

NC INCUBATOR FARM CASE STUDY



A guide to North Carolina incubator farms, common themes to consider before starting or joining an incubator, and possibilities for Extension engagement.



Local Food Program

NC STATE EXTENSION

NC FarmLink

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INTRODUCTION

This case study was funded by the NC Cooperative Extension Local Food Program Team. Interviews and farm tours were conducted by Morgan Marshall, NC Cooperative Extension Local Foods Communications Assistant, and Hannah Bundy, NC FarmLink Program Assistant. This project was led by Robyn Stout, NC 10% Campaign State Program Coordinator with collaboration from Lee Menius, NC Choices Technical Program Coordinator, and Noah Ranells, NC FarmLink Eastern Region Director. All information was gathered in 2023 and 2024. For up-to-date information, contact each farm directly.

Based on the results from the case study interviews, this guide was created to share information about NC Incubator Farms and common themes to consider when starting or joining an incubator. It includes information for Extension involvement and an example lease agreement as an appendix.

An incubator farm program offers land, resources, and training to decrease barriers to early-career farmers and prepare them to start farming businesses.

Incubator farms are one strategy to support early-career farmers with land access and business development. They vary greatly in their scope and mission.

This guide was created to give a snapshot of various incubator farm models. Throughout this guide, you will see a snapshot of information for each farm, with basic stats and structural information. Following that, you will find key takeaways and common themes from the interviews.

If you have additional questions about this project or incubator programs, email info@ncfarmlink.org.



RESOURCES

The following were mentioned during interviews as helpful resources for incubator farms and those working with an incubator farm.

USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/beginning-farmer-rancher-development-program-bfrdp>

National Incubator Farm Training Initiative (NIFTI) Farm Incubator Toolkit - Tufts University

<https://nesfp.nutrition.tufts.edu/NIFTI>

NC State Extension New Producers & Beginning Farmers

<https://go.ncsu.edu/newfarmersandbeginningproducers>

NC State Extension Farm Planning Resources

<https://farmplanning.ces.ncsu.edu>

NC Farm School

<https://ncfarmschool.ces.ncsu.edu>

NC FarmLink Matching Database and Land Access Resources

<https://ncfarmlink.ces.ncsu.edu/>



MEET THE FARMS

The case study incorporated a Google form survey and phone interviews with multiple incubator farms in varying stages of operation across NC. Each farm is unique in how it works with farmers, how the farm is managed, funding sources, how the farm transitions farmers away from the incubator, and how it measures success. This section gives a brief overview of each farm that was interviewed. Following this section is a more in-depth look into each farm operation.

**Click on the name of the farm here or on each of their “profile” pages to access their website.*

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC) Farmer Incubator Program

Buncombe County, NC

Founded in 2015 under the SAHC umbrella the Farmer Incubator Program supports farm businesses by providing affordable access to land, infrastructure, equipment, and technical support on a 100-acre site in Alexander, NC.



Patterson School Foundation Incubator Farm

Caldwell County, NC

The Patterson School Incubator Farm sits on land donated by Samuel Patterson to use as a school for boys over 100 years ago. After sitting empty for quite some time, the Incubator Farm started in 2018 to educate the next generation of organic and environmentally-minded farmers.

Elma C. Lomax Research and Education Farm

Cabarrus County, NC

Lomax is a certified organic farm that provides land access and research-based education to farmers, students, and community members in Concord, NC. The farm launched in 2009 by the Cabarrus County government and NC Cooperative Extension and is currently managed by Carolina Farm Stewardship Association.



Memorial Industrial Community Development Corporation (MICDC)

Forsyth County, NC

MICDC Farm and Food Project is a community farm and garden incubator on a historic piece of land that was used as a working farm orphanage until 1972. The Farm and Food project will continue the legacy of partnering with the county to provide educational opportunities and space to practice agriculture.

W.C. Breeze Research and Education Farm

Orange County, NC

Owned by NC State University and managed part-time by Cooperative Extension personnel, the W.C. Breeze Research and Education Farm sits on one of the biggest plots of land - 270 acres, donated to the NCSU Ag Foundation in 2004 by the Breeze Family.



