



Join the North Coast Land Match program and be part of a movement that supports sustainable agriculture, strengthens local economies, and preserves the natural beauty of Humboldt and Del Norte counties.

Together, we can create a thriving agricultural landscape that benefits landholders, farmers, and our entire community.

North Coast Land Match Landseeker Information

Pilot Draft Version

The North Coast Land Match Program cultivates the future of farming in Humboldt, Del Norte, and Tribal Lands by successfully linking farmers with available land and providing support and guidance in navigating the complexities of farmland access, tenure, and transfer. Through our collaborative approach, we tailor solutions to achieve family, farm business, and community goals.

Local agricultural lands are a precious resource, and it can be challenging for farmers to find a place to grow food. The North Coast Land Match program helps connect farmers, *land seekers*, with land-owners, *land holders* to provide more access to farmland, and to preserve the agricultural landscapes in our community.

We envision a vibrant landscape of working farms managed by thriving farmers. Entire communities will benefit from increased farming opportunities, healthy lands, and a more secure food supply. Through innovation, education, advocacy and consulting the North Coast Land Match Program is transforming how farmers get on to, hold, and transfer farmland in the North Coast Region of California.

This document is created for landseekers. If you are a land seeker, review our [Land Holder Information Document](#).



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What's in this document?

Landseekers

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- What to Expect
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- Conduct a Land Search
- Match with a Land-holder
- Develop a Land Lease Agreement
- Successfully Lease Land and Start Farming

Resources

- Business Plan Resources
- Farmer Resources Considerations
- Worksheet for Farmers
- Action Steps
- Land Tenure Options Resource Document
- Farming Experience
- Where to Start if you don't have (much) farming experience
- A Farm Business Plan

Landseekers

Landseekers face the challenge of finding quality, affordable land. The North Coast Land Match Program connects farms with viable agricultural land-holders, providing the necessary tools, resources, and services to create sustainable and rewarding land arrangements and agreements.

Landseeker Benefits

- Land Match Program: Find land for farming or ranching
- Access one-on-one technical assistance such as
 - Negotiating and Building Agreements
 - Business Advising
 - Financial Management Tools
 - Referrals to Professional Services
- Additional North Coast Land Match member benefits include connections with:
 - Other land seekers, and land holders
 - Beginning farmer training
 - Farm tours
 - Workshops and trainings
 - Business development



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Eligibility Requirements: To qualify as a Landseeker, you must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a current management and/or decision-making role in an agricultural business in Humboldt or Del Norte.
- Possess at least one year of farming experience, either as an owner or employee, with farm income.

Recommended Qualifications: It is also recommended that Landseekers have:

- Field experience or agricultural training.
 - Find training recordings and live upcoming workshops on the NCGA and DNATL websites.
- Collaboration with SBDC for business advising and training.
- Willingness to develop a simple business plan in the near future, with templates and assistance available.
- For more resources to help you meet our eligibility criteria in the future, refer to the resources listed at the end of this document.

What to Expect

Apply as a Land Seeker to the North Coast Land Match

When looking for farmland to start or expand a farm business, there are lots of steps to find the right piece of land. Clarifying your vision and needs, exploring land tenure options, and conducting a land search are some of the steps the North Coast Land Match is here to assist you with.

Before you Apply, clarify your vision and needs as a farmer, answer the following questions to understand your farm business needs and what you require for your farmland.

Clarify Your Needs:

Acreage and Enterprises

- How many acres of land do you need in your first season?
- Do you want to be able to increase the number of acres you are farming in future seasons? If so, how many more acres do you think you might need?
- How much money can you afford to spend per acre per season?
- Do you want to produce crops or livestock or both?
- What kind of soil and terrain are you looking for?
- Do you want your farm to be certified organic?



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Location and Markets

- Where do you want to farm?
- How far away can your farmland be from where you live or work?
- How much does land cost to rent or to buy in our area?
- Will you be farming in an urban, suburban, or rural community?
- How do you plan to sell your farm products?

