

## **Apprentice Role and Expectations 2008**

Choosing the path of organic food production is one that takes serious consideration and dedication. The effort is great: long days, inclement weather, tough markets and much more. Yet the rewards are bountiful: working the land, encouraging customers, a safe and local food supply and the list goes on. Learning this lifestyle is best done working alongside the experts, with hands in the dirt. Complimenting the field work and physical learning with readings, projects and workshops deepens the experience, and builds well-rounded skills for future farmers. The NBOFAP offers all of this – it is more than a “matchmaking service” for farmers and laborers. It is an experiential education program, rich in practical lessons for upcoming organic farmers ready for the reality of organic food production.



Here are some of the comments that our 2006 Apprentices shared about the highlights of their program experience:

- *The farmer was open to answering questions, discussing reasons for decisions, possible new approaches.*
- *The farmer was full of enthusiasm and humour. He was fun to work with.*
- *The research project became part of my learning process.*
- *Workshops were fantastic!*
- *Meeting other starting farmers inspired me to give it a go on my own.*
- *Making apple cider at the seed saving workshop.*
- *Hay rides!*
- *Meeting government reps for possible assistance down the road.*
- *The program was awesome. I loved being an apprentice!*

Please make sure you have read our 2008 Program Description, as it will clarify many of the activities and requirements suggested below.

### **What do Apprentices get out of the NB Organic Farm Apprenticeship Program?**

- Season-long exposure to the farming cycles at an NB organic farm through daily field work
- A dedicated, experienced organic farm mentor ready to share and provide in-depth training
- Opportunity to develop the practical techniques in crop production, animal husbandry, machinery handling and maintenance, marketing and more
- A resource binder with selected readings, articles and websites to present info on organic farming basic topics
- Monthly workshops and network gatherings through the Farming Organically Workshop Series with other apprentices, farm mentors, resource and network support people
- Exposure to the diversity of organic farms around NB
- Opportunity to investigate a research project of interest to you and the farm
- Assistance from NBDFAFA and OACC on research projects
- Networking opportunities with other farmers and support advisors at workshops

## What do Apprentices provide?

### Minimal commitment:

- Commitment to working on the farm full-time with the farm mentor for the 6-month season (May to mid-October)
- Daily participation in field work and farm tasks
- Regular attention to the design, implementation and analysis of the on-farm research project
- Completion of NBCC/CESAB requirements: readings and short assignments, learning journal, final research project report and presentations, participation in workshops
- Complete application process – apprentice application form, resume with references, 500-word essay, \$35 application fee
- Complete the selection process – communicate with selected farms, confirm your placement on a farm and participate in a 3-way orientation conference call with FBC and the farm mentor before the program start.
- \$250 participation fee, payable in installments (bursaries available for applicants with financial need)

### Optional additions:

- Additional field trips and events
- Engage in market opportunities to supplement income
- Participate in a mid-season apprentice exchange (1-2 weeks in July or August)

## How to apply:

1. Read through program materials:
  - 2008 Program Description
  - Apprentice Role and Expectations
  - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
  - *Still have questions? Contact the program coordinator at 506-375-4310 or e-mail: [agriculture@fallsbrookcentre.ca](mailto:agriculture@fallsbrookcentre.ca)*
2. Complete application package:
  - Apprentice Application Form
  - Resume with 3 references (1 professional, 2 personal)
  - Answer the questions: *“What are your future intentions in organic agriculture? How will this program help you get there?”* in 500 words.
  - \$30 application fee (*Cheques made to “Falls Brook Centre”*)
3. Send application package by the **February 22, 2008 deadline** by one of the following:
  - E-mail: [agriculture@fallsbrookcentre.ca](mailto:agriculture@fallsbrookcentre.ca) (application will be processed once fee is received)
  - Fax: (506) 375-4221
  - Mail: NBOFAP  
Falls Brook Centre  
125 South Knowlesville Road  
Knowlesville, NB E7L 1B1
4. Applicants will be contacted for an interview after February 22, 2008 and communications with farmers has progressed.