting sessions with agricultural workforce specialists) and attend an in-person networking luncheon with other participating farms. In addition, participants will be asked to offer feedback through three short on-line surveys and be open to receiving consultant suggestions.

**Instructions:** Please complete this application and send to Nicole Waters, Beginning Farm Project Coordinator for the Cornell Small Farms Program. The form can be submitted by email, mail or in-person at the address listed below. Please feel free to call or email Nicole with any questions. We are always happy to hear from you!

**Small Farm Program Contact Information:**

Nicole Waters – Beginning Farmer Project Coordinator  
Plant Science Building, Room 15b  
Tower Road, Cornell University  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
Phone: 607-255-9911  
Email: [nw42@cornell.edu](mailto:nw42@cornell.edu)

Application Deadline: Accepting applications on a rolling basis

**Farm Contact Information**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Farm Business Name:   |  |
| Farm Owner's Name:  |  |
| Email:  |  |
| Primary Phone:  |  |
| Can we send texts to this number?   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mailing Address (address, city, state, zip)   |  |
| Are you a beginning farm owner? (owned and operated the farm for 10 or fewer years) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Secondary Farm Contact Information (additional person who will be involved project)**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Name:  |   |
| Email:   |   |
| Primary Phone:   |   |
| Can we send texts to this number?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| Mailing Address (address, city, state, zip)                                |   |
| Role on the farm   | Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| What is the farm owner's relationship to you?                              | Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Other Relative <input type="checkbox"/> No Relation <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you plan to become an owner of this farm or another farm in the future? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/>  |

**Will anyone else from the farm be involved with this project?** Yes  No

**If yes, please list below and include their job title. Example: Pat Smith, Bookkeeper**

**Farm Business Information**

**Please describe the farm in a paragraph. Include information on what you currently produce (which crops or livestock), size of farm (acres), the year the farm was established, the year current owner acquired the farm:** *Example: Smith Farm is a 50 acre mixed vegetable and livestock farm. In addition to vegetables, we produce chickens and pork. We raise about 15 acres of vegetables for a 150 share CSA and for 2 farmers markets in NYC. We have been in business for 30 years. I (the current owner) am the first generation on this farm. Our 2 children are employed by the farm and my son is planning to take over ownership of the farm in the next 3-5 years. Our daughter will be employed by the farm in the summer, but is finishing school for a different career.*

**What was the gross income for the farm last year?**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | < \$1000  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Between \$1000 and \$10,000                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than \$10,000 but equal to or less than \$50,000   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than \$50,000 but equal to or less than \$100,000  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than \$100,000 but equal to or less than \$200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than \$200,000 but equal to or less than \$300,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than \$300,000 but equal to or less than \$400,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than \$400,000                                     |

**How has the farm’s gross income changed in the past 5 years?**

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Increased       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Decreased       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Stayed the Same |

**Farm Employee Information**

**Please describe the workforce on your farm in a paragraph, include the following information: number of full time, part time and seasonal workers, level of skills of workers, types of jobs and average number of years employed on the farm, average staff turnover rates.**

*Example: Smith Farm has three year-round, full-time workers and hires a crew of about 4 full-time seasonal field workers from April – November. We have 1 employee (a year round employee) who acts as the crew leader (my son), one full time employee (my daughter) is the farmers market manager and the other full time employee (not a relative) is responsible for equipment maintenance and assists with training seasonal workers on equipment but also does whatever is needed. The three employees have been with us for over 5 years, the crew leader has been employed by the farm for 10 years. About half of the seasonal workers return each year, and most of the ones who return stay for 2-5 years. We also have a part-time bookkeeper (my sister).*

**How has the farm’s number of employees changed in the past 5 years?**

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Increased       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Decreased       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Stayed the same |

**Which Types of Employees Work on Your Farm? (check all that apply)**

| Type of Worker   | In the past 5 years the number of employees in this category has: |                          |                          | Check if this category includes Hispanic/Latino workers |
|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
|  | Increased   | Decreased                | No Change                |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Workers   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College Students/Interns (not local workers)                    | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal/Migrant Farm Workers (not college students or interns) | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H-2A Visa Workers   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                                |

**Because of our grant funding, we have assistance in the grant to specifically provide trainings to increase the management skills of Hispanic employees. Please check below if you are interested and we can share additional information and resources with you.**

I am interested in learning more about professional development trainings for the Hispanic employees on my farm.

**Technical Assistance Need**

**Please select the category that best fits your technical assistance need.**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HIRING EMPLOYEES 101 – GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | ONBOARDING & TRAINING EMPLOYEES QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | FINE-TUNEING & IMPROVING THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | H2-A READINESS  |

**Please describe in a paragraph or two what you would hope to achieve through one-on-one technical assistance.** *Example: We are finding that our staff turnover for seasonal workers is increasing and new workers are coming in with less experience. Also, because our son is transitioning into ownership he would like to develop a more formal training program and process with new field workers so that when he brings in a new crew leader to take his place they will have an established training program to work with.*

**What is your current situation in this area?** *Example: Right now our son has a lot of experience in this area because he has been managing employees on the farm for 10 years, but we haven't created a formalized process. We see this grant as an opportunity to help him implement some management improvements as he transitions to ownership.*

**Do you have a need for assistance in hiring, training or managing employees that is not reflected in the 4 project areas listed?** Yes  No

**If Yes, please describe briefly below.**

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Please sign and date the application below. You can either sign the form digitally, insert a graphic of your signature or print the application and sign the form manually and send a scanned copy by email or mail the form.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

You can insert a graphic of your signature here

**Optional Demographic Information**

**Gender:**

|                          |                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Male   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Female |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: |

**Are you currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or a Veteran?**

|                          |                          |     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | No  |

**Ethnicity/Race (Please check all that apply):**

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | American Indian or Alaska Native    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Asian                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or African American           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hispanic or Latino                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | White                               |

**Age:**

|                          |                          |             |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | < 18 years  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18-29 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30-45 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46-65 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | > 65 years  |