

Application Guidelines

Intro to the scheme

The mentoring programme will run for nine months, from March - November 2020. Each mentee will be matched with a mentor and placed into a small group. The mentee will receive 24 hours of group mentoring in this group, plus an additional 6 hours of one-on-one mentoring with the mentor. The aim is that the group mentoring sessions will where possible take place face-to-face, moving between different mentees/the mentors farm (as appropriate), but the mentee can decide if they want their one-on-one hours to be face-to-face or over the phone.

The scheme will also include a day-long gathering where all the mentors and mentees will gather at the start of the scheme - this is an opportunity for the groups to meet face to face for the first time, but also to meet with the other mentees and mentors.

We will also be running a series of webinars during the programme that will aim to cover some of the core issues such as bookkeeping and planning permission.

Please note that this is a pilot programme - the funding we have received is very limited and as a result we will not be able to include everyone in the scheme. The aim of this two year pilot is to leverage long term support for such a programme and be able to roll it out more widely.

What is mentoring?

The mentoring we are offering aims to be a supportive learning relationship between an established farmer who shares knowledge, experience and wisdom with a new entrant farmer who is ready and willing to benefit from this exchange, with the aim of helping them establish and build a viable business.

Mentoring is different to simply being given advice. The mentor is not there to provide 'the answers', but to guide the mentee towards 'the answer' that is right for them. It's about motivating and empowering the other person to identify their own issues and goals, and helping them to find ways of resolving or reaching them - not by doing it for them, or expecting them to 'do it the way I did', but by understanding and respecting different ways of working.

Eligibility criteria

The programme is open to people across the UK who have been running a farming operation (or who have a decision making role in a farming operation) for less than five years. The scheme is only open to people who already have a business up and running, not those who are still in the planning stages. Under the limits of the resources we have with this

pilot programme, this is where we feel that the mentoring support can be most impactful. Please note that it is a two year pilot programme and so there will be a second round of mentoring being offered in 2021.

The programme is open to people across all different farming sectors and we encourage people from different backgrounds and sectors to apply.

The mentoring programme is open to all, but a higher fee (£200 rather than £150) is payable if you are not a member of any of the partner organisations (Landworkers' Alliance, Organic Growers Alliance, CSA Network UK, Ecological Land Coop)

Commitment

If accepted on to the scheme, you are committing to:

- Participating in 24 hours of group mentoring hours plus 6 one-on-one hours over the course of the 9 month programme
- Attending a Group Gathering day in March 2020.
- Filling in pre-mentoring and evaluation surveys to help us capture data on the survey
- Before the programme starts: submitting your previous year's financial accounts, information about the area of land in production, and a calculation of the volume of food produced during the previous year
- After the programme ends: submitting your end of year financial accounts, information about the area of land in production, and a calculation of the volume of food produced during the year
- Paying a fee of £150 to be part of the programme (£200 if not a member of any of the partner organisations).

Timeline

Here is a proposed timeline for the scheme:

- Nov - Dec 2019 : Applications open
- Jan 2020 : Applications considered and successful applicants notified
- Feb 2020 : Mentees matched with Mentors. Mentees fill in pre-mentoring survey and submit required paperwork
- Mar 2020 : Group Gathering
- Mar - Nov 2020 : Mentoring scheme runs
- Nov 2020 : Mentees fill in evaluation survey