Transplanting Traditions Community Farm

Orange County, NC

Transplanting Traditions Community Farm (TTCF) began in 2010 through a partnership with the Triangle Land Conservancy, who owns the land on which the farm is located. TTCF hosts families of refugees from Burma on 8 acres in Chapel Hill and works with refugees already familiar with farming and agriculture to translate their skills to be successful here in NC.

The Vet Farm of NC, Inc.

Lee County, NC

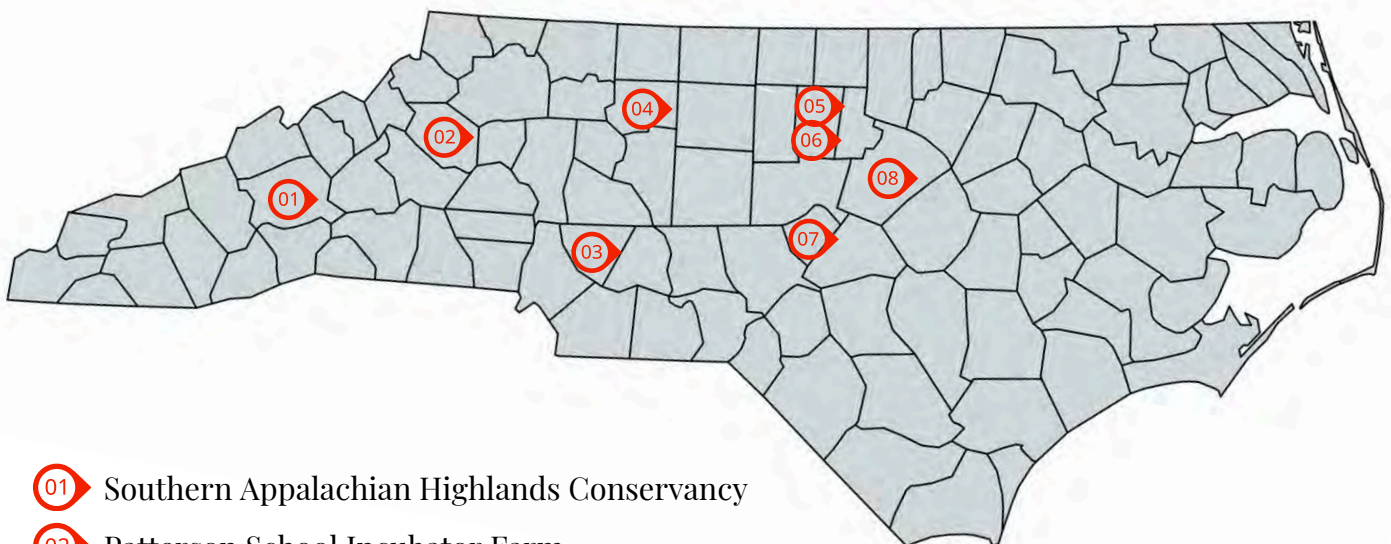
The Veteran's Farm of NC, Inc. was founded in 2015 and works with service members and veterans as a training and mentorship program with on-farm production models of sustainable livestock and organic vegetable production in Sanford, NC



Good Hope Farm

Wake County, NC

Good Hope Farm was founded in 2017 on a former tobacco farm and honors the site's agricultural heritage by increasing community access to farmland and connecting residents to local, healthy food. The farm features a native plant garden and offers agricultural and nutritional educational programming.



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SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY FARMER INCUBATOR PROGRAM

The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy Farmer Incubator Program seeks to support and develop new farm businesses by providing affordable access to land and farm resources.



Structure Owned by SAHC which is a land trust

Funding Funded through SAHC programs and grants

**Max Number of
Farmers** 5

Number of Staff 1 Full-Time Farm Manager

Total Size 140 acres total

Plot Size Rentals Varies based on enterprise

Rental Price Varies based on enterprise and experience

Time Limit Annual leases with most farmers staying for 2-5 years.

Scope of Operation

Access to fields, greenhouses, pastures, tiller, tractor, tools, and the commercial kitchen on-site (depending on enterprise). Most are horticultural growers

Year Established 2014



SAHC INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

Utilizing NIFTI for startup educational resources allows the incubator program to provide farmers with incubator-model-specific resources such as those focused on business development, in addition to providing land access.

