Rogue Farm Corps trains and equips the next generation of farmers and ranchers through hands-on educational programs and the preservation of Oregon’s farmland.

"Through hands-on training, thorough classes, and unrelenting support from the program I feel as though I was given the building blocks to succeed."

-2021 RFC Intern Edward Knight

GRADS AT WORK

Reese Madden is the owner/operator of Plum Tummy Gardens. They grow vegetables with a focus on biodiversity and no-dig transition on 10 acres nestled between the Yamhill River and the tiny town of Carlton, Oregon. Reese was an intern with RFC in 2019, and they started Sonder Farmstead as an apothecary in 2020. They are entering their second season of production. Reese says, "The RFC internship gave me a really solid foundation in sustainable agriculture. RFC has continued to support me and my ventures. It's really amazing to have that kind of ongoing mentorship and to know there are people in your corner cheering you on."

Em Blood is owner and operator of Sonder Farmstead. Em is a first-generation grower who found a love for farming through RFC at Mahonia Gardens in the spring of 2019. Em started Sonder Farmstead as an apothecary in 2020, and recently leased a half-acre plot in Bellingham, Washington for the 2022 season. In addition to producing medicinal herbs for soap, Sonder Farmstead will sell organically grown vegetables at two local farmers’ markets and multiple wholesale accounts. Em's focus is on feeding her immediate community, bridging the gap of food access, reducing waste, and using human-powered garden tools, using exclusively organic practices.

While Edward Knight was an RFC intern in 2021, he met fellow farm crew member Jeff Gowen, and together they began hatching a plan for a new farm business. They were offered access to land with an old orchard and unused field. "One year ago, I couldn't have felt farther from my goal of owning my own property one day to live and farm on," Edward says. "I had a feeling that the gap between where I was and this lofty goal was going to be a long and arduous journey. Enter Rogue Farm Corps. The journey is arduous, but I no longer feel like I possess only goals and thoughts." This season, Edward and Jeff will sell fruit and vegetables from their 1.5-acre farm at local farmers’ markets under the name Oak Valley Farm.

Em Blood
Owner and Operator of Sonder Farmstead

Reese Madden
Owner and Operator of Plum Tummy Gardens

Edward Knight
Former RFC Intern

FINANCES

INCOME

Program Revenue $421,240
Benefit Events $485
Earned Income $43,375
Donations $59,388
Grants $281,132
Total Income $435,179

EXPENSES

Operating $44,084
Program $24,491
Total Expenses $68,575

THANK YOU!

BUSINESSES
Ashland Food Coop
Down to Earth Distributors
East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
High Mowing Organic Seeds
Hummingbird Wholesale
Johnny’s Select Seeds
Market of Choice
Medford Cooperative
New Seasons Market
OnPoint Community Credit Union
Organically Grown Company
Portland Nursery
Talent Garden Club
Tuolin Soil & Water Conservation District
Vitals Organic Seeds

DONORS
So many amazing individuals!

FOUNDATIONS
Autzen Foundation
Clif Bar Family Foundation
Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation
Farm Aid
The Ford Foundation
Harbourton Foundation
The Healy Foundation
Leightman Maxey Foundation
Lora L. and Martin N. Kelley Family Foundation
Meyer Memorial Trust
Ned and Sis Hayes Family Foundation
Ogden and Marjory Kellogg Fund
Oregon Community Foundation
The Reser Family Foundation
Roundhouse Foundation
USDA Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program
USDA AgVets Program

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Cover image courtesy of Hudson Valley Seed Company/Artwork by June Glasson
Dear RFC community,

2021, much like 2020, was a momentous year. If the theme of 2020 was adaptation, 2021 was about growing, evolving, and honing our strategies to support a well-equipped, diverse, and thriving next generation of farmers. We are thrilled to announce that RFC has a new Theory of Change and Strategic Plan, developed collaboratively by our board and staff over the course of 2021. This plan was informed by an organizational equity assessment and input from farmers, partner organizations, past program participants, agricultural service providers, and our BIPOC Advisory Council (thank you). In addition to continuing to support farmers with education, training, and technical assistance, a big focus for RFC moving forward will be addressing systemic barriers to succeeding in agriculture.

On the systems level, we know that to attain our vision we need to build a strong movement for justice and climate resilience in agriculture that centers the voices of BIPOC, immigrants, and others who are most impacted by capitalism, white supremacy, and climate change. RFC will be building our capacity to organize for land access, racial and economic justice, and climate resilience in the years to come. To help build an engaged farmer community that is active in shaping policy that works for farmers, farmworkers, and the land, RFC has been hosting Farmer Advocacy Trainings during the growing season for our farmers-in-training and during the winter for our broader agricultural community.

In 2021, we developed and piloted our newest program, Farm Launch, which is now providing in-depth technical assistance to a cohort of 10 beginning farmers and ranchers, a majority of whom are farmers of color. Farm Launch was born out of the shifting needs of our farming community, in response to the many systemic challenges inherent in starting a farm business and securing land tenure. This program includes classes, one-on-one technical support, referrals to service providers, and a generative peer-to-peer learning space.

RFC is also developing new models for farmer training that are more equitable and accessible, based on feedback we’ve received from program participants. Demand for RFC’s training programs in 2021 was higher than ever before; a cohort of 26 interns and 4 apprentices completed a season of intensive, hands-on training in our 3 chapter areas in the Rogue Valley, Central Oregon, and Portland Metro. In 2022, we are building on our Internship and Apprenticeship programs and introducing exciting new program offerings designed to support aspiring farmers from a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences.

To all of our partners, supporters, teachers, and farmers, thank you for all you do. Let’s keep dreaming big and working together for the future we need.

Yours in community,

Maia Larson
Board Chair

Abigail Singer
Executive Director

ROGUE FARM CORPS

THEORY OF CHANGE

RFC TACKLES CHALLENGES IN FARMING

Beginning farmers face steep social, cultural, educational, and economic barriers, including disparities in access to land, wealth, education, and training. With 97% of Oregon’s farm owners identifying as white, there is an urgent need to address racism and systemic injustice in agriculture.

The average age of farmers is now 60 or older. In order for the next generation of farmers to take the reins, they need training, mentorship, and support to succeed in a challenging industry.

Given the ever-increasing impacts of climate change and the potential of agriculture to be part of the problem or the solution, we must transition our agricultural system to methods of food production that foster ecological health, equity, and climate resilience.

RFC’S ROLE

Build relationships, alignment, and power among those who tend the land by organizing for systemic change in agriculture.

Help facilitate an intentional and equitable intergenerational transfer of farmland.

Provide education, training, technical assistance, and networking to beginning farmers to help them build sustainable careers in regenerative agriculture.

RFC TACKLES CHALLENGES IN FARMING

OUR VISION:

Rogue Farm Corps envisions a world in which land is deeply cared for, power is equitably shared, and farms, ranches, and the people who work them flourish.

10 YEAR MILESTONES

1. RFC is an active participant in building a strong movement for justice and climate resilience in the food system that centers the voices of BIPOC, immigrants, and others who are most impacted by capitalism, white supremacy, and climate change.

2. RFC offers equitable, place-based education and training in sustainable agriculture that helps aspiring farmers with zero to some experience become farm employees, farm managers, and/or farm business owners.

3. RFC addresses barriers to and supports the creation of collective and collaborative farming models and businesses.

4. RFC is a dynamic, multisector, multiracial, multicultural organization that honors whole people and supports personal and professional growth.

Maia Larson
Board Chair

Abigail Singer
Executive Director

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