

# Barking Frogs Farm

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## Permaculture Internship

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## Interns - General

### Our Philosophy of Internships

In our view, internships are training equivalent to higher education--equivalent in their own way to attending college and for many people, far more valuable. We have advanced programs, apprenticeships, for which we charge tuition. We do not charge tuition for internships. Instead, we require work that is useful to us in exchange for the training required to do that work. Please re-read the previous sentence. Thank you.

If you understand that sentence as intended, you will avoid the commonest inappropriate expectation. You do not get training in permaculture design as part of your internship here **unless you are assigned to work on a permaculture design**. You probably will get training on the tasks required to implement our design. The specific tasks and training depend on two factors: your training goals and our work needs. You should feel clear and comfortable that you will get the training you expect before you start your internship. If you come with an expectation that you will somehow manage to get us to provide something to which we did not agree in advance, we will all be unhappy during your brief internship.

Internships should be happy, baring unfortunate external influences, and should at least be fulfilling. Our goal is to strike a bargain with you to provide certain on-the-job training activities in exchange for work. Not all tasks will be to the point--we all share in some of the routine work required to keep our programs going. We encourage feedback to keep everyone on track. We have developed an 8-page periodic evaluation form, five pages to be completed by the intern and three to be completed by the supervisor. We also meet more or less daily to discuss work assignments, and encourage intern feedback at that time.

### Who Should be a Barking Frogs Farm Intern?

Scrupulously honest, hard working, direct individuals with clear goals and good work habits will be happiest here. We look for individuals with a clear sense of boundaries and a knack for knowing when to take initiative and when to come back for more instructions. Successful interns must be able to work within structure and ideally can transcend structure--come to understand the principles behind the structure so that it no longer limits action but instead guides action. Individuals who like to work alone and who do not have a strong dependence on social interaction will mesh nicely with our remote location and our reclusive supervisor. Good English speaking skills are also very valuable. People from other countries whose primary language is not English are welcome to apply however. Everyone has something to offer. We may have special jobs for people who speak other languages, particularly Spanish, from time to time.

### How is a Barking Frogs Farm Intern Program Developed?

Before you come to your internship interview, you should have completed two statements, each no more than 500 words. One statement introduces yourself as an individual. We like to know more about you, who you are, and what you are like. Here is a good place to list skills you already have, also. The other essay should describe the goals that you have for this specific internship. The clearer you make this section, the better we can meet your goals. If your goals change during the internship, we can re-negotiate them. If we see goals that we cannot or will not meet in an internship, we will point these out immediately.

Once it is clear to you and to us that we have a potential match, we schedule an interview. The first goal of the interview is to screen for personality conflicts, people who do not like our setting, etc. Naturally, if we get along well with a candidate and if s/he really falls in love with our place, we are going to have a happier

internship. We hope that an intern candidate can be with us for at least a few days. This gives the intern a chance to see the work setting at its best and decide if it appeals. We get to glimpse the intern at work. If that goes well, then the third interview task is to negotiate a program. Ideally, the outlines of a program, at least, should be negotiated during the interview. This is not a normal negotiation, which has a certain adversarial element, because we also want a program that enables you to meet as many of your goals as possible. We believe that worker satisfaction is essential for work productivity and quality.

During the internship, we can continue the process of defining your role as far as possible. Whenever it makes sense otherwise, we try to offer an intern opportunity to assume a managerial role in some project. Again, this is more satisfying and more educational for the intern, and reduces the supervision load on us as the intern earns increased decision making latitude.

### **Academic Credit**

We will meet reasonable reporting requirements for academic credit for interns enrolled in college programs.

### **Resources**

Interns may be allowed an undeveloped space for a garden plot. Foraging wild food is allowed within limits. Interns who eat flesh may have the option of game (probably squirrel) from time to time. Our permaculture library is **not** open to interns, but an intern may arrange to borrow books one at a time. The permaculture center includes a kitchen with stove and refrigerator. For the most part, interns prepare their own meals. We are willing to provide basic rations of legumes and grains, if desired and needed. Interns must purchase, grow or forage other foods. Interns who volunteer in our garden, in addition to the internship work, **can earn** a share of surplus produce. Similar arrangements can be made for eggs at times of surplus.

