



# GLYNWOOD

Center for Regional Food and Farming

## Hudson Valley Apprenticeship

The Hudson Valley Apprenticeship provides education, training and mentoring to a decentralized cohort of new-entry farmers across the Mid-Hudson Valley. The program's focused curriculum emphasizes practical skill-building for aspiring professional farmers, and builds on Glynwood's fifteen-plus years of experience training apprentices on our farm property in Cold Spring, NY.

### About the Apprenticeship

The Hudson Valley Apprenticeship (HVA) was created to address the need for more educational, entry-level opportunities for aspiring and new-entry farmers while lifting up the knowledge and mentoring abilities of seasoned Hudson Valley farmers. In stewarding this program, Glynwood elevates and resources the efforts of talented farm mentors; facilitates mutually supportive spaces for both apprentices and mentors that are inclusive, accessible, safe and fair; and builds connections within rural communities between farmer mentors and apprentices. We strive to deliver this regional support with [transparency and accountability](#).

In practice, the HVA is a vocational training program, with a curriculum that emphasizes practical skill-building for aspiring professional farmers. The majority of an apprentice's hours are spent learning by doing a variety of fieldwork. While specific systems will vary by host site, each host farm will cover a set of **core topics**, including:

- Greenhouse management & propagation
- Field & bed preparation
- Planting & crop management
- Irrigation
- Weed management
- Harvesting & post-harvest handling
- Marketing & distribution



To supplement apprentices' in-field educational experience, all apprentices also participate in 60 hours of classroom education. Topics covered include:

- Antiracism & DEI in food & farming
- Business planning and financial management
- Cover cropping & crop rotations
- Pest and disease management
- Safety and first aid
- Small engines operation
- Soil science and testing
- Team communications
- Tractor safety and operation

All apprenticeships are seasonal paid positions, with hours and schedules varying from farm to farm. Apprentices are compensated for all field-work and classroom hours.



Apprentices receive further support through guided skills assessments and check-ins. To reach their learning goals, apprentices assess their own skills and learning goals at the start of the program. Scheduled check-ins with farm mentors and Glynwood staff create space for apprentices to reflect on their learning journey, and opportunities for mentors and program staff to make any relevant contributions or adjustments.

Through this diverse set of hands-on and classroom-based learning opportunities, goal setting and mentorship, apprentices gain competency in practical agricultural skills. These skills are the necessary building blocks that will enable apprentices to progress in their agricultural careers or as food system professionals. Ultimately, the HVA seeks to support regional climate-resilient farm viability with a well-trained apprentice workforce using a replicable system of farmer knowledge transfer.

## About Mentor Farms

In order to participate in the HVA program, mentor farms must meet core requirements. All mentor farms must be located in the Mid-Hudson Valley (Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster, Orange and Rockland counties) and follow sustainable production practices (certified organic, certified naturally grown, practicing organic, or comparable). Mentors must have demonstrated management and mentoring experience and the ability to instruct apprentices in the seven core topics listed above. And because the



Hudson Valley Apprenticeship program (HVA) is committed to fair compensation and worker protections, mentors must compensate apprentices at minimum wage or higher.

Importantly, mentors must demonstrate a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and share [Glynwood's core equity values](#). Glynwood partners with mentor farmers who are creating increasingly safer spaces for apprentices who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+ and other historically marginalized identities, and provides customized support to mentors in this process.

Beyond these, mentor farms are unique and vary in acreage, team structure, schedules, soil types, growing practices, markets, and mentoring styles. Recent mentor farms have included:

- Choy Division (Chester, NY)
- CULTIVAR (formerly Four Corners Community Farm) (Red Hook, NY)
- Glynwood Farm (Cold Spring, NY)
- Long Season Farm (Kerhonkson, NY)
- Maple View Farm (Poughquag, NY)
- Phillie Bridge Farm Project (New Paltz, NY)
- Poughkeepsie Farm Project (Poughkeepsie, NY)
- Rise & Root Farm (Chester, NY)
- Solid Ground Farm (Kingston, NY)

Mentors receive an annual stipend; access to a mentor toolkit; and regular check-ins to support their time educating apprentices. All mentors agree to participate in annual mentor training, orientation, and program review sessions.

