

Title:	The Glynwood Farm and Food Incubator: a collaboration to ignite beginning farmer and rancher entrepreneurship in New York's Hudson Valley		
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Program Code: BFRDP

Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

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Performing Department

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Co-Project Directors

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Departments

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Non-Technical Summary

A bit of digging into the purchasing practices of the New York City schools recently uncovered that 70% of the food served in school cafeterias comes from China, a long way from local. This project is designed to help farm and ranch entrepreneurs create businesses in the New York region that are economically and environmentally sustainable over the long term. In the Hudson Valley, one hour outside of New York City, prohibitively expensive land prices require farmers to engage in non-traditional alternatives to land ownership, something that fundamentally changes the traditional business of farming. With the option of cashing out to retire by selling land unavailable, an alternative business approach must replace it. Most efforts to support beginning farmers in this region fail to address this fundamental problem and the result is a very high failure rate among new farmers. Alternatively, businesses that create significant value added food products and a recognizable consumer brand have significant value when big food companies prefer to buy rather than start small natural food brands. Creating and successfully marketing consumer products requires a completely new skill set for farmers. These conditions dictate that successful entrepreneurs in this region have a unique set of challenges that are addressed by our Incubator project. These include: access to land during the start-up and growth phases with non-traditional lease arrangements; production techniques that meet landowner environmental and esthetic requirements; and sufficient farming and business skills and resources to establish a viable farm and value added business. The Incubator is one that would provide new and transitioning farmers and food entrepreneurs with a multi-year structure of experience and mentorship, including help through the risky early stages of their startup with farm and business mentoring, access to land, markets, and capital. The Incubator will help them launch their own brands and market their products into the biggest food market in the world. The Cary Institute will help us develop a state of the art educational curriculum in ecologically sustainable farming practices for this region. Once these young businesses are ready to transition out of the Incubator, we will help them access land through non-traditional ownership structures. As a result of this project, we expect to see 3 new farm-based food businesses started in the first year, 30 potential and new farmers trained in non traditional land access and ecologically sustainable farm practices, 1 new community starting a Keep Farming program, 1 wiki site posted that includes best practices in non-traditional land access, and 10 farm business leaders in our peer learning and business coaching program. The Incubator, and the wider training and publications that will result from it, will grow over time and create an entirely new generation of people who are working the land in this region in an economically and ecologically sustainable way. This program is could be replicated in any region that shares the economics of farming and erosion of farm services that defines the Hudson Valley.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

Objective 1 is to increase access to non-traditional lands for farming in the region by helping beginning farm entrepreneurs start and expand their businesses by facilitating the process of getting long-term secure access to working lands under alternative ownership structures. Expected Outcomes: 3 new farmers on Incubator land, 30 potential farmers trained in non traditional land access through collaborating organizations, 1 new community in the region working to keep or grow the opportunity for beginning farmers to locate in their community, 1 wiki site posted and mediated to keep sharing current best practices. Incubator participants and individuals who participate in the trainings or use the training resources developed as part of this project will learn current best practices in the area of alternative land transfer strategies. Objective 2 is Landowner Environmental and Esthetic Requirements and Farmer Production Techniques by helping beginning farmers to successfully locate on a landowner site by ensuring that their farm operation is compatible with landowner concerns about wildlife, ecological impact and esthetics. Expected Outcomes: 3 new farmer operations in the Incubator developing ecologically sustainable and esthetically compatible businesses, 30 individuals trained in these principles. Incubator participants and the broader audience will learn state of the art, science-based ecologically sustainable practices in a practical context. They will also better understand what estate owners and ways to mitigate conflicts that arise from conflicting use of land in this setting. Objective 3: is the creation of a New Farm Business Incubator that will provide comprehensive, one on one support for up to 15 farm entrepreneurs at a time as they navigate the difficult startup phase of their businesses. Expected Outcomes: 3 new farmer operations in the Incubator, 10 farm business leaders participating in peer learning and mentorship program. Incubator participants will be required to conduct their operations in a way that is consistent with state of the art sustainable production practices. Each will have a production mentor who will be experienced in all areas of production relevant to the specific project. The other member of the mentoring team for each Incubator participant is the business mentor. This individual is likely to be a seasoned sustainable farm and food entrepreneur who can advise participants on all dimensions of their business. These skills are critical to the long-term success of all farmers in this region. The business mentors will therefore be required to have experience in food marketing and be prepared to teach topics like brand management in informal and formal settings. This Incubator project will allow the talented people at Glynwood to create an entirely new generation of people who are working the land in this region in an economically and ecologically sustainable way. It will be applicable to any region of the country that shares the economic structure of farming and erosion of farm services that defines the Hudson Valley.

