



Ignatius Jesuit Centre
A Place of Peace

Ignatius Farm

Small Plot Agriculture Farm Rentals 2025 Request for Proposals

Seeking entrepreneurs to locate their ecological agricultural enterprises at Ignatius Farm

Submit by January 15, 2025

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 2025, proposals will be accepted for rental of the farmhouse, adjacent barn and pasture, field parcels of 6 acres or less, and 1/4 acre sections with water access.

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. Since 2001, Ignatius Farm has grown certified organic produce (up to 10+ acres) for Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) members, markets, local businesses and service agencies, provided Community Gardens (3.5 acres), Acreage Rentals (175 acres), Ignatius Farm New Farmer Training Program (5 years), Farm Immersion Internships, a Community Orchard, Working Shares & volunteer opportunities, 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.

Small Plot Agriculture rentals are available to individuals, groups and organizations to raise food (plant/livestock), 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 large Community Garden plot where water and field preparation is taken care of has helped numerous entrepreneurs launch.

Proposals of interest

Proposals are invited for enterprises, research, education, and service projects in ecological/regenerative agriculture. Any complementary proposal is welcome. Examples include:

- Family or organization seeking farmhouse and adjacent barn and pasture rental invested in the health of the land
- Food, fiber crops or livestock to be marketed in part to existing Ignatius Farm community and clients
- Small herd livestock; may supply manures, composts, and/or rotational grazing with complementary enterprises
- Draft power farmer (oxen/horse) who could demonstrate, and provide custom draft work
- Seed-saving, breeding & seed keeper work
- Forest gardens, alley cropping, silvopasture, permaculture projects
- Plant nurseries
- Indigenous land care
- Food security projects
- Willow collective to care for and utilize the diverse willow plantation for community benefit

Land Rental Parameters

1. Organic certification of products is optional; following the Canadian Organic Standard is required. Tenants must follow Rules and Regulations of use of the land.
2. Farmland tenancy begins April or May 1.
3. Late proposal submissions will be reviewed until the summer.
4. Tenants begin with a 3-year lease, with potential for renewal. Rental rates increase on renewal. See rental rates and fees below
5. Water: Ignatius Farm is rural and dependent on Ignatius Jesuit Centre private wells and hydro to pump it. Our Permit to Take Water is dependent on all water users to employ water conservation, source protection, and follow required protocols
 - 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. The Farm Irrigation Well services several 1/4 – 1/3 -acre parcels with direct metered access. Other parcels can draw at the well hydrants into containers to take to their fields parcel. See fees below, including overage fees for annual use beyond 50m³.
 - c. Tenants are responsible for their own water storage and distribution systems.
6. Livestock farmers are responsible for secure fencing of their livestock.
7. All structures require approval of design, materials and placement before construction or placement on the land. The tenant must follow building permitting requirements.
8. Ignatius Farm does not rent tractors or equipment for use by tenants. Some custom work by Ignatius Farm staff is available with advance scheduling. Hourly fees apply.
9. Tenants must hold active insurance for their activities and a policy including the landowner as Additional Insured.

Annual Rental Rates & Fees

1. Farm Enterprise Fee – for all tenants. Covers one enterprise with ¼ to 1-acre, vehicle access, general communications. \$600

2. Land Rent for additional acres - annual field rent for non-prepared lands with no amenities or structures. \$275/acre
3. Farmhouse – 5 bedrooms, 1.5 bath, sunroom, mudroom, storage shed, yard. \$3,000/month not including utilities
4. Barn and storage rental space: \$5-6/ ft² per annum – varies with location. Minor discount for full building rental.
5. Water Access Fees, subject to change annually:
 - a. Metered access for higher volume, small parcel uses: \$450/year *or*
 - b. Frost Hydrant access: \$350/year
 - c. Annual water usage exceeding 50m³ is an additional \$4.50/m³, invoiced in the fall
6. Additional fees apply for
 - a. Use of field adjacent space for programming, storage etc, \$0.29/sq.ft
 - b. Additional enterprises not signatory to lease, \$350 each
 - c. Additional vehicle access, priced on request
 - d. Custom field work, \$115/hr
 - e. Short term storage, minimum \$50

Fields available:

- a) 'Sleepy Hollow 114B', three 1-acre parcels. In hay since 2014, cattle pasture 2021, mixed uses 2023-2024
- b) 'Long South 117', 1/4 acre parcels with metered water access
- c) 'New Hermitage West, 116B', 4 acres. In perennial herbs, fallow & cover crop for 11 years.
- d) 'Willows 120', 13+ acres in divisible parcels. 1990's biomass research plantation of diverse willows & switchgrass now fallow. OBA bee yard is adjacent.
- e) 'Farmhouse barn pasture', 2.5 acres. In fallow since 2014-2020, cattle pasture 2021; complements rental of adjacent Farmhouse Barn lower animal pens, and upper mow sections available.
- f) 'Farmhouse North 127 + 126 extension' 6.5 acres recently in fallow, previously cover crops, hay

Farm infrastructures open for proposals:

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

RFP Evaluation

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

- Meets organic standards, IJC Rules & Regulations
- 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 15, 2025** as a concise plan, five pages or less, and include:

- a. Full contact information of lead applicant: first & last name, business name, postal address, email & phone, website or LinkedIn address if available
- b. Objectives
- c. Summary: proposed use of lands

- d. Acreage sought and any limiting conditions of land/location
- e. Infrastructure sought: house, livestock housing, storage, water (weekly volume), electrical (weekly usage)
- f. Activity outline with timelines
- g. Crop List and/or Livestock List with stocking rates and shelter plans
- h. Inputs planned: fertility, pest management, structures & their fit with organic standard
- i. Equipment and resources: current assets and intended capacity creation (purchase/hire/other) to meet plan
- j. Intended markets
- k. Collaborations/partnerships: existing and potential
- l. Expertise & experience – a brief description for lead applicant and any core team members
- m. 2-3 references (names, association, phone, email)

Proposals must be sent electronically in Word or PDF format by January 15 to the Farm Manager at farmanager@ignatiusguelph.ca.

Inquiries may be directed via [email](mailto:farmanager@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 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.