To learn more about becoming a participating farm mentor, read the [FAQ](#).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is an apprentice's schedule?***

While most participating farms require a full-time commitment (~40+ hrs, 5 days/week), some offer a part-time engagement. Many farms have longer hours in the “peak season” (May/June - August/September) and slightly shorter hours in early spring / late fall. Most start their days early, within an hour or two of sunrise during peak





season months. This information will likely be in each farm's job description.

***How long is the program?***

Apprenticeship start and end dates vary by participating farm. They can run as long as 9 months (March - December), with many starting in March or April. This information will likely be in each farm's job description.

***What will I learn?***

All apprentices will learn the basics of producing mixed vegetables using sustainable growing methods. Expect to engage in a variety of tasks including propagation, transplanting, weeding, pruning, trellising, harvesting, wash/pack, and irrigation. All apprentices participate in the same core syllabus for classroom learning to supplement their in-field learning.

***Where will I spend my time?***

Fieldwork, the majority of an apprentice's time, will take place at the participating farm which the HVA mentor owns or manages. The full HVA apprentice cohort comes together for 60 hours of classroom education and for annual orientation and end-of-season events, which take place at Glynwood and at other farms in the HV.

***Who are farm mentors?***

Mentors are experienced Hudson Valley farmers who meet the criteria listed above and wish to host apprentices. Mentors are also apprentices' managers and employers.

***How are mentor farms selected?***

Mentors are evaluated on a set of criteria outlined above. In order to cultivate a diverse mentor leadership team, priority consideration is given to mentors from historically marginalized communities, including BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+ and women farmers.



***How are apprentices selected?***

Apprentice selection varies by farm and by mentor. Some mentors prefer or require prior experience, while others do not. Mentors may also select apprentices whose learning goals align with the learning opportunities their farm has to offer. Mentors are encouraged to prioritize applicants from historically underrepresented or marginalized communities, as described above.

***How hard is the work?***

Farm apprenticeships are physically demanding jobs. Applicants should be prepared to work in all weather (including hot, cold, wet, and muddy conditions) and to walk, stand, bend, crouch, kneel, and lift for much of the day.

***Wait: Is this work or learning?***

It's both – and both are compensated. All apprentices receive minimum wage or higher for all hours worked in the field and spent in required classes and workshops. Upon successful completion of the program, apprentices also receive a continuing educational stipend.

***Do I need a car?***

Given the decentralized nature of the program and the fact that not all farms offer on-site housing, many apprentices feel a car is necessary. That said, some apprentices who have on-site housing have managed without one.

***Is housing provided?***

This varies by farm. Some mentor farms may offer or require on-site housing. Others may not. In instances where housing is not offered, apprentices seeking housing may consider asking mentors where previous employees/apprentices have lived, or for support in connecting with local options.

***How do I know if this apprenticeship is for me?***

This program could be a fit for you if you enjoy inherently physical work that includes crouching, bending, kneeling and lifting; if you enjoy working outdoors and as part of a team; if you are interested in learning in both field and classroom settings; and if you are interested in growing food plants and soil on a production scale (for distribution, as opposed to home gardening or homesteading). While farming can be physically and mentally challenging and tiring, particularly as a first-year apprentice, it can also be extremely rewarding, nourishing, empowering, and life-changing.

***If I submit an application via the shared application form, when will I hear back?***

If you apply by November 30 2024, you will hear back by December 15. If you apply between December 1 and January 30 2025, you will hear back by February 15. Applications coming through after February 1 will receive notification only if positions are still available. *\*\*If you apply directly to the participating farm, you will hear back on whatever timeline they have shared. Note that each participating farm may have their own priority deadlines.\*\**

***How do I apply? What if the application window is closed?***

Information about applications will be announced in the fall. To express interest outside of the application window, or interest in mid-season employment opportunities, you may [complete an interest form](#).



Learn more about Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming at:  
<https://www.glynwood.org/>