



Ignatius Jesuit Centre
A Place of Peace

Ignatius Farm

2023 Request for Proposals – Farmland Rentals

Seeking entrepreneurs to locate their ecological agricultural enterprises at Ignatius Farm

Submit by January 10, 2023

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 seeks entrepreneurial individuals, groups, or organizations to rent available acreages for 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 2023, field parcels of 4 acres or less, and 1/3 acre sections with water access 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 north of Guelph, ON. IJC welcomes all and is home to Loyola House Retreats & Ignatian Training, Ignatius Farm and the Ignatius Old-Growth Forest. The Mission of IJC is to cultivate spiritual growth and ecological engagement.

Ignatius Farm is a regional leader as an organic community training farm. The farm grows certified organic produce (10+ acres) for Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) members, markets, local businesses and service agencies. Programs include Community Gardens (3.5 acres), Acreage Rentals (175 acres), Ignatius Farm New Farmer Training Program, Farm Immersion Internships, Community Orchard, Working Shares & volunteers, and seasonal Community Field Days. A good portion of the land is dedicated to cover crops and soil care for the Guelph loam and sandy-loam soils, capable of producing great-tasting crops. Annually, over 2000 people are directly involved with Ignatius Farm.

Acreage Rentals are available to individuals, groups and organizations to raise food (plant/animal), feed, fibre, trees, and plant products. Sites may include a combination of enterprises, including mixed cropping and livestock.

Businesses may be for-profit, social enterprise, education, and/or research. Prospective candidates have relevant experience in the proposed enterprise(s). They have a foundation of skills, knowledge and financing to capably care for the entire field area(s) they seek to rent – both for production and soil care.

Individuals building their foundation of skills, knowledge and financing may benefit from the various [Ignatius Farm training options](#), before proposing a field rental. Testing ideas in a Community Garden plot where water and field preparation is taken care of has helped numerous entrepreneurs launch. Seasonal hires are 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;
- 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, permaculture projects
- Plant nurseries
- Christmas tree farm
- Farmer utilizing draft power (oxen/horse) who could demonstrate, and provide custom draft work

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 10 will not be reviewed until 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:
 - \$140/acre <75 acres
 - \$105/acre for >75 acres
6. Annual rent for 1/3-1/2 acre plots with water access or other desirable infrastructure: \$200/annum
7. Vehicle & roads fee: \$135/annum (up to 2 vehicles and 500 ft² designated parking area)
8. Barn and storage rental space: \$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 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 recently drilled a well to service current enterprises and several 1/3 – 1/2 -acre field parcels for small plot agriculture enterprises.
 - c. 2023 water access fee: \$175/annum. Annual water usage beyond 50m³ is an additional \$4/m³. Rates subject to change based on costs. Initial water hook-up fee TBD.
 - d. Tenants are responsible for their water storage and distribution.
 - e. Tenants must employ water conservation, source protection, and scheduled use protocols.
10. Livestock farmers are responsible for secure fencing of their livestock.
11. All structures require approval of design, materials and placement before construction or placement on the land. The tenant must follow building permitting requirements.
12. Ignatius Farm does NOT provide equipment for use by tenants.
13. Tenants must hold active insurance for their activities and a policy including the landlord as Additional Insured.

Fields available:

- a) 'Sleepy Hollow 114B', 4-acre parcel. In hay since 2014, cattle pasture 2021
- b) 'Long South 117', two 1/3 acre parcels with water access
- c) 'New Hermitage West, 116B', 1.5-acre parcel. In perennial herbs, fallow & cover crop for 9 years. Buckwheat in 2022.
- d) 'Willows 120', divisible 6-acre parcels. 1990's biomass research plantation of diverse willows & switchgrass now fallow. OBA bee yard is adjacent.
- e) 'Farmhouse barn pasture', 2.5 -acre field. In fallow since 2014-2020, cattle pasture 2021; complementary rental of adjacent Farmhouse Barn lower animal pens, and an upper mow section is available

Farm infrastructures open for proposals:

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

RFP Evaluation

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

- Meets organic standards
- Synergies with the Ignatius Jesuit Centre, 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
- Includes soil improvement and water protection plans

RFP Deadline & Application Procedures

Submit your proposal by **January 10, 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
- 2-3 references (names, association, phone, email)

Proposals must be sent electronically in Word or PDF format by January 10 to the Farm Manager at hlekx@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 final 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.