What was accomplished under these goals?

Objective 1: Increase access to non-traditional lands for farming in the region

A significant primary objective has been achieved in placing three participants on the property to begin their businesses at the Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator. (More detail in Objective 3.)

Glynwood is active in American Farmland Trust's (AFT) Hudson Valley Farmlink Program, a network of 15 regional service providers, which launched this year. Dave Llewellyn, Glynwood's Director of Farmer Training, serves as a core partner in the program. Through the facilitation of landowner and land seeker matches, this network should lead to more land access opportunities for transitioning participants of Glynwood's Farmer Training programs. In April, Glynwood presented information about the incubator at a pair of land access forums in Newburgh and in New Paltz, reaching over 80 participants, including 30 potential farmers.

Glynwood staff toured a number of properties that are being considered for acquisition by its program partner, the Open Space Institute (OSI). We provided input to help determine if these particular properties would be suitable for the needs of our eventual program graduates for long-term lease or lease-to-own arrangements with OSI.

Through our partnership with OSI, participation with AFT's Hudson Valley Farmlink program, and some interested individual investors, we believe that we have a strong network of partners who will support our efforts to transition our program graduates onto their own land and bring more land into agricultural production. We will learn more about potential land options in advance, so that we can do some preliminary site analysis and be able to communicate about these options during the recruiting stage.

In order to foster a welcoming and supportive community to new agricultural producers, Glynwood gathered New Paltz community members to discuss the Incubator program. In January, Glynwood convened the New Paltz Community Advisory Group for the first time to open dialogue about the best ways for Glynwood and its program participants to engage with the New Paltz community. This group includes the following pillars of New Paltz agriculture, business leaders, and respected members of the community. The group provided many creative ideas for integrating into the New Paltz community, such as holding public educational events on the property, which we have folded into our program plans.

Objective 2: Teach landowner environmental and esthetic requirements and sustainable farmer production techniques

Each of the three participants selected for participation in the incubator have articulated management practices which are compatible with best agro-ecological and wildlife friendly practices. Glynwood staff will work with them to ensure compliance and to develop and improve their management practices.

Glynwood contracted Hudsonia and AppleSeed Permaculture to evaluate the biodiversity, physical characteristics and water systems on the property, and to make recommendations on best management practices. Hudsonia is a not-for-profit institute for research, education, and technical assistance in the environmental sciences. AppleSeed Permaculture is an edible landscaping and regenerative design firm. Their findings will inform our whole farm planning, which will become the basis of a

comprehensive curriculum to teach participants about soil improvement techniques. Hudsonia and AppleSeed Permaculture are under contract to deliver additional trainings in the fall and to participate in a convening about best agro-ecological and wildlife friendly management practices this winter.

Glynwood consulted with a firm called O2 Compost to design and construct a static aerated composting system. The cost-effective and replicable composting model recommended by O2 Compost will be managed by Community Compost Company, one of our incubator participants.

Glynwood has conducted soil tests through numerous laboratories to get adequate baseline data on the condition of the property at the time we assumed management of it. We will review these findings with several trusted colleagues and incorporate them into the development of our whole farm.

Glynwood received assistance from NRCS and Cornell University staff in the design of its soil improvement demonstrations. Glynwood has reserved several acres of the property for the purpose of demonstrating a number of approaches to improving soil health. Glynwood Director of Farmer Training, Dave Llewellyn, attended a multi-day Soil Health Training with Cornell University soil science faculty. Glynwood plans to utilize the Soil Health Test to help Incubator participants better understand the complex interrelationship between the physical, chemical, and biological processes that determine how soils function.

