An online Course with the Organic Seed Alliance

Organic Seed Production

April 2022 - October 2022

A six-month certificate program combining hands-on, farm-based independent study with online learning.

Intern Cohort Program Structure:

- **Online Course:**
  - Six modules correspond to six months of planning, growing, and harvesting
  - The course runs from approximately April 15 - October 30 (may shift slightly, slightly late starts are ok)
  - Each module features:
    - Pre-recorded videos on course topics
    - Supplemental reading material with links to additional resources
    - A short quiz, prompt or assignment to enhance learning
  - Live Meetings:
    - Two 1-1.5 hour-long group discussions per month on course materials, assignments, and on-farm activities
    - Optional office hours with instructors to receive support and feedback
  - Course Projects
    - Season Crop Tracking Project: Crop Production Report and Enterprise Budget, or another project developed by intern and host and proposed to course moderators
  - Expected workload: 1-2 hours per week independent study plus 2-3 hours per month of live meetings

- **On-Farm Mentorship:** Field-based training at a host site
  - Work together with intern host, employer or mentor to outline expectations
  - Complete at least five months of on-farm work, according to terms agreed between parties
  - The on-farm experience is meant to ground students in the realities of seed production, and to provide the experiential learning that is not possible in an online course.

Program Objectives

1. Cultivate a network of seed growers committed to educating the next generation of seed farmers and advocates
2. Provide beginning seed farmers with real-world experience in seed production, seed business and marketing, and responsible stewardship of seeds.
3. Help alleviate the ongoing shortage of organic seed
4. Provide individualized learning opportunities to support development of professional and personal paths in seed work.

Curriculum

Course requirements

1. Watch videos and complete reading on module topics (2 hours per month)
2. Complete the module assignment: one post and one comment on a post for each module (1.5 hours per month)
3. Attend monthly live discussion groups (2-3 hours per month)
4. Complete season long activity such as a crop production report (including regular photo uploads)(2 hours per month)
5. Complete program evaluation(s) (.5 hr per month)

Course Overview | Schedule of Live e-Meetings

Google Calendar for our course
Live session Zoom Room

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>New modules released on Mondays of 1st week of the month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Course orientation &amp; welcome:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Suggested Video: Crop Reproductive Biology</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Office hours: technical support, getting set up in the course</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Seed Crop Planning and Management:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Risk mitigation through careful field planning and management</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Variety Trialing, Selection and Improvement:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Introduction to trial design, data management, selection and on-farm plant breeding</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Seed Harvest and Cleaning:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Seed Harvest and Cleaning:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Seed Sovereignty and Intellectual Property:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Seed Growers Livelihoods:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This work is supported by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program Award #2019-49400-30069 from the USDA-NIFA.