

California Farm Academy Apprenticeship Program: Work Process Schedule

Over the course of the term of the apprenticeship, the apprentice shall complete competency in:

Competency Area and Description	Hours
Soil management: Ability to take into consideration and determine proper moisture levels, weather and soil texture to make decisions on timing for working the soil. Ability to take soil samples and read a soil test. Understanding of basic soil fertility and critical/appropriate nutrient levels. Understanding of soil amendments. Knowledge of appropriate equipment and implements to use for soil work, as well as spreading amendments.	75
Tractor skills: Basic understanding of major tractor functions (PTO, engine, hydraulics, implements). Understanding tractor safety, operations, how to hook up implements and basic tractor maintenance. Ability to administer daily maintenance check-ups as well as scheduled check-ups.	75
Planting and/or Pruning/Tree care: Knowledge of techniques and equipment used for planting various crops. Knowledge of pruning or thinning techniques based on particular crop type. Understanding and knowledge of timing of cultural methods used.	75
Pest and weed management: Ability to identify pests and weeds, knowledge of best practices to deal with vertebrate and invertebrate pests, ability and knowledge to safely apply pesticides. Ability to develop and implement a pest and weed management plan, and operate tools related to pest and weed control. Achieve a pesticide applicators license.	75
Irrigation management: Basic understanding of pumps, horsepower, well depth, water tables and volume and pressure ratios. Basic knowledge of both surface water and ground water delivery systems. Ability to design, understand and install a drip irrigation system, filters, layout sprinkler irrigation at appropriate intervals, and basic repairs.	75
Harvest, handling, packing and grading: Basic horticultural principles of fruit maturity, stages of maturity for peak sugars, flavor and quality. Knowledge of both hand harvest and machine harvest principles, techniques and tools/equipment. Knowledge of appropriate post-harvest handling, packing and grading techniques. Basic knowledge of correct temperatures for different crop storage, understanding and implementation of food safety rules and regulations in the handling and packing of crops.	100
Sales/Marketing or Employee/Regulatory work: Exposure to principles and strategies for sales through direct and/or wholesale marketing outlets. Exposure to and participation in compliance with environmental, food safety, and labor regulations directly affecting farm business operations.	75
Equipment repair and fabrication: Work with shop manager to perform basic repairs to farm equipment, and fabricate necessary parts for larger repairs.	25

Total Minimum Hours: 575

Of the 3,000 hours, 575 must be dedicated to on-the-job training in these areas. The remainder of the OJT hours (2,425) will be gained in other work performed on the farm, based on the farmer's needs and/or the interest of the apprentice.