

## Invitation and Overview

Thank you for your interest in a mentoring relationship designed to support beginning farmers. The OEFFA Mentoring Program exists to serve early career farmers (3-9 years) who either currently operate or manage a farm business on land that they own, rent or access in other ways, or who have prior experience doing so.

It is recommended that you print and thoroughly review a PDF read-only version of this application before starting to complete the online application. (Because the online application does not allow you to save incomplete forms or a draft, you may prefer to complete and save your hand written drafts.) The application consists of 24 questions and takes about 20-30 minutes to complete.

Applications are received and reviewed on an ongoing basis. As mentoring relationships are made in response to the specific needs and interests of mentees and the available *mentors*, a mentoring relationship is not guaranteed.

Typically but not always, mentoring matches are made December-February. The Begin Farming Program Coordinator will be in periodic communication to clarify the likelihood that a mentoring match will be available for consideration.

When appropriate, an OEFFA Mentee is presented with a prospective mentoring relationship in the form of a Mentoring Agreement, which specifies the mentee's learning objectives and proposed terms of the relationship. The mentoring assignment is official when the mentor and mentee have signed a mutually acceptable Mentoring Agreement that is then signed.

If you have any technical problems completing an application, please contact Kelly Henderson, Begin Farming Program Coordinator at [kelly@oeffa.org](mailto:kelly@oeffa.org) or (614) 421-2022 ext. 213.

If you are ready to apply now, the next page will direct you to the application.

## Identification and Contact Information

**\* 1. Applicant**

**Name**

**Farm Business Name, if any**

**Address**

**City/Town**

**State/Province**

**ZIP/Postal Code**

**County**

**Email Address**

**Phone Number(s)**

**2. Website or social media site of farm business, if any**

**3. If you are conversationally fluent in one or more languages other than English, which language(s)?**

**\* 4. Are you currently a member of OEFFA?**

Yes

No

## Farming Experience Profile

\* 5. Are you currently farming?

Yes

No

Other (please specify)

6. If yes (to Q5), how do you access farmland?

Ownership

Leasing

Working on land that someone else owns or leases

Other (please specify)

\* 7. Do you have plans to change your land access situation in the future? If yes, please specify how using the options in Q6.

Yes

No

If yes, please specify

\* 8. How many years total have you been engaged in farming at a commercial scale?

\* 9. What best describes the degree to which farm income is a part of your current household income?

Farm income is the primary source of household income

Farm income is a secondary source of household income

Farm income is an insignificant source of household income

Other (please specify)

\* 10. Indicate your level of involvement in farming currently.

- Full time
- Part time
- Seasonal only

\* 11. With which agricultural production practice do you most identify?

- Sustainable agricultural production practices
- Organic agricultural production practices (certified)
- Organic agricultural production practices (not certified)
- Conventional agricultural production practices

\* 12. Which type of farm management dynamic best represents you currently?

- Farming alone
- Farming with family members
- Farming with paid non-family partners or workers
- Farming with unpaid non-family partners or workers (interns)
- Other (please specify)

\* 13. Where do you market your farm products and/or services?

## Preferences for a Mentoring Relationship

\* 14. What best describes your preferred *general* focus of the mentoring relationship for which you are applying?

- Starting my farm business (have production experience)
- Scaling up my farm business
- Engaging in a new enterprise
- Transitioning my farm to organic production
- Other (please specify)

\* 15. Your mentoring relationship will focus on *only one* farm enterprise. Communicate your priorities by ranking your top 5 choices out of the list below.

	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	4th choice	5th choice
Agritourism	<input type="radio"/>				
Beef	<input type="radio"/>				
Breeding stock/genetics	<input type="radio"/>				
Commodity grain	<input type="radio"/>				
Cover crops	<input type="radio"/>				
Custom grazing	<input type="radio"/>				
Dairy	<input type="radio"/>				
Direct market grain	<input type="radio"/>				
Fiber production	<input type="radio"/>				
Flowers/ornamentals	<input type="radio"/>				
Herbs	<input type="radio"/>				
Maple syrup	<input type="radio"/>				
Non-timber forest products (agroforestry)	<input type="radio"/>				
Orchard	<input type="radio"/>				
Pasture (for feed and forage)	<input type="radio"/>				
Pastured livestock (mixed species)	<input type="radio"/>				
Poultry	<input type="radio"/>				
Seed/transplant production	<input type="radio"/>				
Small fruit/berrries/brambles	<input type="radio"/>				
Swine	<input type="radio"/>				
Value-added production (commercial kitchen)	<input type="radio"/>				
Vegetables	<input type="radio"/>				
Other livestock (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>				
Other enterprise (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>				

16. What do you want to learn from your mentor?

Your answer here can be general (for example: animal health, organic certification, scale appropriate equipment, organic pest control for vegetables, etc.). Note that if you are selected and matched, you will complete a *Farming Skills Evaluation* and *Growing Season Learning Plan* which will narrow your learning goals.

\* 17. What modes of communication do you prefer to use to support your monthly contact with a mentor?

	Strong Preference	Some Preference	Low Preference	Prefer Not to Use	Uncertain
Face-to-Face	<input type="radio"/>				
Telephone	<input type="radio"/>				
Text	<input type="radio"/>				
E-mail	<input type="radio"/>				

\* 18. Would you mind if your mentor sells products associated with the enterprise that is the focus of your mentoring relationship in the same local market that you do, in other words, would be competing with you for local customers?

- Yes, I would mind
- Uncertain, would like to discuss during the mentor match process
- No, I would not mind

\* 19. If you are not matched with a mentor for 2019, would you like to be considered for 2020 if the program continues?

- Yes
- No

## Preferences for Mentor Characteristics and Competencies

\* 20. Besides farming skills and knowledge, a good mentor is also an encouraging coach and teacher. What qualities or characteristics do you desire in a mentor?

## Additional Questions

\* 21. If you are offered an opportunity to work with a mentor, do you give permission to OEFFA to recognize you as a mentee in OEFFA's public communications? For example, if you complete a survey for evaluation purposes, a quote may be used in marketing materials in the future.

- Yes
- Uncertain, would like to discuss at that time
- No

22. If you know a mentor in your area you are interested in being paired with, please provide their information below.

Name, Phone # or E-mail:

Name, Phone # or E-mail:

Name, Phone # or E-mail:

\* 23. How did you hear about this opportunity?

- OEFFA Conference
- OEFFA website
- OEFFA email
- A friend

Other (please specify)

\* 24. Please read and check all of the following affirmations before you submit your application. Thank you for your applying for a mentoring relationship through OEFFA's Beginning Farmer Program.

- I understand that I am responsible to initiate communication with an assigned mentor and to be physically and mentally able to perform the required learning tasks associated with a mentoring relationship.
- To the best of my ability and understanding, I have answered questions in this application truthfully and honestly.
- I understand that this is an application. Not every applicant will be accepted for the Mentoring Program. As mentor-mentee matches are driven by mentee needs and wants, OEFFA does not guarantee that a qualified mentor will be available to be matched with each prospective mentee.
- I understand that I must pay a program fee of \$75 if and when I sign a Mentoring Agreement, and that a mentor match is not official until payment has been received by OEFFA.
- I agree to completing a midsummer and final evaluation survey.