Johnson County Historic Poor Farm Protocols

All farms need to follow Certified Naturally Grown Standards as a set of best practices. The following protocols are additional standards for all farms.

Access and Authorization

A farmer must have permission before entering another operator's crop production area. Historic Poor Farm staff have the right of entry and inspection in case of an emergency and to mitigate safety concerns, such as a broken irrigation hose. In such cases, the farmer will be notified immediately. This also applies to any rented storage space.

Cover Crops and Rotation

Farmers must cover and rotate crops once they acquire land as a standard practice to maintain soil tilth and health. A winter cover crop is required whenever possible. Lease agreements will be the same for cash crop and cover crop fields.

Compost/Manure Application

Organic matter such as compost is a valuable addition to the soils where the percentage of organic matter is low. Annual soil tests can be used as a guide to determine the compost needs for each field.

Proper compost/manure application and soil management is the responsibility of each farm. Any manure used must be (aged manure only) and must be worked into soil within 12 hours. Compost/manure may not be applied between December 15 and March 1. It is acceptable to apply organic mulches, which may include partially composted materials (not including manures), at any time. All sources of offsite compost, manure, and organic mulches will need to be approved by staff.

On-farm tenants are responsible for managing their own food safety risks with compost and manure. It is recommended that all untreated compost or manure does not come into contact with the edible portion of a crop within 120 days of application or 90 days for crops that the edible portion doesn't come into contact with the soil.

Field and Equipment Management

Farmers are expected to operate independently and secure all needed farm equipment, tools, and supplies to operate their farm, including tilling. Equipment and supplies must only be stored in designated, approved spaces.

Soil and Erosion Management

Do what is reasonably necessary to control soil erosion including, but not limited to, planting cover crops, using mulches and abstaining from any practice, which will cause damage to the site. The farmer's responsibility does not include major reconstruction of such improvements made necessary by normal wear and tear or other natural causes.

Protect all desirable vegetation, such as grass field borders, grassed waterways, wildlife cover, shrubs and trees. Refrain from burning, spraying, and tilling as they relate to the disturbance of permanent vegetation.

Weed Management
Preventing weeds from reseeding and regenerating is essential to farm management. Acceptable means of controlling weeds are as follows: mulching, mowing, hoeing, cultivating and torching with flame weeders. Use reasonable efforts to control weeds in fields and along field edges utilizing mowing and or cultivation. Farmers may not use chemical substances to control weeds unless approved by staff. Farmers are responsible for making regular field inspections for weed growth. Areas determined mismanaged by staff will be subject to a written complaint and possible fees.

Insect Management
Insect management requires attracting and encouraging beneficial insect populations as a means to balance populations of insect pests. Farmers are required to understand current organic methods of control. They should be versed in Invasive Pest Management (IPM) monitoring techniques, such as scouting. All farmers must work cooperatively and with staff to discourage pests.

Pesticides that are not approved by Certified Naturally Grown are not allowed.
If new products appear on the market that are not allowed but would like to be considered, farmers must present the pesticide to staff for review and approval.

Farmers must keep records of all pest controls in a log from year to year. An annual report is due by December 15th, including a summary of fertilizer, lime, and pesticide application records. Staff may request this information for annual reporting. It is recommended that all farmers receive training on the safe use of chemicals.

Disease Management
Acceptable controls include: crop rotation, Certified Naturally Grown allowed fungicides, diseased plant removal and disposal, tool sanitation, restriction of foot traffic, cleanliness, black plastic mulch use, and drip irrigation or watering at ground level. Farmers should be familiar with plant diseases and be able to identify them when they appear.

Irrigation & Water Access
Water is available from two onsite wells and water hydrants on site and from natural precipitation. Water from the wells on-site is limited due to the amount of users and often pressure is low. Farmers are expected to communicate with one another about irrigation needs and use water efficiently.

Hauling water from a source outside of the Historic Poor Farm is acceptable as long as it comes from an approved and tested source. Historic Poor Farm staff will conduct water tests

annually on all on-site water sources provided by Johnson County.

Historic Poor Farm staff are responsible for making sure all wells and water sources are operable and set up to accommodate main line hook ups.

Farmers must present irrigation needs to Historic Poor Farm staff. Staff will devise an operating schedule based on the needs of every farm. Each farm is responsible for purchase and maintenance on their field irrigation system. Each farm will receive training and orientation on maintaining Historic Poor Farm irrigation systems.

Field Workers and Visitors
Farmers agree to provide staff with the names and phone numbers of all regular field workers and visitors. Farmers must always be at the farm when any workers or visitors are there unless prior arrangements are made with staff. Each farmer is responsible for making sure their guests understand and follow the farm guidelines.

