The Farm at the Arb Apprenticeship is offered each year from February to October. Applications are due in the fall.

This hands-on, technical training in vegetable growing is designed for beginning growers, skilled workers and career changes. Are you looking to pursue a career in sustainable food production for sale and community health? The USDA defines a beginning farmer as someone who has ten years of experience or less - The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum helps individuals begin or continue their career as food system leaders.

The program is offered in collaboration with the University of Minnesota Department of Horticultural Sciences and Extension. Apprentices receive a combination of classroom, lab and field experience. This includes a 14 week paid work experience at the Arboretum and partnering farms.

**Core Curriculum**

The focus is on annual vegetable production, using a hands-on, plain language, and team-focused approach. Coursework includes greenhouse and raised-bed production, soil science, plant healthcare, food safety, and more throughout the program. Instructors are UMN educators and professional guest speakers who have established horticultural careers and deep experience in particular aspects of sustainable growing and marketing.

Curriculum components are adapted from UMN Extension Master Gardener and Agricultural Production resources, Growing for Market trade publications, and coursework from the UMN Horticultural Sciences Department.

**Priorities and Environmental Literacy**

Horticulture skills can be used to promote access to nature, local food, plant and pollinator diversity, healthy soil, and clean water. They enable us to create resilient landscapes that are adapted to our climate. We encourage participants to join a community of practice, whose mission is to advance horticultural knowledge while growing for defined markets.

For more information visit: [https://arb.umn.edu/learn/farmapprenticeship](https://arb.umn.edu/learn/farmapprenticeship)
Thank you for your interest in the Farm at the Arb Apprenticeship program. We are excited to announce the 2024 recruitment process.

1. Complete the following interest form:  

   Scan QR code or visit: 
   https://z.umn.edu/FarmArbAP

2. Attend one mandatory two-hour Information Session  
   (Details will be emailed prior to the event)

3. Attend one mandatory three-hour Interview Day at  
   the Farm at the Arb in Chaska:  
   (Sign up at Information Session)

Please feel free to reach out with any questions. We look forward to meeting you at an information session.

The University of Minnesota recognizes and values the importance of diversity and inclusion in enriching the employment experience of its employees and in supporting the academic mission. The University is committed to attracting and retaining employees with varying identities and backgrounds.

The University of Minnesota provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. To learn more about diversity at the U:  http://diversity.umn.edu
Spring Schedule  
February 5 - May 26  
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.  Monday  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  Tuesday and Wednesday  

Paid Work Experience  
May 28 - September 1  
14 weeks at partnering farm sites  

Fall Schedule  
September 3 - October 10  
9 a.m.-12 p.m.  Monday and Thursday  
8-12 a.m.  Tuesday and Wednesday  

Program Overview: 450 Classroom Hours, up to 725 Paid Hours  
In the spring semester, the program focuses on the foundations of sustainable agriculture:  
horticultural plant science, soil fertility, pest management, greenhouse production, and post-  
harvest handling techniques. The program also includes exposure to specialty topics by guest  
lecturers. Participants also explore environmentalism and community building in group activities  
and discussions. The program structure is made of lectures, lab activities, and fieldwork to  
develop an employable and problem-solving grower with applicable skills to the industry.  

During the summer paid work experience, participants will work a minimum of 24 hours per week  
on a commercial vegetable farm or garden. This intensive work experience applies concepts  
learned in the spring semester. While on internship, the participant must complete an  
independent pest and disease management project, S.M.A.R.T goals, and a detailed notebook on  
farm management.  

After the summer, the participant creates a crop plan for the following year. The participant  
develops this plan in collaboration with a partner, and presents the plan in a public forum.  
Participants continue field work at farm sites, completing their skill sets for the program. Finally,  
students create an up-to-date resume, a horticulture cover letter, and participate in a mock  
horticulture job interview.
SPRING SCHEDULE

Week 1: Intro to Farm at the Arb Program; Intro to Sustainable Farming
Week 2: General Botany: Plant Parts and Processes; Fundamentals of Environmental Literacy and Water
Week 3: Greenhouse Production: Concepts, Seeding; Fundamentals: Health, Food and Agriculture
Week 4: General Botany: Plant Reproduction and Seeds; Fundamentals: Social Entrepreneurship and Community Organizing
Week 5: Greenhouse Production; Water in Agriculture; Perennials Overview; Food Safety, Harvest and Market Training
Weeks 6-8: Outdoor Production: Site Planning, Cropping Systems, Crop Specific Resources, Tilling, Transplanting, Building and Other Techniques
Week 9: Soil Physical Properties; Soil in marginal areas: Practicalities, Land Access, and site maintenance
Week 10: Compost & Soil Ecology
Week 11: Soil Chemical Properties; Reading Soil and Compost Reports; Identifying Plant Deficiencies
Week 12: Plant Health Care: Integrated Pest Management; Insect Pests and Beneficial Insects
Week 13: Plant Health Care: Managing Plant Pathogens
Week 14: Ecological Weed Management; GAPS Training; Small Farm Food Safety
Week 15: Harvest Efficiency and Post-Harvest Handling Revisited; Intro to Beekeeping
Week 16: Farm and Market Garden Reports;

SUMMER AND FALL

Weeks 17-30: Full time, paid work experience at Landscape Arboretum or partner farm site. IPM assignment: Complete weekly IPM assessment and logging of a particular field/crop/pest.

Weeks 31-36: Crop Planning and internship presentations, Employability workshops, and Field Days

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