02

Managing farmer needs and expectations for support with staff capacity can add challenges, especially when first starting out and working on initial infrastructure. Specializing farmer support services and streamlining those as well as the educational offerings is recommended.

03

Finding multiple revenue streams can help offset some of the costs of the incubator. Much of the program funding for the SAHC incubator is financed through other programs, including their farm wedding venue, rental Airbnb property, and donations and grants that fund their overarching programmatic goals.

04

Any acreage that is not managed by the incubator program farmers will need to be maintained by staff. This can be utilized as a way to provide training and education for the farmers as well as the general public regarding regenerative and ecologically responsible land stewardship practices.

05

It's important to consider how the incubator farmers build equity while building soil in a temporary location, as well as farmer housing nearby the farm. Living offsite can provide challenges due to the management needs of crops and local market creation. SAHC is considering potential solutions to this using the Agrarian Commons model.

“Our ideal is for farmers transitioning off of the SAHC farm is to stay local to the Asheville area, and use the markets they built here to stay engaged and be successful in the local agricultural scene.” - Chris Link



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SAHC COMMUNITY FARM

PATTERSON SCHOOL FOUNDATION INCUBATOR FARM

The Patterson School Foundation provides educational opportunities with a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, organic agriculture, and historical preservation.



Structure	Owned by Patterson School Foundation which is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization
Funding	Grant funded and Farmer Fees (\$1,500/year)
Max Number of Farmers	10
Number of Staff	1 Full-Time Program Director; 1 Part-Time Farm Manager; 1 Part-Time Apprentice
Total Size	7 Acres
Plot Size Rentals	1/2 Acre
Rental Price	\$1,500/year
Time Limit	Varies/3 years
Scope of Operation	Farmers get access to the tractor, greenhouse space, packing room, and coolbot; priority access to the commercial kitchen
Year Established	2018



PATTERSON INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

Having a board of directors with influence over the incubator program and to approve farmer applications is recommended. A committee with relevant experience, knowledge, and skills is able to help with farm-based programming, decisions, and general operations.

02

Starting out on small acreage in the 1/4 to 1/2 acre range for at least the first year for new growers can be beneficial.

03

Creating a signable document that outlines expectations for both parties through a lease or user agreement, including allowable soil amendments, amounts of greenhouse space allocated per farmer, specifications about tractor and equipment usage, and specificity depending on their crop/production plan is recommended.

04

Living on or near the farm is ideal for farmers to be able to keep a close eye on their crops. Living more than 20-30 minutes away can provide extra challenges.

05

If the incubator is a part of a larger program or organization, having mission alignment and a clearly defined understanding of how the incubator fits into the wider program is helpful. This can then be used to guide decision makers in a way that is supportive of the incubator program.

"Our overarching goal is to be able to educate the next generation of people as organic and environmentally minded farmers who can thrive in an environment that doesn't support the culture of preventative medicine." - Kitty Rosati



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATTERSON SCHOOL FOUNDATION

ELMA C. LOMAX RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FARM

The Elma C. Lomax Research and Education Farm provides land access and research-based education to farmers, students, and community members to foster a food system that supports the local community and protects our natural resources for future generations.



Structure	Managed by Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA)
Funding	Private donations, grants & some county funding
Max Number of Farmers	5
Number of Staff	1 Full-Time Farm Manager
Total Size	31 acres
Plot Size Rentals	1/4 to 1/2 an acre
Rental Price	Tiered system determined by the amount of land used by each farmer
Time Limit	3 to 4 years
Scope of Operation	Any type of vegetable production; certified organic (must grow to organic standards but their business does not have to be certified)
Year Established	2009



LOMAX INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

Exposing early-career farmers to innovative practices through research partnerships is a great way to provide educational opportunities while increasing farmer exposure to innovative and ecologically-minded stewardship practices.

02

Educating community members of all ages, including school-aged children, can be included in the farm if it is fitting within the program mission.

03

Conducting research for the wider farming community in the region can impact a wide swath of farmers beyond just the incubator program.

04

Vetting farmers by the farm manager is a beneficial step and if they are newer to the profession, completing additional training and educational requirements can help ensure their success in the farm program. Determining what education capacity the incubator program has can help determine how much experience incubator farmers need to have.

