



Ignatius Jesuit Centre
A Place of Peace

Ignatius Farm

2022 Request for Proposals – Farmland Rentals

Seeking entrepreneurs to locate their ecological agricultural enterprises at Ignatius Farm

Submit by January 20, 2022

Purpose of the RFP

A diversity of agricultural enterprises located on the IJC lands has demonstrated synergies for all involved. In the patchwork of Ignatius Farm fields, we address pressing issues: climate change, farm resilience, regional and individual food insecurity, rural-urban divisions, new farmer training, equitable land access, and access to local, organic food.

This RFP is seeking entrepreneurial individuals, groups, or organizations to rent available acreages to implement complementary ecological or regenerative agriculture projects at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre.

The Ignatius Jesuit Centre (IJC) aspires to be an equitable and inclusive place where a diversity of life experiences, identities and perspectives work together. IJC encourages applicants from all walks of life, especially those from communities that have been historically excluded from farming or access to farmland.

For 2022, a few small fields of 5 acres or less, and ¼ acre sections are available for rent.

Background

The Ignatius Jesuit Centre (IJC) is a not for profit charity situated on 600 acres of woodlands, wetlands and farmland just outside of Guelph Ontario. IJC welcomes all and is home to Loyola House Retreats & Ignatian Training, Ignatius Farm and the Ignatius Old-Growth Forest. The Mission of the Ignatius Jesuit Centre is to cultivate spiritual growth and ecological engagement.

Ignatius Farm is a regional leader in organic farming, focused on community and training. The farm grows certified organic produce (10+ acres) for Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) members, the Milton Farmers' Market, local businesses and service agencies. Farm programs include Community Gardens (3.5 acres), Acreage Rentals (175 acres), Internships and farmer training courses, working shares & volunteer opportunities, and seasonal community events. A good portion of the land is dedicated to cover crops and soil building every year. The Guelph Loam and Sandy-Loam soils are known for producing great-tasting crops. Annually, over 2000 people visit, consult with, and participate directly with Ignatius Farm projects.

Acreage Rentals are available to individuals, groups and organizations to raise food (plant and/or animal), feed, fibre, trees, and plant products. Businesses may be for-profit, social enterprise, education, and/or research. Prospective candidates already have some experience in the proposed enterprise(s). They have a foundation of skills, knowledge and financing so that they are capable of caring for the entire field area(s) they seek to rent – both for production and soil care. Proposals are welcome for mixed cropping and livestock systems, and the use of sites for a combination of enterprises.

Individuals who are still building their foundation of skills, knowledge and financing may benefit from the various Ignatius Farm opportunities for learning, before proposing a field rental: Farm internships, the New Farmer Training program or individual workshops offered in collaboration with EFAO and Everdale, working shares (volunteer weekly with the farm team and receive a CSA share), or testing growing ideas in a Community Garden plot where water and field preparation is taken care of. Seasonal hires also available.

Proposals of interest

Proposals are invited for enterprises, research, education, and service projects in ecological/regenerative agriculture, (re-)indigenization work, food security. Any complementary proposal is welcome. Examples include:

- Food, fiber crops or livestock to be marketed in part to existing Ignatius Farm community and clients;
- Growing crops for inclusion in Ignatius Farm CSA shares
- Livestock farmer who can supply manures, composts, and/or grazing complementary with current enterprises
- Seed-saving, breeding & seed keeper work
- Forest gardens, alley cropping, silvopasture or permaculture projects; plant nurseries
- Christmas tree farm
- Farmer utilizing draft power (oxen or horse) who could demonstrate, and provide custom draft work for others
- Teaching plots

Land Rental Parameters

1. Organic certification of products is optional; following the Canadian Organic Standard is required.
2. Farmland tenancy begins April or May 1.
3. Proposals received after January 20 will be considered in late summer.
4. Tenants generally begin with a 3-year lease, with potential for renewal. Rental rates increase at the 3-year mark.
5. Basic annual field rent is for non-prepared lands with no amenities or structures:
 - \$95/acre for >75 acres
 - \$115/acre <75 acres
6. Annual rent for plots of 1 acre or less, proximate to water access or other desirable infrastructure is \$150/annum
7. Field edge parking and roadway fee is \$125/annum
8. Barn and storage rental space is available at \$5/ ft² per annum. This is not adjacent to the rented fields.
9. Water: Ignatius Farm is rural - there is no city water hydrant to connect to.
 - a. Most fields do not have water access and are best for crops with low water needs and water self-sufficiency. Fields adjacent to gravel roads can receive water truck delivery to containers during dry conditions.
 - b. Ignatius Farm is fundraising for and digging an irrigation well to service current enterprises and several ¼ acre field parcels for small plot agriculture enterprises needing water. Current water access fee is \$150/annum and an additional \$3/m³ beyond 50m³ based on annual usage. Rates subject to change based on well development costs. Initial water hook-up fee TBD.
 - c. Tenants are responsible for their water storage and distribution
10. Livestock farmers are responsible for secure fencing of their livestock.
11. Construction of structures may be permitted after approval of design and placement. The tenant must follow building permitting requirements.
12. Ignatius Farm does NOT provide equipment for use by tenants.

Fields available:

- a) Farmhouse barn pasture, 2.5 acres. In fallow since 2014-2020, cattle pasture 2021; complementary rental of adjacent Farmhouse Barn lower animal pens, and an upper mow section is available
- b) 'Sleepy Hollow B', 5-acre field section shaped by the contours of the land, in hay since 2014, cattle pasture 2021
- c) Long Field, divided into ¼ acre parcels. Water access is in development during 2022.

Farm infrastructures open for proposals:

- a) Farmhouse Barn: lower level with animal pens; some upper mow sections available for storage; water and minimal electricity usage included
- b) Small areas in shared area of barns

RFP Evaluation

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

- Meets organic standards
- Synergies with the Ignatius Jesuit Centre, with Ignatius Farm activities, and other tenants
- Expertise and experience of the applicant
- Plan is fully thought-out and demonstrates capacity to implement the plan proposed
- Plan is relevant to site
- Integrates ecological, economic, and social benefits
- Soil improvement and water protection plans are integrated into production plans

RFP Deadline & Application Procedures

Submit your proposal by **January 20, 2022**. The proposal is a concise plan, five pages or less, and includes:

- Full contact information of lead applicant: first & last name, business name, postal address, email & phone, website or LinkedIn address if available
- Objectives
- Summary: proposed use of lands
- Acreage required and any limiting conditions
- Activity outline with timelines
- Crop List and/or Livestock List with stocking rates and shelter plans
- Inputs planned: fertility, pest management, structures & their fit with organic standard
- Infrastructure needed: storage, water (weekly volume), electrical (weekly usage)
- Equipment and resources: current assets and intended capacity creation (purchase/hire/other) to meet plan
- Intended markets
- Collaborations/partnerships: existing and potential
- Expertise & experience – a brief description for lead applicant and any core team members
- 2 references (names, association, phone, email)

Proposals must be sent electronically in Word or PDF format by January 20 to the Farm Manager at farmmanager@ignatiusguelph.ca.

Inquiries may be directed via [email](mailto:farmmanager@ignatiusguelph.ca) 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.

Selected candidate(s) will be shown available parcels and an addendum to the initial proposal will be required to clarify outstanding questions. Final approval and preparation of leases occurs over March & April.