Infrastructure

- What do you need for irrigation (to water your crops)?
- What other water access do you need (for livestock or to wash crops safety)?
- What kind of storage do you need?
- Do you need electricity?
- Do you need other equipment? If so what?
- Do you need a greenhouse/hoop house?
- Do you need fencing?
- Do you need parking?
- Do you need housing?

Write a Farm Business Plan

A written plan will further clarify your visions and needs. A business plan can help you decide what kind of farmland you need for your farm business. A plan can also help you make decisions and see your dream more clearly. Your plan can change over time. (see resources at the end of this document).

Steps for farmers

1. Apply

Once your vision is clear, fill out our application form, and tell us what services you would like to access, what kind of land and lease agreement you are looking for, and what your farming practices are.

The North Coast [Land-Seeker Application Form](https://www.northcoastgrowersassociation.org/land.html) will guide you in creating a **Landseeker Profile** to describe your business model and experience. You can upload supporting documents, a photo, a business plan and resume. For more information and further resources go to <https://www.northcoastgrowersassociation.org/land.html>



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2. Review and Approval

Upon meeting the eligibility criteria, you will gain access to the North Coast Land Match Land Portal, which contains all active landholder listings. In event that you do not meet the entry requirements, rest assured that we will provide you with a curated list of resources designed to assist you in meeting these criteria in the future. Please note that your profile will be visible to other active North Coast Land Match Members. We will follow up with you on the status of your submission within 7 days.

3. Conduct a Land Search & Match with a Land-Holder

Navigate through our listings of viable farmland within our **Land Match Portal**. It's important to know that all the land listings featured in our portal have undergone surveys to confirm their viability for agricultural use.

When you come across a piece of land that piques your interest, simply reach out to us. We'll take care of matching you with the landholder and coordinate a suitable time for you to visit the property. If the match appears promising, we'll guide you in the development of a land lease agreement.

4. Develop a Land Lease Agreement and Start Farming

Leveraging resources and technical training, we'll collaborate to establish a fair and equitable land lease agreement between the land seeker and the landholder. Our aim is to ensure that the lease agreements benefit both parties. To achieve this, we may also tap into the resources and expertise of organizations like CAFF and CA Farm Link.

With the land lease agreement in place, you can begin your farming journey on your newly acquired land. We encourage you to embark on this exciting endeavor and share your success stories with the North Coast Land Match Program. Your experiences can inspire and guide others within our community.



Resources

Business Plan Resources: The business planning process involves about five basic steps:

1. Laying out your basic business concept.
 2. Gathering data on the feasibility and specifics of your concept.
 3. Focusing and refining your concept based on the data.
 4. Outlining the specifics of your business.
 5. Putting your plan into compelling form and using it to lead you.
- Download a simple Google Docs Farm Business Plan Template [here](#).
 - Additional Farm Business Plan templates are available on bplans.com.
 - Highly recommended resource: Business Plan Workbook for New Farmers by CA Farmlink. [CA Farmlink Workbook for New Farmers](#) a
 - For a deeper dive, consider "Building a Sustainable Business: A guide to developing a business plan for farms and rural businesses" by the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture.

Farmer Resources Considerations [spreads \(landforgood.org\)](http://landforgood.org)

Please take some time to think about the following consideration as you prepare to acquire land. You may think of others.

- Ownership versus tenancy (Do I want to own farm property now or at some point in the future? What do I think are the pros and cons of land ownership versus tenancy?)
- How land purchase or leasing fits into your business plan
- Landowners and landlords (Private? Public? Absentee? Conservation organization?)
- Leasing arrangements (What kinds of leases? Payment options? What's in a good lease?)
- Landlord – tenant relations (How involved? Sharing responsibilities? Communications?)
- Property attributes (e.g., natural features, location, residence, community)
- Finding property (locating, assessing, negotiating)
- Financing (What do I need? What's available?)
- Timeline (What needs to happen soon? Down the road?)

Worksheet for farmers: [LFG-Necessary-Desirable-Optional-Worksheet-Finding-Your-Farm-2.pdf \(landforgood.org\)](#)



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