05

Separating fees for specific equipment can help with equipment maintenance expenses. This includes the tractor, post-harvest and cooling spaces, and greenhouse spaces.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CFSA

MEMORIAL INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

To improve the quality of life for Forsyth County residents by addressing social determinants of health and the impact of food and nutrition on poverty while preserving the historical and rural character of the area.



Structure Cooperation between Forsyth County and MICDC

Funding Mostly grant funded with County supports

**Max Number of
Farmers** 5

Number of Staff 2 Part-Time Employees

Total Size 5 acres

Plot Size Rentals 3 x 50 ft planting rows

Rental Price \$100/annually

Time Limit Seasonal

Scope of Operation Not certified organic but farmers are required to use organic practices.

Year Established 2021



MICDC INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

The history of the land and the way that it has been utilized within the community play a role in the structure to honor heritage. With MICDC, the land has a history of being involved in agriculture as an orphanage for African American youth, and now strives to honor that legacy.

02

In addition to honoring the legacy of the land, MICDC strives to educate and inspire young members of the community to engage in agricultural enterprises and to increase community food security.

03

Each community farm project will look different based on the goals. When the focus is education, more community growing space and classes need to be built into the structure and plans, as compared to if it is solely a business incubator for farmers with farming experience. Proximity to town is important to consider if there is a goal of community members engaging with the farm regularly.

04

Working with county departments and those with formalized power in the community will take time, but that can be beneficial with partnerships and funding support when you advocate for the benefit of the community through the projects' actualization.

05

Starting with big dreams of how the project will look overtime can be a guiding vision. Smaller benchmarks keep things moving as the structures and pieces are built to support the full vision. Examples may include smaller projects that include community participation, educational classes, and more.



W.C. BREEZE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FARM

A place where aspiring farmers can grow.



Structure	Owned by North Carolina State University
Funding	Limited funding by the county
Max Number of Farmers	4
Number of Staff	1 Part-Time Farm Manager
Total Size	270 total acres, 5 for the incubator
Plot Size Rentals	Fractions of an acre up to several acres
Rental Price	\$500/year/acre
Time Limit	No formal limit, temporary occupancy
Scope of Operation	No noxious or invasive species, annuals, and small perennials, animal production allowed
Year Established	2008

BREEZE INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

Staff capacity is important to consider not only in the start-up stages of incubators but also when planning for the long term. Depending on the size of the land, maintenance outside of the incubator farm plots will need care and farm equipment may often require staff maintenance.

02

When planning funding sources, remember to include how those programs and funding channels will be promoted and marketed and who will be responsible for maintaining those in the long-term. Since most incubator programs require support from other programs and sources, building that structure into the setup is critical.

03

A committee that can vet applicants through a selection process is helpful when there is limited staff. It also creates support externally for educating, mentoring, and increasing the overall impact of the incubator program.

04

Creative partnerships for program support depending on the mission can bring attention and awareness to the program. For larger areas of land, row crops, and research plots are another option for diversifying the types of farm projects taking place on the farm.

05

Setting expectations for equipment maintenance and usage in the user agreement is strongly recommended. Understanding and having clear distinctions between the tools and infrastructure that are community-utilized and what those specifications look like is important with multiple farmers sharing space and equipment. Having a budget for maintenance and updates is important.



PHOTOS TAKEN DURING FARM VISIT

TRANSPLANTING TRADITIONS COMMUNITY FARM

To uplift food sovereignty in the refugee community through access to land, education and opportunities for refugee farmers to address community food insecurity and the barriers they face in reaching their dreams of farming.



Structure	501(c)(3) non-profit
Funding	Mostly grant funded
Max Number of Farmers	15 farm businesses
Number of Staff	7 Full-Time and 3 Part-Time Employees
Total Size	8 acres
Plot Size Rentals	Plots vary in size, can grow over time and depends on business size
Rental Price	Farmers pay some rent - goal of charging a % of income
Time Limit	No time limit
Scope of Operation	Not certified organic but farmers are required to use organic practices.
Year Established	2010



TTCF INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

Working other jobs in addition to farming on the incubator is common, similar to many small-scale farms where farm families hold multiple jobs off-farm.

