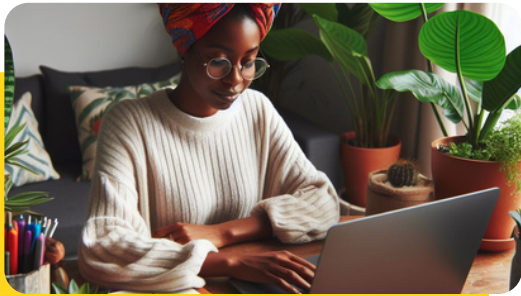




# GETTING STARTED IN FARMING



## WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF FARMING

Starting your farming journey can be both rewarding and challenging. Whether you're interested in traditional farming, urban agriculture, or hydroponics, having the right knowledge and resources is key to success. In this guide, we'll walk you through the essential steps to get started and provide a list of agencies and resources to help you along the way.

## THE SEEDS OF A DREAM

A patch of earth beneath your feet,  
A canvas wide, untouched, complete.  
With hands that dig and hearts that sow,  
The seeds of dreams begin to grow.

The dawn may rise with misty air,  
Uncertain skies, a humble prayer.  
But deep within, the soil knows,  
That every farmer's spirit glows.

Each row you plant, each seed you lay,  
Is hope in bloom, a brand-new day.  
Though storms may come, and winds may  
roar, Your roots will hold, your crops  
restore.

For farming is a steady art,  
A labor born from mind and heart.  
Through dirt and sweat, through sun and rain,  
You'll find the joy outweighs the strain.

So take the plow, and trust your hand,  
The earth will meet each bold command.  
With patience, love, and grit to stay,  
Your farm will flourish, come what may.

The harvest waits, the time will show,  
That what you plant will surely grow.  
So start today, and don't look back—  
The farmer's path is on track.

# STEPS NEEDED TO GET STARTED

## Step 1: Define Your Farming Goals

Before breaking ground, it's important to define what type of farming you want to pursue. Consider:

- Scale of Operation: Will you start small or aim for larger-scale farming?
- Farming Method: Traditional, organic, hydroponic, or SPIN farming?
- Crops or Livestock: Decide whether you'll grow crops, raise livestock, or do both.
- Target Market: Will you focus on local farmers' markets, restaurants, or a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)?

Take the time to research and think through your vision for your farm.

## Step 2: Choose Your Farming Location

Finding the right piece of land is crucial for farming success. Consider factors like:

- Soil Health: Test your soil to ensure it's suitable for your crops.
- Water Access: Ensure your location has a reliable water source.
- Zoning Laws: Make sure the land is zoned for agricultural use.
- Climate: Choose crops and farming methods suited to your region's climate.

Urban farmers should consider hydroponics, raised beds, and SPIN farming methods for maximizing small spaces.

## Step 3: Obtain the Necessary Resources

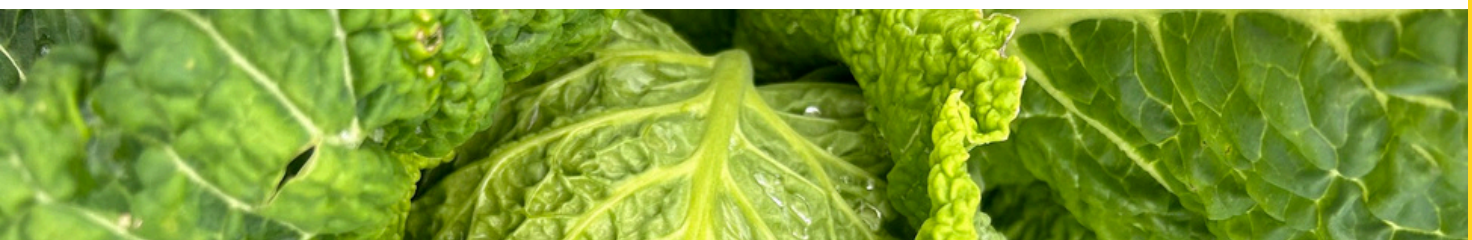
Farming requires essential tools, seeds, livestock (if applicable), and equipment. Here are some initial investments to consider:

- Basic Farming Tools: Shovels, hoes, rakes, etc.
- Irrigation Systems: Drip irrigation or sprinklers.
- Greenhouses or High Tunnels: For controlled growing environments.
- Seeds and Plants: Start with crops that grow well in your area.
- Compost and Soil Amendments: To enhance soil health.

## Step 4: Develop a Business Plan

A solid business plan is vital to securing financing and keeping your farm sustainable. Here are key components:

- Mission and Vision: Clearly define your farm's purpose.
- Market Analysis: Identify your target customers and competitors.
- Revenue Streams: Consider sales avenues like local markets, direct-to-consumer, restaurants, and online sales.
- Budgeting and Financing: Outline your startup costs, operational expenses, and revenue projections.
- Marketing Strategy: Plan how you'll promote your farm (e.g., social media, community outreach).



## Step 5: Secure Funding and Support

Farming can be capital-intensive, and there are several programs and grants available to help new farmers. Here's a list of key agencies and resources for financial support and training:

### USDA (United States Department of Agriculture)

The USDA offers numerous programs aimed at helping new farmers, including:

- Farm Service Agency (FSA): Provides loans, disaster assistance, and conservation programs.
  - Visit FSA
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): Offers technical and financial assistance for conservation practices.
  - Visit NRCS
- Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Program (BFRDP): Provides training, financing, and land assistance to new farmers.
  - Learn more about BFRDP

### SCORE Mentoring for Farmers

- A free resource offering mentorship and business advice for entrepreneurs, including farmers.
  - Visit SCORE

### Farm Credit System

- A nationwide network of lending institutions focused on agricultural loans for beginning farmers.
  - Learn more about Farm Credit

### Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE)

- Provides grants and resources for sustainable farming projects.
  - Visit SARE

### NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture)

- Provides grants, loans, and other resources for farmers looking to innovate and improve their agricultural practices.
  - Explore NIFA programs

## Step 6: Learn and Build Skills

Farming is an ongoing learning process. Whether through online courses, workshops, or community outreach programs, continuous education is key to success. Here are some **resources**:

- **ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture**: provides publications, webinars, and training for sustainable farming.
  - Visit ATTRA
- **Local Cooperative Extension Services**: Offer local workshops, soil testing, and advice specific to your region.
  - Find your local extension

## Step 7: Start Small, Dream Big

As you begin your farming journey, remember to start small, experiment, and learn from your mistakes. Track your progress and adjust your plan as you grow. Farming requires patience, persistence, and passion.

### Upcoming Workshops & Events

- Intro to Hydroponic Farming (November 14th, 2024)—Virtual Workshop hosted by USDA
- SPIN-Farming for Small Spaces (November 15th, 2024)—In-person event at I Urban Farm, LLC, Covington, GA
- Grant Writing for New Farmers (December 1st, 2024)—Online event

### Stay Connected!

For more information, updates on new workshops, and farming tips, subscribe to our newsletter. You can also follow us on social media for daily insights and inspiration.

### Your Farming Journey Awaits!

Starting a farm is an exciting adventure filled with learning and growth. Take advantage of the resources available to you, stay connected to your local farming community, and keep pushing forward. Your farm's success is within reach!



Chemical Free



Fresh & Healthy



100% Natural



Farm to Plate

Our produce

## From Our Farm To Your Table

I Urban Farm, your go-to hub for urban farming excellence right here in Covington and Conyers, Georgia! Explore our locally grown produce, cultivated with care to bring you the freshest and finest harvest from our local farm.

