



Ignatius Jesuit Centre

A Place of Peace

Ignatius Farm

2017 Request for Proposals – Farm land and farm house rental

Seeking entrepreneurs to locate sustainable agricultural enterprises at Ignatius Farm:

Specialty area - open

Purpose of the RFP

Ignatius Farm, an integral part of the Ignatius Jesuit Centre, grows organic vegetables and strawberries for Community Shared Agriculture members, the Milton Farmers Market, and local businesses. Crops are certified organic through EcoCert Canada. The farm also includes many cover cropped acres, 3 acres of Community Gardens, and approximately 175 acres of cropland rented to small organic farm businesses and researchers.

A diversity of agricultural enterprises located on the IJC lands has demonstrated synergies and increased entrepreneurial capacity. This RFP aims to find entrepreneurial individuals, groups, or organizations to implement new models of ecological agriculture at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre who will rent available acreages and/or the farm house.

Background

Climate change presents a need to enhance farm resilience to extreme weather events. Simultaneously, increased demand for local and organic food invites innovative and financially viable approaches to improve Ontario's food security. Ecological, social, and financial sustainability are supported through diverse organic agricultural enterprises and serve the Ignatius Jesuit Centre's Program Objectives:

- To foster an ecological way of life, for the healing of the world
- Nurture a deeper spirituality in people, leading to inner freedom
- Promote the production of local sustainable food
- Provide a welcoming space for individual & communal discernment, and education

Ignatius Farm is a regional leader in organic agriculture, specializing in organic vegetable production. Annually, approximately 2000 people visit, consult with, and participate in Ignatius Farm projects. Ignatius Farm is community-oriented, with well-established programs in CSA, Community Gardens, Organic Agriculture Internships, and volunteering. Its sandy-loam soils are known for producing great-tasting crops.

Three farmland sites are open for proposals:

- a) Fields #126 'Farmhouse Well' (4 acres), and #127 ' Farmhouse North' (5.1 acres): in hay since 2013; moderate slope towards woodland/wetland on west side of #127; proximate to Farm house and barn
- b) Field #128, 'Farmhouse barn pasture' (2.5 acres) in fallow since 2014 - available with rental of Farmhouse Barn lower animal pens, and potential rental of upper mow section
- c) Fields # 114 A & B 'Sleepy Hollow A & B' (2.5 & 6.3 acres): in hay since 2014; gently sloping field shaped by the contours of the land. Nestled between woodlands and adjacent rented fields. May be subdivided into existing parcels for complementary proposals.



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Farm infrastructures open for proposals:

- a) Farm house: 5 bedrooms, large kitchen and living room, 1 and a half bathrooms, sunporch, mudroom, shed, spacious yard; potential kitchen garden can be added to rental
- b) Farmhouse Barn: lower level with animal pens; west section of mow available for storage; water and minimal electricity usage included

Ignatius Farm supports research, production, and outreach in integrated and organic cropping systems. Proposals are welcomed for mixed cropping and livestock systems, and the use of sites for a combination of enterprises, research, education and outreach programs.

Parameters

Ignatius Farm is seeking proposals from individuals, groups or organizations to locate their businesses or programs within the designated lands.

Complementary proposals that Ignatius Farm is especially interested in:

- Organic/ecological crops and livestock. These may marketed in part to existing Ignatius Farm CSA members & community gardeners. Organic certification is optional; following the Canadian Organic Standard is required.
- Seed-saving enterprises
- Organic or ecological small fruit and berry production, marketed in part to Ignatius Farm CSA membership and Community Gardeners (organic certification optional; following the Canadian Organic Standard is required)
- Forest gardening/permaculture/alley cropping – diverse annual and perennial cropping
- Research, education, and outreach programs involving any of the above forms of production

Details:

- Ignatius Farm currently rents field crop lands without amenities at \$85/acre per growing season. Lands with access to established amenities (water) start at \$250/acre per annum. Rates are for non-prepared lands.
- Tenancy terms begin November 1 or April 1, and conclude Oct 31.
- Farmland leases start with 3-year terms.
- Ignatius Farm does not supply equipment for use by farm tenants.
- Rental of barn space may be negotiated along with a farmland lease at \$5/sq.ft. per annum.
- Farmhouse rental starts at \$1500/month. Utilities are additional.
- New water access is limited and will be negotiated based on environmental impact, capital investment from the tenant for access, installation of required backflow protection, water meters, lines etc... in addition to the tenant's own distribution/irrigation system.



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RFP Evaluation Process and Assessment Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by the Ignatius Farm advisors. Evaluation criteria include:

- Fit with the Ignatius Jesuit Centre Program Objectives; synergy with current and planned Ignatius Farm enterprises
- Expertise and experience of the applicant
- Solid production/research/education plan relevant to site
- Integration of triple bottom line strategies – for Ecological, Economic, and Social benefits
- Cover crop/ground cover, and soil improvement plan complementary to production plan
- Limited water use needs
- Tenancy timeline
- Meets organic standards

Application Process

Proposals are to be submitted to Ignatius Farm by **February 1, 2017**. The proposal is a basic business or research plan, five pages or less, and should include:

- Full contact information of lead applicant: first & last name, business or organization name, postal address, email & phone, website if available
- Objectives of the business
- Summary: proposed use of lands
- Acreage required and requested plot(s) or field conditions
- Methods: overview of activities with timelines
- Crop List and/or Livestock List with stocking rates and shelter plans
- Inputs: fertility, pest management, structures & their fit with organic standard
- Infrastructure: storage, water and electrical requirements and plans
- Equipment and resources: itemization of current assets and intended capacity creation (purchase/hire/other)
- Intended markets
- Collaborations/partnerships: existing and potential
- Expertise & experience – a brief description for lead applicant and any core team members, along with 2 references (names, association, phone, email)

RFP Deadline

The deadline for submitting a proposal is **February 1, 2017**.

Proposals should be addressed to:

Heather Lekx, Farm Manager
Ignatius Jesuit Centre
5420 Highway 6 North, Guelph, ON N1H 6J2

Proposals must be sent electronically in Word or PDF format to farmmanager@ignatiusguelph.ca.

Inquiries may be directed via [email](#) or to 519.824.1250 x243. The Farm Manager is available for up to 1 hour of consultation or site visit per proposal in advance of submission.