



School to Farm Student Handbook

Program Overview

The Hunger and Environmental Nutrition (HEN) Dietetic Practice Group's [School to Farm Program](#) seeks to provide opportunities for nutrition and dietetic students and interns to immerse themselves within a farming operation that is focused on using sustainable agriculture practices. Several participating farms are owned/managed by a Registered Dietitian (RD), but the program is also open to farms with owners/managers who are able to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for nutrition and dietetic students and interns.

Is the School to Farm Program right for you?

Students who seek to volunteer on host farms will act as working interns. Students and interns should be willing to work alongside her/his host to gain an appreciation for food production in sustainable agricultural systems. Being a student farm volunteer is right for you if you:

- Support HEN's [mission and vision](#);
- Are interested in learning about sustainable food systems and sustainable and organic methods of agriculture; and
- Are willing to meet new people and work hard both individually and as part of a team on projects and tasks presented to you.

Student Eligibility

Student members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) who meet one of the following criteria are eligible to participate in School to Farm:

- A student enrolled in a ACEND accredited/approved dietetics or dietetic technician program or supervised practice program who does not meet requirements for Active membership, or
- A student enrolled in a regionally accredited, post-secondary education program which is non-ACEND accredited. This classification is available to students who state their intent to enter an ACEND accredited program, or
- A current Active AND member returning to school on at least a half-time basis for a baccalaureate or advanced degree or to complete an ACEND accredited supervised practice program (Dietetic Technician Program, Dietetic Internship, or Coordinated Program) — annual verification required.

Our Farms

Two farms currently participate in the School to Farm Program, both co-owned and run by RDs who are members of AND and the HEN DPG (please click on the links to read more about each farm):

- [Prairie Horizons Farm](#) in Starbuck, MN
- [Dyer Family Organic Farm](#) in Ann Arbor, MI

Participating farms have the potential to offer a wide variety of learning opportunities involved with sustainable food and agriculture systems as well as whole foods nutrition such as: hands-on experience growing fruits, vegetables, and other foods; keeping bees, raising animals, or developing and implementing various “farm to fork” educational experiences and activities.

Application Process

1. To apply, complete the program application available here: [School to Farm Student Application](#). Applications are received on a rolling basis. In the application, you will be asked to include two references. The School to Farm Program will then send a form to your references to complete within two weeks of receipt. The student is responsible for making sure that the references complete the form within that time.
2. If you are accepted into the program, you will be connected to a farm via email by the School to Farm Program chair. The program will do its best to take farm preferences into account.
3. It will then be up to the student and the farm to arrange internship dates and determine other expectations that are agreed upon by both parties.

Expectations

1. Students will communicate with the farm in advance of their farm stay to discuss the following:
 - Expectations for hours and length of stay
 - Tasks where help is needed
 - Expected learning outcomes
 - Accommodations and meal arrangement
2. Students are expected to complete the School to Farm Evaluation Form for students within one month following their farm experience. The form is available here: [School to Farm Student Evaluation Form](#).
3. Students are responsible for transportation to and from the farm unless otherwise discussed.
4. There will be no expectation of money exchanged between host and student; however, this situation is open to discussion in individual circumstances. For example, if the student completes work above and beyond the original learning agreement the farmer and student may discuss compensation for such work. Agreements should be made in advance. Most importantly this is an educational opportunity for the student.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are there scholarships available?

Yes! The HEN DPG provides an opportunity for School to Farm Program participants who are HEN DPG members to apply for a scholarship to defray the travel costs and other expenses for participating in the program. More information about the Joraan Forbord Memorial Scholarship is available here: [HEN Scholarships](#).

2. How long do School to Farm Program participants stay on a farm?

Length of participation depends on student and farm preferences. Both parties may want to begin with a trial stay of one week, evaluate the status of the experience, and then extend the time if it is a positive experience. Farm stays may last anywhere from a few days to an entire growing season. The School to Farm Program suggests setting clear expectations from the beginning with the farm.

3. What type of accommodations and/or food are provided by the farm?

Amenities vary by farm. The School to Farm Program suggests setting clear expectations from the beginning with the farm.

4. What should I bring to the farm?

The School to Farm Program recommends asking the farm you are staying with about packing recommendations. See below for a list of recommended items:

- Weather-appropriate work clothes
- Sturdy closed-toe shoes
- Work gloves
- Water bottle
- Sun screen
- Sun hat

5. Will I be weeding the entire time?

No, you will not be weeding for your entire experience, but you might be weeding for part of your experience. You might also dig potatoes, sort carrots, plant garlic, manage a farmers market stand, lead a farm tour or a variety of other experiences. Your farm experience should include a variety of activities that demonstrate food production from planting to selling. Just like any job, farming has its fun and dull moments as well as its easy and difficult tasks. Ideally, you will get to experience them all.

6. As a dietetic intern, how do I know if the School to Farm Program activities will fulfill my Dietetic Internship competencies?

It is important to discuss this with your Dietetic Internship director before arranging an internship rotation with the School to Farm Program. Here are some examples of how dietetic internship competencies can be accomplished while working on a farm: [School to Farm Dietetic Internship Competencies](#). After being assigned to a farm, it is recommended that you set mutually clear educational expectations with the farmer.

7. I am a Registered Dietitian. Does CDR award CPEUs for this experience?

There is not currently a CPE activity type for this specific experience. However, credit for this experience may be available as a Sponsored Independent Learning activity (CPE Activity Type 220 – see Professional Development Portfolio Guide). The AND member providing the farm would serve as the Sponsor, and both sponsor and learner would complete and sign the Sponsored Independent Learning Contract, which will set out the learning needs to be addressed, the learning resources and activities to be used, and the learning outcomes expected, as well as the expected hours and timeline. It should be noted that not all hours spent in the experience may be creditable as new learning. Discretion will need to be used to delineate the difference between experiences that contribute to new learning versus work.

Other Questions?

Please send all other questions and inquiries to the HEN DPG School to Farm Program Chair at henschooltofarm@gmail.com.