Pets
To adhere to food safety best practices pets are not allowed on the farm.

Children
Children may not work on the farm for long periods of time or during hot weather and must be appropriately clothed at all times. Children must always be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Substance Abuse
The use of illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and personal violence is strictly prohibited on the farm. Farmers will be expelled from the farm for participating in these activities and may face disciplinary action.

Buildings and Improvements
As the Historic Poor Farm is situated within city limits, many legal restrictions apply to construction at the farm. Any land improvements (moving or altering of soil, building construction, fence construction, growing or removal of trees, or any activity that could impact the topography of the land) are subject to approval by staff. Overnight camping or structures intended for those purposes are not allowed. Small temporary hoophouses, caterpillar tunnels, storage units, and low tunnels are allowed if approved by staff.

Shared-use Spaces
There are several shared space areas on the farm. Farmers are responsible for keeping these areas clean and accessible. Failure to do so may result in not being able to use the space.

Packsheds - Packsheds are open-air structures specifically designed for washing and packing produce. Farmers are not to store personal items in these spaces unless they are used in the

wash/pack process. Farmers are expected to supply their own packing and cleaning supplies, sanitizers, and remove all plant and vegetable refuse. Scheduling is done between farmers who utilize the space.

Cold Storage - Farmers are expected to manage their own products in storage and remove any spoiled products. Cold storage is for short-term holding. Farmers utilizing on-site coolers are responsible for maintaining food safety practices and monitoring cold storage temperatures.

Driving and Parking
All tenants must drive and park motor vehicles only on designated field roads and parking areas. In wet conditions, follow posted instructions and comply with barriers.

Farm Safety
All tenants are expected to store all pesticides and fuel in a locked container and/or room with posted signage detailing the contents of the container. Familiarize themselves with and abide by all farm safety requirements and must accept safety as a personal responsibility. Everyone is expected to develop and maintain a safe working environment by recognizing unsafe acts and unsafe conditions, and taking the necessary corrective action. Tenants must ensure all equipment owned and used by operator must feature slow moving vehicle (SMV) signage and be equipped with a roll over protection structure (ROPS) and seatbelt.

Site Maintenance - Field Edges
Farmers are expected to maintain 2 feet beyond their field by mowing or with a string trimmer. All irrigation must be within the contracted field boundaries. Field edges must be kept clear of debris, equipment and tools. Farmers will keep hoses and tools out of the field roads and grass areas. Hoses should be wound up near the hydrant, out of the road, after each use. If the staff's mower breaks tools or damages hoses left near a farmers crop production area, the farmer is responsible for their replacement and for any damage caused to the staff's mower.

Trash and On-farm Waste
Farmers agree to keep the site, storage areas, and wash stations free of trash at all times. Staff will provide a place for trash. There is an on-site compost pile for organic farm waste. Only farm plants or produce waste may be put into the compost pile.

End of Year Reports
Farmers are required to annually submit an end of year report as part of this agreement. By December 15, a form for this report will be submitted at the beginning of each growing season so the farmers will know in advance what information must be tracked.

End of Year Maintenance
Farmers agree to remove all inorganic matter (trash, plastic mulch, landscape fabric, hoses, etc) from annual crop production areas within two weeks after the last harvest of the season. Use of row covers, low tunnels, irrigation or other means to overwinter crops are allowed. Trellising

and irrigation for perennial crops are also allowed during the winter. Farmers will be charged a $50 hourly rate if they do not clean out production areas at the end of the season and staff must clean it.

Dispute Resolution Policy
Historic Poor Farm staff and participating farmers agree to mediate all problems with one another through face-to-face meetings. If an agreement cannot be reached, the individual must provide a written notification of the unresolved conflict to the other parties involved and to the Historic Poor Farm staff. This notification should occur within 15 days of the face-to-face meeting. The Historic Poor Farm staff will provide a trained facilitator/mediator to attempt to resolve the conflict. The parties involved will be responsible for the fees of the facilitator/mediator.

The mediator will provide a written summary of conflict to staff. If mediation fails, the written summary will be forwarded to the Johnson County Local Food and Farm Manager and the Johnson County Board of Supervisors' Executive Director who will work together to make the final determination. The Local Food and Farm Manager and the Executive Director will attempt to come to consensus in all decisions, but if that fails, disputes will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for final decision.

Additional Resources. The standards of the Certified Naturally Grown Program are available on the Certified Naturally Grown website, https://www.cngfarming.org/produce. Certified Naturally Grown farmers do not use synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicide, or GMOs, just like certified organic farmers.

All protocols can be referenced in the Operator Duties and Conditions section of the Land Use Agreement.