Objective 3: Launch new farm business incubator

In March of this year, Glynwood signed a lease with OSI and assumed management of the 323-acre property. The Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator was officially launched and announced publicly in the spring.

Glynwood formed a selection committee for the incubator program, comprised of farm and business experts. In August, the selection committee helped Glynwood determine its three inaugural participants. Each participating business has been licensed use of property and equipment for three years. Our inaugural class includes:

Lily Dougherty-Johnson will launch Ferdinand's Farm, a diversified operation that produces eggs, honey, culinary herbs, and edible flowers. A small herd of goats will eventually be added to the operation to provide goat meat to local butchers and consumers.

Leanna Mulvihill will start Four Legs Farm, a 150-member meat CSA that offers pastured lamb and pork meat to members. The farm will also offer educational programming and events for the surrounding community that will focus on livestock education.

Eileen Banyra and Noa Simons are the principles of Community Compost Company, whose mission is to lead the NY/NJ metro area's wave of recycling food scraps for compost production. This "table-to-farm" business retrieves organic materials from the waste stream and produces high-quality compost in conjunction with local farms. As the first collection/compost company in Ulster County, they intend to build a model that will complement the Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator and that can apply to other farms within proximity of urban areas across the United States.

Glynwood will work closely with other Hudson Valley service providers in assisting program participants with their business plans. We will coordinate and in some cases require participants to work with services such as Hawthorne Valley's Farm Beginnings course, the New York Small Business Development Center, and Hudson Valley Agriculture Business Development Corporation's Incubator Without Walls. We will also link participants with individual mentors for farm and business advice as needed.

Incubator participants will take part in a bi-monthly peer learning network with other area farmers, totaling 10 participants.

Glynwood staff met with members of the Rondout Valley Growers Association to discuss their continued participation in the peer learning group and to learn what topics would be of greatest benefit to their members. Some proposed topics include a livestock producers' roundtable and exploring cooperative business models.

A comprehensive curriculum will be tailored to the participants' needs as determined through an intake assessment tool Glynwood has developed during this reporting period.

What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

Training Activities

Glynwood hosted multiple public workshops for new farmers and apprentices this year, such as Welding 101, Tractor Safety, Intro to Botany, Rotational Grazing, Pasture Plant Identification, Pest and Disease Management, Integrated Parasite Management and a training on growing your own Mycorrhizal Fungi with USDA researcher David Douds. These workshop topics are unique offerings in the Hudson Valley and over 40 individuals participated. We will continue to assess and refine the classroom schedule and make these offerings available to Incubator participants going forward.

Glynwood presented information about the Incubator at a pair of land access forums, in Newburgh and in New Paltz, hosted by the American Farmland Trust as a part of its Hudson Valley Farmlink program.

Professional Development

The Hudson Valley Farmer Training Network, a group of area service providers convened by Glynwood, met in March to hear from a panel of beginning farmers about the services they used in developing their businesses and to identify gaps in services that they need. The network also heard a presentation from Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC) on the agricultural law curriculum that they are developing. It is NRDC's intent to develop a network of attorneys that understand agricultural issues and may offer pro bono services to start-up farm businesses. We are exploring ways to collaborate with NRDC and GROW NYC to serve start up farm businesses in Ulster County.

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

All of our public workshop opportunities were published on regional email listserves for beginning farmers. A comprehensive document including an explanation of the program, introduction to our first participants, and interim reports on the physical characteristics and biodiversity of the property has been published. Full reports on the history, physical characteristics and biodiversity of the property have been published on our webpage and shared at open house information sessions.

<http://www.glynwood.org/incubator/>

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

{Nothing to report}

Participants**Actual FTE's for this Reporting Period**

Role	Non-Students or faculty	Students within Staffing Roles			Computed Total by Role
		Undergraduate	Graduate	Post-Doctorate	
Scientist	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	3.4	0	0	0	3.4
Technical	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	3.4	0	0	0	3.4

Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Target Audience

Glynwood's target audience for its Farmer Training program area are beginning farmers (or explorers) and new farmers. We define beginning farmers as those with 0-3 years experience. New farmers are those who have been farming for fewer than 10 years.

