

# Wairarapa Eco Farm CSA Agro-Ecology Course and Internship

## Linking practice with theory

**Are you interested in growing and distributing healthy vegetables and fruits? Do you want to learn about agro-ecology, food sovereignty and sustainable food systems? Are you keen to tap into the knowledge of an experienced and innovative farmer? Or, do you have a desire to learn about the challenges and practicalities of working towards a sustainable, healthy, viable food system that is fair and just for the earth, the consumer and the producer? Then why not join Frank and his whanau on the Wairarapa Eco Farm CSA during our New Zealand spring 2019 or summer 2020!**

### Course and Internship Description

This is an experiential learning program based on agro-ecology and soil quality, the pre-requisites for quality food production with environmental care that lay the foundation for genuine progress/resilience in community development. The program is geared toward people interested in producing food quality and community development.

During the 10-week intensive course and internship program you will be involved in all aspects of our farm and work closely with the team. Typically, Monday to Wednesday's time will be spent practically and is focussed on the gardens and the week's CSA harvest, preparation and distribution. Interns will learn to about greenhouse management, field cultivation, irrigation systems, harvesting, post-harvest handling, distribution, and animal care. To give you an idea of what type of work interns will be doing:

- Field work: includes seeding, transplanting, weeding, thinning, trellising, field prep and harvesting.
- Greenhouse: seeding, thinning, transplanting, watering, and plant care/pest control.
- Wash Station: washing, sorting, packing, labelling all crops
- Distribution: distributing CSA, sales at farmers' markets, CSA logistics.
- Animal care: letting chickens out at sunrise, feeding, watering, collecting eggs and putting in at sun down. Feed and water pigs, set up electrical fence, move paddocks.

Thursday will be class based and divided into two main areas. Firstly, the agro-ecological theory behind our actions on the farm is explained in detail. Over the period of your stay topics such as: the basics of agro-ecology and food quality, soil, plants and animals, and how to (re)design, maintain and increase the throughput of a farming system will be covered. The course endeavours to give you a real understanding of what proper "organics" should be about, i.e. growing quality food the right way and with the right intentions. Secondly, we will introduce to you the ins and outs of this type of direct selling. How to plan and grow for a year-round CSA, structures and organisation, software packages, administration and logistics. You will leave with a proper insight into our CSA and its advantages and disadvantages. This will help you decide what will work best for you.

Friday's are divided up between a half day of your own chosen project work and a half day in the garden. The personal project (you choose what interests you) will give you an opportunity to work

with and learn from a practical situation, giving you the experience of putting the theory into practice and checking out for yourself if it might be something to pursue on your own terms.

Interns work full-time with our team. The typical schedule is 8.30am to 5pm, with a one hour lunch break around noon, and one Sunday a month on animal duty. Depending on the weather we might start earlier and/or finish later.

**Accommodation:** this year we hope to have small cabins available for our interns, with a shared outdoor kitchen. A shower block with hot shower and compost toilet is situated a few meters away. A library/office is situated in the main house.

Farm produce such as greens, eggs, meat is available for interns as the season provides.

**Some house rules:**

- It is your responsibility to take care of and clean personal and communal living space.
- You will be sharing the accommodation, so rules apply on behaviour
- We can pick you up from the bus station in town, or the train station in Featherston. We are 6 km from our nearest local town; a car or bicycle is a handy item to bring.
- We are unable to accommodate pets on the farm.
- Please no smoking on the farm, and we ask for responsible consumption of alcohol.
- Interns cook their own breakfast and dinner 6 nights a week – there is one shared farm dinner with the whole team per week. Weekday lunches are shared.

**Field Trips:** Over the course of the internship period we will take a field trip to another farm in the area based on intern's interests. This can include another organic farm, raw milk dairy or a community/urban garden.

**Dates:** Check out the box below.

	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Last Date to Apply</b>	<b>Results Sent Out</b>
<b>Spring Course</b>	12 Oct 2019	19 Dec 2019	21 July 2019	1 Aug 2019
<b>Summer Course</b>	13 Jan 2020	20 March 2020	21 Sept 2019	1 Oct 2019

**Costs and Payment:**

Program fees are \$2,750 for the 10-week period and include the course work, field training and project mentorship, farm food supplies, and accommodation. Due dates are as below:

	<b>Total Fee</b>	<b>\$250.00 Registration Fee</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Deposit Due Date</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Deposit Due Date</b>
<b>Spring Program</b>	\$2,750.00	Upon registration	15 Aug 2019: \$1,250.00	7 Sept 2019: \$1,250.00
<b>Summer Program</b>	\$2,750.00	Upon registration	24 Oct 2019: \$1,250.00	13 Dec 2019: \$1,250.00

### **Cancellation Policy:**

Cancellation of up to four weeks before the start of the program, you will receive a full refund, less registration fee. Cancellations made within four weeks of the start of the program, a 50% refund will be given, less registration fee.

Please note that we reserve the right to end your participation in the program at any stage, in case of indecent, violent or dangerous behaviour, without a refund. Working on the farm requires the physical capability to contribute daily in a rigorous, fast-paced agricultural setting. Farm work offers an incredibly rewarding and demanding work environment and life experience. Please consider this commitment before applying.

### **Application**

Please send a cover letter detailing your interest in our program, resume and completed Internship Application to the farm by email. If you are successful we will contact you to schedule a phone or skype meeting.

Applicant must have a valid tourist visa, work visa or NZ residence.

## **Internship Application**

Please send a resume, together with a letter covering the questions below together with a recent picture of yourself to [csa@wefs.co.nz](mailto:csa@wefs.co.nz). We will get back to you within 2 weeks after the application date closes.

Finding a good match between what the course and internship can offer, and the needs and expectations of an intern are incredibly important. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

- Please tell us briefly about yourself. Background, hobbies?
- What interests you about our farm and this program?
- Have you ever worked on a farm before? Please describe.
- What is your motivation to apply for this program?
- Do you have any allergies, food restrictions, physical limitations or mental illnesses that might affect your ability to live and work on a rural farm?
- We use dogs as part of our farming system. Are you comfortable around dogs?
- Will you be able to attend the full length of the program?
- What are your 3 most liked and disliked vegetables.