
Hawai'i Institute of Pacific Agriculture

Beginning Farmer Training Program

This guide is meant to provide specific information about our farmer training program. Please contact our program manager, at programs@hipagriculture.org if you have further questions.

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Beginning FARMER TRAINING PROGRAM

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WHO WE ARE

Our mission

HIP Ag's mission is to practice and teach regenerative agriculture through programming developed to educate all ages of local and beginning farmers, nourishing the Kohala community with food and knowledge..

Values + Guiding Principles

- Practice sustainable agriculture that produces food and medicine, focusing on traditional Pacific agroforestry methods alongside small scale market gardening, and greenhouse production.
- Provide experiential, place-based, career connected education.
- Be food movement leaders.
- Promote the Rights of the people to access healthy land and food.
- Practice methods of farming that increase the health of the land, community and environment.
- Teach agriculture-based nutrition and wellness.

Land + Cultural Background

He ali'i ka 'āina, he kauwā ke kanaka. #531

The land is a chief, the people are her servant.

- We are here to be stewards of the land and acknowledge that it is our kuleana (responsibility and privilege) to be in this role.
- We acknowledge that many regenerative farming practices are based on preexisting indigenous techniques and we will be mindful of giving recognition to indigenous cultures in our daily work, educational workshops, and special events.
- We acknowledge the complicated history of these islands and will be open and respectful to the political and cultural changes that are currently occurring.

Our team

Dash Kuhr- Co-Director, Farm Director

Erika Kuhr- Co-Director

Nia Vargas- Assistant Farm Manager

TBD, Program Manager

Farmer Training Program

Cohort 1: January 29th - July 5th, 2024

Cohort 2: July 15th - December 20th, 2024

Cohort 1: January 13, 2025 - June 28, 2025

Cohort 2: July 14, 2025 - December 20, 2025

Program Details

HIP Agriculture will host a Residential Beginning Farmer Training Program at our farm with two cohorts, each 23 weeks long. Our training program is accepting applicants who are seeking agricultural career training in market gardening and tropical agroforestry. Trainees participate in a dynamic schedule of farm projects each week in exchange for training, unique educational experiences, fresh farm food, and rustic off-grid housing with access to community bathroom/kitchen/laundry facilities, and an educational stipend.

The farm schedule is Tuesday- Saturday, and typically includes in-field projects (weeding, bed prep, planting, nursery and more), agroforestry block renovation/maintenance, food processing, infrastructure development and repairs, harvest/post harvest handling, and staffing our farmers market booth, supporting HIP Ag special events and fundraisers. Working alongside the farm manager and other staff, trainees gain valuable skills in organic farming, market gardens, greenhouses, agroforestry systems, orchards, farmers market participation, etc. Average weekly hours on farm are 32 field time + bi-monthly classes (4 hours per month) +community chore responsibilities(2 hours weekly).

The ideal candidate is a hard-working individual that is diligent, excited about physical outdoor work, eager to learn, pays attention to details, works well within a community, and perseveres through difficult situations(has grit)!

What's Included

Housing: Private room with shared bathroom and kitchen, includes internet and utilities.
\$800 /month

Produce Share: Weekly vegetable mix box that includes seasonal starches and fruits.
\$100 /month

Education: Specialty Educational Workshops by staff and agricultural specialists, as well as hands-on farm field trips - \$500/month

Stipend: \$500/month

Package Value \$1900/month

[APPLY through the form HERE](#)

Schedule

Tuesday-Friday 8-12/1-5 + Saturday Farmers Market for 4 weeks. Each person works the market to gain in-person market experience. Attendance at Saturday ag classes are required.

Timeliness & Strong Work Ethic- This is a physical labor job and we work in all environmental conditions. Our expectation is that with proper training, trainees will be able to fulfill the physical and mental demands of farming while working as a group, independently, and without supervision.

- As a short term training program we require full commitment, including working weekends and holidays when needed.

Community Responsibilities

- Cleaning: Time (2 hours scheduled weekly and mandatory) will be set aside during each week to ensure proper cleaning and home/yard care is made a priority. Cleaning schedules will be discussed upon arrival. Cleanliness is important and emphasized.
- Home yard and building spaces: It is the responsibility of the tenant to maintain landscaping around the perimeter of their housing. Such as grass and weeds from buildings and walkways. Residents will change out propane tanks and communicate with leadership when needed to be filled before the spare is empty.
- Community Meetings: Monthly meetings will be required and are outside of farm work hours.
- Quiet Hours: 10pm-6am. Please be respectful of everyone's need for space and rest.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many people will we be living with?

There is currently space for 3 individuals and 1 couple in our shared apprenticeship housing. Housing consists of 1 shared bathroom (toilet, shower), shared laundry, kitchen and living room. Coin operated dryer available, costs about \$2 per load.

What is Kapa'au like?

Kapa'au is a small town on the northern tip of Hawai'i island. The current population is under 2,000 residents. Kapa'au is known for its rural, natural beauty and has a handful of restaurants and stores. 9pm is "Kohala midnight" and most restaurants and shops are closed by 7pm.

How can we get around?

We ***highly*** recommend people have their own vehicle, scooter or bicycle. Please be aware that this is a small town with limited transportation opportunities. Access to farm vehicles is also limited and sporadic. Participants must be prepared for the reality of not having access to transportation as a daily or even weekly occurrence. Carpooling, biking, and/or walking is the only consistent form of transportation at this time. There is currently no public transportation in North Kohala.

Where can we get food and basic necessities?

Our local Farmers Market has a variety of produce, cheeses, eggs, breads, jams, hummus and pesto. This is a wonderful way to eat local but may be cost prohibitive for some. The closest grocery stores are Arakaki's and Takata's which have most basic necessities.

What if I'm unsure about living in a small community on an island?

It is the responsibility of each participant to research this area and decide if it is the right fit for them! Please do the work ahead of time to make sure you are prepared for rural/small town island life. There is not much in terms of "city activities" in this area and this program is best fit for those looking to use this time to deeply focus on their farming skills/education in a beautiful and sacred space.

HOW TO APPLY

[Click Here to Apply](#)

We will be reaching out to schedule interviews by the first week of January, 2024.

If you have any questions regarding this opportunity please email farm@hipagriculture.org and programs@hipagriculture.org