Glynwood has engaged this target audience through many outreach efforts throughout the calendar year. Glynwood staff hosted an informational table at the Northeast Organic Farming Association's (NOFA) winter conferences in New York and Massachusetts in January for recruiting purposes, which provided a great opportunity for face-to-face outreach and communication about our program. Once the Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator was formally announced in March, Glynwood posted information about the program online on many relevant organization's web sites such as the New York and Massachusetts chapters of the NOFA, the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), and Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA). In the spring, Glynwood co-sponsored a National Young Farmers Coalition mixer, which provided an excellent opportunity to get the word out about the project to beginning farmers in the Hudson Valley. Additionally, Glynwood hosted an open house information session at the incubator site on June 22nd with another scheduled for October 10th.

In addition to the recruitment activities referenced above, which attracted hundreds, Glynwood directly trained 28 explorers and 36 new farmers during this reporting period.

Products

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2014	YES

Citation

The Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator information booklet includes a program overview, maps, business summaries, and interim reports on the physical characteristics and biodiversity of the property.
http://www.glynwood.org/files/2014/11/Incubator-info-packet_FINAL_low-res.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2014	YES

Citation

AppleSeed Permaculture ("AppleSeed") completed an agro-ecological site assessment for the purpose of informing our land use management strategies at the Incubator site. The site assessment includes detailed information and relevant maps related to the physical characteristics and environment of the Incubator site. AppleSeed provided additional information about the property in their report on the historical and cultural context of the property. This report overviews the historical and cultural context of the Incubator site including indigenous peoples and land uses, European settlement and agriculture, and the ecological and economic history.
 AppleSeed Permaculture's Agro-Ecological Site Assessment design report:
http://www.glynwood.org/files/2014/11/AppleSeed-Glynwood_Design_Report1.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2014	YES

Citation

AppleSeed Permaculture's Land Use Options map:
http://www.glynwood.org/files/2014/11/AppleSeed-Glynwood_Land_Use_Options1.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2014	YES

Citation

AppleSeed Permaculture's Land Use Recommendations map:
http://www.glynwood.org/files/2014/11/AppleSeed-Glynwood_Land_Use_Recommendation1.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2014	YES

Citation

AppleSeed Permaculture created a place history entitled, "Stories of Place":
<http://www.glynwood.org/files/2014/11/Incubator-Stories-of-Place.pdf>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2014	YES

Citation

Hudsonia conducted a biological assessment for the purpose of informing our land use management strategies at the Incubator site to provide the basis for strong agro-ecological farming practices for our incubator program participants and the general public. The site assessment includes detailed information related to the physical characteristics and environment and relevant habitat maps of the Incubator site. The report includes exploratory surveys for breeding birds, reptiles, amphibians, bees, damselflies, dragonflies, butterflies and plants.
 The managed and unmanaged habitats of the Incubator site offer abundant resources of value to agriculture and to the host of plants and animals of this landscape. The full report addresses aspects of the relationships between soil health, biodiversity and farm productivity, and offers recommendations for farm practices compatible with the habitats and species of conservation concern at this site.

Hudsonia's biological assessment of the Incubator property:

<http://www.glynwood.org/files/2014/11/Mohonk-Foothills-biological-assessment.pdf>

Other Products

Product Type

Data and Research Material

Description

Glynwood has run soil tests at the incubator site using three different labs. The data will be used to document our progress in improving the soils on the property. The data will inform our soil fertility management decisions. Our incubator participants will benefit from improved soil fertility and regional farmers will benefit from lessons learned via related workshops on soil science.

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

Glynwood has refined our curriculum for incubator participants, which covers a broad range of business and practical skills trainings. We have identified course instructors and have piloted many topics through our apprentice program.

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

Glynwood has developed a participant manual for the Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator. This comprehensive manual outlines all program rules, expectations, and procedures, and a bio-safety protocol for livestock. This document will be useful to other incubator programs, particularly any which may want to incorporate livestock into their programs.

Product Type

Evaluation Instruments

Description

Glynwood has developed an intake assessment form for the purpose of evaluating the skills and educational needs of our program participants. Importantly, this has been designed so that program staff can repeat the assessment periodically for the purpose of monitoring progress towards learning goals. The intake assessment form will be of interest to other farmer training organizations.

Changes/Problems

{Nothing to report}