02

When working with marginalized communities, such as refugees, additional support for navigating loans and other components of land access beyond the incubator is required. It is also important to understand the motivations and cultural considerations of the farmers and to honor the design, implementation, and continued staff approach according to the farmers.

03

Developing product consistency and familiarity with seasons and crop cycles allows farmers to navigate more advanced sales channels such as CSA programs through incubator farms.

04

Joint marketing and sales amongst farmers can assist farmers who are integrating into the community and may not be as familiar with market channels in the area. Developing these and assisting farmers with navigating and setting up sales channels as a part of the regular educational offerings is recommended.

05

Consistent gatherings with both educational and community-building components help create a cohesive and consistent community aspect of the farm. This provides regular training and continuing educational opportunities that can be offered by farm staff and more experienced farmers.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TRANSPLANTING TRADITIONS

THE VET FARM OF NC, INC.

Giving Veterans a new mission and America a new farmer.



Structure Privately Owned, 501(c)(3) non-profit

Funding Grant Funded

Max Number of Farmers 10

Number of Staff 1 Full-Time and 2 Part-Time Employees

Total Size 53 acres

Plot Size Rentals Varies

Rental Price Free

Time Limit 3 to 6 months

Scope of Operation The Vet Farm of NC, Inc. is more of a training program than a typical incubator farm. It is a free program created for veterans, spouses, and active duty military with vegetable, hydroponic, livestock, poultry, and greenhouse production.

Year Established 2015



VET FARM INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

The Vet Farm of NC is an education-based incubator, working with veterans and family members of veterans so their format, structure, and transition plan looks different than a “typical” incubator.

02

The format of the farm consists of a two-month curriculum followed by more in-depth instruction and student-led projects that are completed from start to finish with another farmer over the time frame of about two to three months. Peer support and networking through mentorship are especially impactful for veterans who are transitioning into farming while also adjusting to civilian life.

03

Students participate in a mock interview with Farm Credit to share their business plans and the end goal of the farm program is for students to find land and continue their farming journeys. Aside from grants funding the program, students sell through the farm to help support the program.

04

The farm is part of a network of veterans that allows them to borrow equipment at a very reduced cost. Equipment is available to students and the farm maintains the equipment as needed.

05

Networking with other agencies to provide resources for farmers based on their unique needs for transition off the farm can help meet farmers where they are and set them up for future success and business development.



GOOD HOPE FARM

Supporting farmers, preserving history, and connecting community to local food.



Structure	Partnership between the Town of Cary and a collaborative effort of 4 non-profits
Funding	Mostly grant funded
Max Number of Farmers	Up to 25
Number of Staff	1 Full-Time Employee
Total Size	31 acres
Plot Size Rentals	1/4 acre up to 2 acres
Rental Price	1/4 acre: \$800/year and 1/2 acre: \$1800/year with a tiered system based on terrain and proximities to amenities
Time Limit	One year renewable leases
Scope of Operation	Not certified but farmers are required to use organic products.
Year Established	2016

GOOD HOPE INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

01

Hosting training on the safety and operation of equipment use, as well as a period of monitoring farmer use, can be helpful if equipment use, especially larger/motorized equipment, is included as a part of the agreement with farmers. This can ensure farmer safety and proper use of the equipment to help prevent injuries and/or damage/repairs.

02

Success looks different for every farmer. Allowing farmers to determine when they feel their business is ready to exist on their own helps encourage autonomy. This can include the production processes, market development, and record-keeping components of managing their farm businesses. Having on-site employees who can assist in troubleshooting is a benefit of the incubator structure.

03

Starting with a more bare-bones incubator program can work as long as continued funding and support expands offerings over time. By having various plot sizes and infrastructure available for farmers, a variety of start-up options for growers means meeting the needs of diverse farming operations.

04

A volunteer board with a subcommittee that is responsible for the majority of the decision-making, such as programmatic decisions and reviewing/accepting farmer applications can streamline processes and include the organizing entity in processes without overwhelming the program staff.

05

Having a thorough process for renting plots can help ensure farmers are a good match for the incubator. Good Hope has potential farmers visit and/or volunteer at the farm, apply formally, interview, submit a business plan, and go through a reference check followed by a recommendation from the Project Manager and then final approval from the board's subcommittee.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOD HOPE FARM



THEMES

01

Farmer Experience

Some incubators are suited for those who already have some growing experience, whereas others have more capacity to help aspiring farmers get initial farming experience.