We have discontinued telephone service to the permaculture center building. Interns who require frequent personal use of the telephone should acquire a cell phone.

Supplies, postage, etc., provided by Yankee Permaculture or Elfin Permaculture are not for personal use, except if we identify a surplus of salvaged materials.

### **Transportation**

Interns are responsible for all transportation associated with the internship. This is a relatively remote area with soft sand dirt roads. You have to be pretty tough indeed to get anywhere with a bicycle. We may take interns with us to and from town from time to time, but we may also want space away from interns or to be not limited in our return schedule. If you do not have a vehicle, be prepared to spend almost all your time here. We do not lend use of our vehicles under any circumstances.

### **Housing**

Residence is not required of interns and providing of residence is not required of Barking Frogs Farm. We may, as we have in the past, invite interns to camp near Permaculture Center **as our personal guests**. The building itself presently does not suit habitation.

### **Profit Sharing**

The potential for profit sharing as an outgrowth of the internship is very strong. If interns develop income that well exceeds the overhead and direct costs of their internship, we will consider a transition of that project to a profit sharing status. Obviously, this is unlikely to be relevant in short internships. The percentage of profit sharing will vary according to the extent our resources are required and the extent of our involvement, liability, and so forth. For an enterprising intern, a profit-sharing business can continue beyond the internship with a **commonworks** arrangement. Basically, this is one way for someone with little or no capital to get started in a permaculture-related business to the benefit of all concerned.

**Caretaker.** We wish to find a responsible single person to server as caretaker here, working a specified part time schedule and receiving a place to live with no rent.

### **How Should One Prepare for a Barking Frogs Farm Internship**

It is helpful if interns have a basic knowledge of permaculture before beginning the internship. We recommend that you read at least one basic book. Mollison's *Introduction to Permaculture* is good. Otherwise, any process that helps you clarify your goals is great.

### **Things to Bring.**

It is good idea to have a well-sharpened Swish Army knife, Power Sog, or similar multi-purpose tool. The Power Sog or similar tool, is most useful. It consists of folding pliers with knife blades and other tools in the handles. Discount stores like Home Depot carry one version. Check with us for clothing for various seasons. Protective clothing is essential. Everyone here needs a good pair of rubber boots. Bring any item you want to be sure to have. We got rid of most of our household materials before we moved to Florida and it is not practical for us to restock two houses completely. If you have tools that you particularly like to use, a personal computer for use in off hours, etc., by all means bring these along. You can figure out what you might want to bring during the interview process.

### **What and Why is Barking Frogs Farm?**

It is first of all the private residence of Dan and Cynthia Hemenway. It is also home to the projects of Elfin Permaculture (teaching, consulting and other permaculture outreach) and Yankee Permaculture (publications). We plan to develop the farm through permaculture design to pay for itself and maybe, someday, even develop some net income.

There are two parts to the farm: our private residence and the permaculture center. Interns work based at the permaculture center, which is a double-wide mobile home. We have a bit more than 16 acres of land and water, much of it wetlands.

Interns all work a mix of office and outdoor work. The balance depends on the individual program.

### **Advanced Permaculture Training Program -- APT**

If you have an Elfin Permaculture diploma from one of our Permaculture Design Courses, you may be eligible for our APT program. This is an apprenticeship, not an internship. This can be residential or based on fieldwork elsewhere. Using permaculture design principles, you design your own program of from one to four years. The program must consist of a mix of design, design implementation, outreach and research. In programs of more than one year, you must specialize in one area. We guide the program design process to the extent necessary and consult with you regularly, based on the amount of our interaction that you design into your program. The more of our time you require, the more we charge for tuition. Tuition may be partly defrayed by barter, including services. Download more information about APT from our web site.

### **The Application Process**

Submit the two essays. Probably we will then want to set up an interview. Before you receive directions to our place, you must sign our Hold Harmless agreement and a copy of the Intern Handbook. Also initial each page to indicate that you have read it.