



Community CROPS Growing Farmers Incubator Farm

Lincoln, NE

Farm participants include immigrants, refugees and low-income families who want to establish a small farm business.

CROPS offers support to beginning farmers by providing low-cost land, startup equipment, technical assistance and market access.

YEAR ONE

Activities:

- Graduate from the winter workshop training series.
- Develop a business plan.
- Develop planting, financial and yield records.
- Produce transplants in a cold frame or greenhouse.
- Grow on 1/8 to 1/4 acre.
- Attend bi-weekly field walks with CROPS staff.
- Attend 3/4 of all summer workshops.
- Sell at the CROPS OCRFM stall or the CROPS CSA.
- Utilize other services such as computer classes or ESL, as needed.

Sales:

- Gross at least \$2000 over the season (CSA and market sales).
- Save 25% of produce sales for expenses the following year.

General:

- Demonstrate commitment, participation and skill development.



YEAR TWO

Activities:

- Attend 1/2 of all first-year winter workshops.
- Attend 2-4 advanced spring workshops or area conferences.
- Exchange labor with an established farmer-mentor.
- Modify and adapt business plan.
- Increase use of planting, financial and yield records.
- Produce transplants in a cold frame or greenhouse.
- Grow on 1/4 to 1/2 acre.
- Attend monthly field walks with CROPS staff.
- Sell at a farmers' market, the CROPS CSA and 1 wholesale account.
- Utilize other services such as computer classes or ESL, as needed.

Sales:

- Gross at least \$5000 over season (market CSA, 1 wholesale account).
- Save 25% of produce sales for expenses the following year.

General:

- Continue to demonstrate commitment, participation and skill development.



YEAR THREE

Activities:

- Attend advanced workshops and conferences as recommended.
- Modify and adapt business plan.
- Use planting, financial and yield records. Assist staff with CSA planning.
- Produce transplants in a cold frame or greenhouse.
- Grow on 1/2 acre or more.
- Attend field walks as requested by CROPS staff or participant.
- Sell at farmers' markets, the CROPS CSA and to wholesale accounts.
- Work with staff to identify an independent farm site to rent/buy.
- Identify larger purchasing needs, such as tillers or other equipment.
- Utilize other services such as IDA, computer classes, classes at SCC, etc.

Sales:

- Gross \$8000+ over season.
- Save 25% of produce sales for expenses the following year.

General:

- Participate independently and seek skill development independently.
- Mentor new farmers.



INDEPENDENT FARM BUSINESS

- Lease or purchase land located with assistance from staff.
- Rent or purchase farm equipment and supplies as needed.
- Maintain market booth, establish CSA, restaurant & grocery accounts.
- Obtain loans through banks, government or other sources.
- Maintain contact with staff for training & support as needed.
- Increase annual sales and/or acres in sustainable production.