02

Education

Consider the types of educational offerings you can provide the farmers through workshops and classes or simply troubleshooting field issues. Note that this will require paid staff to be on-call.

03

Agreements

A vetting process (application, references, and committee reviews) and user or lease arrangements are highly encouraged to protect both farms and farmers utilizing the structure. Liability insurance coverage is necessary as well.

04

Funding

Depending on the management structure, overhead and infrastructure maintenance is usually not covered by the farmer fees. Formal management and staff on-site were named as critical for success in this model. Diversified revenue streams can help with funding overhead, maintenance, and staff time.

05

Market Channels

Most of the incubator plots are smaller acreage, and are therefore best suited for farmers looking at direct-to-consumer sales. As farmers gain experience they may want to expand and diversify their market channels.

06

Uniqueness

While there are consistencies in foundational components across incubators, each program is situated within an organizational context that impacts the mission, vision, farmer audience, and programmatic implementation uniquely.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTENSION ENGAGEMENT

Cooperative Extension professionals and other agricultural service providers can support farm incubators by offering training and technical assistance to entities looking to start an incubator farm and aspiring farmers in the following ways:

For land owners wanting to support and mentor farmers

- Connect them to funding and agricultural service providers (i.e. county planners, community college business programs, grant programs, land conservancy programs, etc.).
- Provide support with educational programming and technical assistance for farmers at an incubator farm.

For producers considering an incubator program

- Connect them to incubators or landowners offering land access.
- Provide technical assistance and support with navigating the various components (i.e. soil samples, crop planning, land assessments, connecting to resources, food safety, etc.).

Questions & Considerations when considering an incubator model

- Clearly define the vision and goals of the incubator.
- Will the incubator offer education to beginning farmers, youth, community, etc. in addition to the land access?
- What experience level do farmers need to have to participate in the incubator?
- What resources, infrastructural support, financial support, and social/human support would participants have access to?
- Who will be involved in decision-making? Clearly define roles for those involved.
- Who will be responsible for the day-to-day decisions and maintenance of the property?
- Items to have in place:
 - Lease Agreements (see Appendix A)
 - Liability insurance for incubator farm program and farmer(s)
 - Sustainable funding plan
 - Community support/engagement and awareness of the project and how to be involved



Thank you to the farm managers/owners who allowed us to interview and tour their incubator programs and all others who contributed to this effort. We'd also like to thank the NC Cooperative Extension Local Food Program Team for funding this project.

All information was gathered in 2023 and 2024. Contact each farm directly for up-to-date information. As time continues we expect North Carolina will be home to even more incubator programs as they emerge across the state to assist farmers in overcoming the challenges and barriers around land access. The NC State Extension Local Food Program website houses a list of incubator programs.

If you have questions about this project or incubator programs, or if you know of additional incubator programs that should be included on the Local Food Program website, email info@ncfarmlink.org.

Appendix to follow.

APPENDIX

Lease Example

LIST SPECIFICS THAT LEASEES WILL HAVE ACCESS TO

All LESSEES are required to hold a Commercial Liability Insurance policy.

The program fee of \$_____ must be paid in full upon entering the program. All costs not included in the program's registration fee are the responsibility of the Incubator Farmer.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, COUNTY OF _____ AGREEMENT OF LEASE

This AGREEMENT OF LEASE made and entered into this 1st day of January, 2023 by and between _____ hereinafter referred to as the LESSOR, and _____, hereinafter referred to as the LESSEE.

WITNESSETH:

That in consideration of the rents, covenants, and conditions hereinafter stipulated to be paid and performed by and between the two parties, the LESSOR does lease to the LESSEE as described below:

1. LEASED PREMISES: Specifics of property/acreage/plot that is leased.

Shared Facilities: The LESSEE is entitled to shared use of the greenhouse, the washing/packing area, and coolbot. These facilities will be shared equally with registered IF LESSEES.

2. PRIOR LEASES: Any and all prior leases between the LESSOR and the LESSEE are considered null and void upon signing of this lease.

