

With generations of farmers retiring, and younger generations of Veterans coming back from service in the Military, a crossing of paths seems almost natural. Farming requires many of the same skills that were utilized in the military such as hard work, ability to work in a variety of environments, perseverance, and attention to detail, while continuing to be of service to the community. Farming can also be very therapeutic for Veterans with PTSD, TBI, and physical rehabilitation needs.

The **Farmer Veteran Coalition** <https://farmvetco.org/> - is *the go-to* for resources on training, loans, and more. This national program is dedicated to increasing Veterans' awareness of agriculture and helping them break into the ag industry. See their resource guides here:

The Farm Bureau Resource Guide to Assist Veterans in Agriculture

https://www.farmvetco.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/FB_Vet_GuideOct13final.pdf

Government Resources Guide for Farmer Veterans:

https://www.farmvetco.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Government_Resource_Guide_for_Farmer_Veterans_102015.pdf

Veteran Careers in Agriculture: A resource guide

https://www.farmvetco.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/RG_FINAL_WEB_compressed.pdf

Statewide Military Veterans Email List: For Military Veterans in Oregon who are exploring the farming path. This two way communication option provides a space to share statewide events and resources relevant to Veterans. You can also email the list serv yourself to ask a question, sell farm equipment, post a job opportunity, or organize over a particular topic. To join email Teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu. List serv is monitored to assure safety and relevance.

Training

Veterans receive education benefits from the GI Bill. Determine how best to use your available benefits using this **GI Bill Comparison Tool** <https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11/>. Community colleges and land grant universities like Oregon State University offer a variety of agricultural programs.

There are many farmer training programs throughout the PNW, including **Rogue Farm Corps'** <https://www.roguefarmcorps.org/> beginning-level Internships and advanced Apprenticeship programs, including the **Rogue Valley Regenerative Farming Fellowship 2023** *Training Start Date: April 4, 2023 - End Date: October 26, 2023* <https://www.roguefarmcorps.org/rff>



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- **On-Farm Veteran-Run Training in the PNW:**

Central Oregon Veterans Ranch, Bend, OR

<https://www.covranch.org/>

Mentoring and Education in Farming, Ranching, and Beekeeping, as well as peer and PTSD Support Groups.

Growing Careers in Agriculture, Northern California

<https://farmvetco.org/programs/education/>

Paid, 3-6 month apprenticeships on organic farms and artisan food businesses.

Growing Veterans, Lynden, Washington

<https://growingveterans.org/>

Assists in the transition from military to civilian life while working with partners to provide resources to Veterans including employment, volunteering, internships, and fellowships.

Growing Veteran Agripreneurs Program , Southern Oregon

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/events/growing-veteran-agripreneurs-0>

30 week immersive experience, runs May-October. Veterans learn about planting to harvest, cover-cropping, operational considerations, strategies in drought, business management, site-visits, and practicum. Focus is on annual vegetables, herb production and direct marketing.

<https://beav.es/iDb>

Red Feather Ranch, Philomath, Oregon

<https://www.redfeatherranch.org/>

Provides online support groups for women veterans and will be offering retreats and vocational training in sustainable agriculture and food production.

Veterans’ ETC, Tenino, WA

<https://veterans-etc.org/>

Working with local partners we help Veterans envision and build a viable business plan, then give them the physical space to start the career of their dreams.

Veteran Women for the Land, PNW

<https://farmland.org/project/veteran-women-for-the-land-ranchers-farmers-pacific-northwest/>

Offering a series of listening sessions, learning circles, and regional convenings. The project will support non-formal education to provide veteran women the necessary skills, training, and experience to be successful in agriculture.

- **National Training & Business Resources for Veterans:**

AgrAbility

<http://www.agrability.org/resources/veterans/>

Committed to helping military Veterans who choose agriculture as their "Next Mission," as well as beginning farmers with disabilities or other functional limitations.

Homegrown by Heroes

<https://farmvetco.org/hbh/>

The official Farmer Veteran branding program of America. The label serves to inform consumers that agricultural products donning the logo were produced by U.S. military Veterans

NCAT Armed to Farm

<https://www.armedtofarm.org/>

Training and providing technical assistance and resource materials for military Veterans interested in sustainable and organic agriculture.

Office of Veterans Business Development

<https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-locations/headquarters-offices/office-veterans-business-development>

Business development services, training, counseling, and mentoring, as well as referrals for Veterans owning or considering starting a small business.

USDA Veteran Employment

<https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/initiatives/veterans/veterans-and-employment>

USDA prioritizes hiring veterans, knowing that Military experiences can directly translate to USDA jobs.

The VA's Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Office

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/>

Rehabilitation Counselors can assist with business evaluation and planning and can connect farmer Veterans with related resources.

Veteran Farmers Project—Center for Rural Affairs (CRFA)

<https://www.cfra.org/veteran-farmers>

Individual consultations with professionals for financial and production advice, a HelpLine, and a webinar on resources for Veterans as new farmers.

Veterans to Farmers

<https://www.veteranstofarmers.org/>



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Assisting Veterans to assimilate effectively, productively, and permanently into private citizenry through agricultural training and education.

Funding

There are numerous funding opportunities for Veteran farmers and ranchers to purchase land, homes, structures, and equipment. With grants, they do not need to be repaid. They are designed to reward Veteran farmers for their service in the military, and their future service growing our nation's food.

- **Grants:**

[The Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\) Transition Incentive Program](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/transition-incentives/index)

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/transition-incentives/index>

Gives owners of land coming out of CRP additional CRP payments if they lease or sell the land to a Veteran farmer.

