



## Commercial Organic Growers Course

### Information & Application Form for 2023

This 4-day commercial organic growing course is intended to encourage a new generation of commercial growers. It is aimed at helping new growers in the UK to establish themselves to supply their own local buyers (like Manchester's co-operative - Veg Box People, Unicorn Grocery and the many farmer's markets around Greater Manchester).

The course will cover the main technical issues, including; - propagation, soil types and preparation, salad growing, crop planning and rotation, cover crops, marketing and machinery. It also supports new growers with business planning and finances.

This 2023 course will be taught online after an initial 'live' first session at our Stockport site. As part of the course you will be asked to put together a very short presentation on a business idea of your choice and present it to the trainer and the rest of the group on the last day. This is really informal so please don't be put off by it - it is an excellent opportunity to help you focus what you are learning into the context of setting up your food growing enterprise and to get feedback from the group.

We recommend that you do some volunteering on farms or market gardens that are available to you, in order to gain practical experience and get a taste of working at a commercial scale.

**The fee for the course is £200 (inc VAT).** Instalment plan option available on request to [farmstart@kindling.org.uk](mailto:farmstart@kindling.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you. Please complete the application form below as fully as possible, all information will be helpful. Places are limited and will be allocated to those applicants who show a commitment to becoming commercial vegetable producers and who are able to attend all the training and volunteering sessions.

Return by email to [farmstart@kindling.org.uk](mailto:farmstart@kindling.org.uk) by midnight, **Sunday 20th August, 2023.**

If you have any questions, please email the same address with your query. Please also enclose your phone number.

## Application Form

## Personal Details

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Postcode:**

**E-mail address:**

**Mobile phone number:**

## Pronouns

**How would you like people to refer to you when not using your name?**

She/Her          He/Him          They/Them

**Other:**

(We ask this so we can use the most respectful language when addressing you)

## Are you currently?

Employed          Retired          Unemployed          Student          Other

**What is your current occupation (if employed) and/or are you involved in any other relevant projects, initiatives or volunteering?**

## Growing Experience/ Knowledge

**How would you rank your current commercial food growing skills/knowledge?**

|  |   |  |   |                                       |              |
|--|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| I know nothing about commercial food growing | I know a little about commercial food growing | My commercial food growing knowledge and skills are fair | My knowledge and skills of commercial food growing are good | My knowledge and skills are very good | I'm not sure |
|  |   |  |   |                                       |              |

**Please describe your previous food growing experience (incl. acreage, crops, hobby/commercial, organic etc?)**

**What skills/knowledge do you hope to gain from this course?**

|   | Not important at all |   |   |   | Very important | No opinion |
|---|----------------------|---|---|---|----------------|------------|
|   | 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5              | 6          |
| Knowledge of running a food growing business.   |                      |   |   |   |                |            |
| Understanding of maintaining soil fertility.  |                      |   |   |   |                |            |
| Knowledge of small-scale market gardening, focusing on plant propagation and salad leaf production.           |                      |   |   |   |                |            |
| Knowledge of field-scale vegetable production, including pests and diseases and an introduction to machinery. |                      |   |   |   |                |            |

**Are there any other skills/knowledge concerning commercial organic growing that you are looking to gain from this course?**

**Business Proposal** - This course is designed for people who want to start growing commercially. If you have plans please outline them briefly below (if you have an idea but no plan as yet, the course will help you to do this so just outline your idea).

**Please outline your plans for growing vegetables commercially after the course (inc other people involved, types of crops, growing technique etc.):**

**Do you have a business plan and/or budget?:**

**Thinking about the future, would you be interested in joining The Kindling Trust's Farmstart Training Programme at Woodbank, Stockport?**

| Definitely won't | Probably won't | Maybe | Probably will | Definitely will | Don't know |
|------------------|----------------|-------|---------------|-----------------|------------|
|                  |                |       |               |                 |            |

**Please tell us about any plans you have for accessing land:**

## **Marketing**

**If you are local to Manchester, are you interested in supplying Manchester Veg People?**

**What market outlets have you considered for your area?**

**Why is sustainable food important to you?:**

**Please indicate why you are interested in attending this course?**

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither agree or disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|-------|---------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------|
|  | 1              | 2     | 3                         | 4        | 5                 | 6          |
| Build knowledge & skills to start growing commercially                     |                |       |                           |          |                   |            |
| To lead to future employment   |                |       |                           |          |                   |            |
| Hope it will assist me in setting up my own business                       |                |       |                           |          |                   |            |
| Connect with others who aim to start growing commercially                  |                |       |                           |          |                   |            |
| Haven't come across a course like this before & thought it would be useful |                |       |                           |          |                   |            |
| Other:   |                |       |                           |          |                   |            |

**Availability**

**Please confirm that you are able to attend training days on:**

- Day 1: Saturday 16th September
- Day 2: Sunday 17th September
- Day 3: Saturday 23rd September - half day
- Day 4: Saturday 7th October

**How did you hear about this course?**

## Privacy Notice

The information you provide us with in this form will be used by The Kindling Trust in order to review your suitability for the course, and its suitability for you! We also use application information to monitor and demonstrate our social impact.

By providing your information you consent to it being used in these ways.

Signed ..... Date .....

We will never use this information to contact you for any other purpose without your consent, and we will never sell or swap this information with any third party.

**Please let us know here if you would like to receive our 2 monthly e-news**, containing information from us about our work, future events and courses? YES NO

If you are successful in applying for a place, we may want to use some of the information you provide in this form - for example your name, why you're applying and what you plan to do next - to help us tell others about the course, via our website, e-news, newsletter etc. This doesn't include your contact details, obviously!

**Please let us know if you are happy to consent to your application information being used publicly in this way** (this is completely optional and won't affect your application in any way!) YES NO

We also take photographs on our courses to share with our supporters and to advertise future courses and associated events. Please let us know on the day if you do not wish to be photographed. Thanks!

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.**  
**Please return it by midnight on Sunday 20th August to [farmstart@kindling.org.uk](mailto:farmstart@kindling.org.uk)**

We will reply to you by email by **Tuesday 22nd August** whether you have a place on the course.

You will then be asked to pay the fee by bank transfer to confirm your place. We will send you further details and course sheets nearer the start of the course.