3. TERM: The term of this Lease shall be for 12 months, beginning on _____ and ending on _____.

4. RENEWAL: The LESSEE's intention to either renew or discontinue this lease beyond the time period covered must be made with three month's written notice, and a new executed agreement with provisions of the renewed lease will be required. If intent to not renew or no intent is given, The LESSOR reserves the right to lease the land to others and access the land for purposes of showing the property to potential future LESSEES.

Appendix: Lease Example

5. PAYMENT: Base payment shall be \$xx annually. Payment is due at lease signing and shall be paid to LESSOR without set-off or deduction and made payable to: _____

If any payment is returned for non-sufficient funds or because LESSEE stops payment, then, after that, (i) LESSOR may, in writing, require LESSEE to pay Rent in cash (ii) all future Rent shall be paid by money order or cashier's check.

6. INSURANCE: The LESSOR requires the LESSEE to provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance covering the LESSEE at a minimum of \$1M/occurrence for damages to persons and property that may arise. This policy must list the incubator farm as an additional insured party. LESSEE shall accept full responsibility for damages not covered by the LESSEE's insurance policy.

A commercial liability policy is a necessary protection for anyone selling food to be consumed by the general public and should be considered a fixed cost of your farm business.

7. USE: LESSEE shall use the Leased Premises only for the organic propagation and cultivation of crops. LESSEE covenants that the Leased Premises shall be used only and exclusively for lawful purposes and commits to only law-abiding actions. Premises may not be used as storage space for items not directly related to the LESSEE'S farming activities, or activities or used to generate income in a way other than farming. The leased land is to be used solely for purposes of farming with organic methods and may not be used as storage space for items not directly related to the LESSEE's farming activities or used to generate income in a way other than organic farming. LESSEES are not permitted to host events or official tours without permission. Any illegal activity conducted on the premises is considered a breach of this agreement. LESSEE agrees to practice organic farming methods, and manage their plots with OMRI-approved inputs, and honor all organic certification guidelines. Farming, with the long-term health of the land, is a priority, thus all who sign this contract are pledging to manage their IF plot organically or pay a \$1,500 penalty for not doing so.

8. COMPOSTING:

9. EQUIPMENT:

10. FUEL: Tractor fuel is the responsibility of each IF LESSEE using the tractor.

Appendix: Lease Example

11. INDEMNIFICATION: LESSEE shall indemnify and defend LESSOR from any and all claims, liability, damages, expense or loss, including, but not limited to, legal fees arising out of any activity on the demised premises by LESSEE, their agents or invitees, or resulting from LESSEE's failure to comply with any terms of this Lease. The LESSOR shall not be liable for any damage to either person or property sustained by the LESSEE or by any third party arising in any way out of LESSEE's use, operation, occupancy on the premises, or by the sale or distribution of any product manufactured on the premises.

12. ASSIGNMENT, SUBLETTING, OR LICENSING: LESSEE shall not, without consent of LESSOR, transfer or assign this Lease in whole or in part, or sublet or license the whole or any part of the Leased Premises, or permit any other persons or entity to occupy the same. LESSOR may elect to consent or withhold consent.

13. AMENDMENTS AND ALTERATIONS: Amendments and alterations to this lease shall be in writing and shall be signed by both the LESSEE and the LESSOR.

14. RIGHT OF ENTRY: The LESSOR, as well as agents and employees reserve the right to enter the farm at any reasonable time to a) consult with the LESSEE; b) make repairs, improvements, and inspections, c) tour interested visitors and potential IF LESSEES.

15. DEFAULT: Default of this lease agreement occurs when the LESSEE does not pay rent as outlined in section "4. Payment", or the LESSEE violates any other covenant of the lease. Default of the lease agreement constitutes grounds for removal from the premises. LESSEE must correct any breach of this agreement within 14 days after receiving written notice of the same from the LESSOR. If more than 14 days pass without corrective action taken, The LESSOR may terminate this agreement, and take any action necessary to remove the LESSEE's property and lease the land to others.

Suggested to include in addition to what is provided here:

- Mission and overview of the organization and the role of the incubator program
- Site map with specifics and photos for where plots will be
- Signature page for the lease
- Lessee information page for farmers to fill in with their information and their business plans