[Dauntless Veterans Foundation](https://dauntlessvf.org/agriculture-grant-program/) (*Open November, Deadline Mid-December*)

<https://dauntlessvf.org/agriculture-grant-program/>

Designed for Veterans, to fulfill a financial gap after all Federal/State educational grants/scholarship/grants available to an eligible applicant has been utilized and all means exhausted.

[The Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/) (*Open Year round, Deadline End of October*)

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>

Can fund investments like greenhouses and other conservation projects. Veterans may be eligible for advance payments of up to 50% for the costs of certain conservation practices up-front, before implementation. A reimbursement and cost-share program covering 75-90% of costs. Preference for Veteran Farmers or Ranchers applying for several types of conservation financial assistance.

[The Oregon Farm to School Grant Program](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/childnutrition/F2S/Pages/education.aspx)

The Farm to School Education Grant (*Deadline August*)

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/childnutrition/F2S/Pages/education.aspx> (ODE)

The Equipment and Infrastructure Producer Grant (*Deadline May*)

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/MarketAccess/Pages/FarmtoSchool.aspx> (ODA). Programs

offer preference points for applicants who are Veterans. *Open again in the fall/winter of 2023.*

[Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund from the Farmer Veteran Coalition](https://farmvetco.org/fvfellowship/) (*Deadline February 14, 2023*)

<https://farmvetco.org/fvfellowship/>

Grants from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to veterans who are in their beginning years of farming or ranching. The Fellowship Fund does not give money directly to the Veteran, but rather to third-party vendors for items the Veteran has identified. *Applications are open from January to February of each year.*

Food Animal Concerns Trust Grant (*Deadline January 10, 2023*)

<https://www.foodanimalconcernstrust.org/grants>

FACT awards competitive grants of up to \$3,000 to working, independent farmers located in the United States who raise beef cattle, bison, broiler chickens, dairy cows, ducks, geese, goats, laying hens, pigs, sheep and/or turkeys.

Geared to Give

<https://www.kubotausa.com/kubota-cares/farmer-veteran-coalition>

Giving the gift of Kubota equipment to help Veterans achieve self-sufficiency and take their farming operation to the next level.

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program - (*Deadline in Fall*)

<https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/grants/oahp/pages/oahp.aspx?emci=ad03d84b-f774-ed11-819c-000d3a9eb474&emdi=3a5870f3-2377-ed11-819c-000d3a9eb474&ceid=9337845>

The OAH's 4 grant programs help Oregon farmers and ranchers protect both the agricultural and conservation values on their working land and engage in succession planning, as well as make the land more affordable for the next generation.

The Second Service Foundation (*Deadline October*)

<https://www.secondservicefoundation.org/>

Offering the Military Entrepreneur Challenge Grant to 3 participants between \$4,000- \$15,000. Applications due August of each year. Includes coaching and mentorship opportunities.

The Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District's (UWSWCD) Farmers Market Grant Program (*Deadline January 15, 2023*)

<https://uwsxcd.org/farmers-market-grant-program/>

Grants up to \$8,000 per market location for projects and events that promote conservation and support local food systems through community farmers markets in central and eastern Lane County.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Several Programs Available

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/financial-help/applications-and-forms>

Veterans of the U.S. Armed Services may receive preference for (NRCS) programs. These voluntary conservation programs include financial and technical assistance, as well as easements.

USDA Value-Added Producer Grants (*Deadline April - Paper / May - Online*)

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/value-added-producer-grants>

Assists farm businesses and producer groups in developing business plans and strategies to market value-added products. Applications due mid-spring each year.



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2023 Young Farmer Grant Program (Deadline January 13, 2023 3pm Eastern time)

<https://www.youngfarmers.org/youngfarmergrants/>

75 grants awarded in the amount of \$5,000 for completing a project, purchasing a new piece of equipment, covering operating costs such as seeds and compost, building new infrastructure, attending a farmer training program or conference, hiring additional farm labor, or covering personal finances that stand in the way of farm success, including but not limited to childcare, housing, or student loan payments. Grant recipients also received a one-year membership to the National Young Farmers Coalition. *Text "YF GRANTS" to 40649 to learn more.*

- **Loans:**

Farm Service Agency prioritizes veterans in their lending products with the following 2 loans:
Microloans of up to \$50,000 -

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/microloans/index>

Direct farm ownership loans offer up to 100 percent financing, up to \$600,000 -

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/farm-ownership-loans/index>

Farm Credit Network

<https://farmcredit.com/>

69 independent Farm Credit institutions are governed by the customers they serve. Supporting farmers, ranchers, agricultural producers, rural infrastructure providers and rural homebuyers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Hivers & Strivers

<https://hiversandstrivers.com/>

A group of angel investors focusing exclusively on funding companies led by Military Veterans. Investing between \$250,000-\$1 million per round in early stages, and performance pending, participate in follow on rounds.

The Small Business Administration's Veteran-Owned Business (OVBD)

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/grow-your-business/veteran-owned-businesses>

The SBA programs provide access to capital and preparation for small business opportunities. They can also connect Veteran small business owners with federal procurement and commercial supply chains.

VA Home Loans

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/homeloans/FarmLoans.pdf>

Can be used to purchase a farm. A farm residence must be on the land, and the Veteran must live in it as his or her primary residence to be eligible.

Additional Viewing:

Documentary: *Ground Operations* <https://walkyourtalk.tv/>



Oregon State University
Extension Service

Farmer Veteran Resources Guide



Documentary featuring the growing network of combat Veterans who are transitioning into careers as sustainable farmers, ranchers and artisan food producers.