

Red Earth Farms Community Land Trust Membership Process

1. **The visitor questionnaire:** Before visiting us, people are asked to answer a few questions about themselves, their possible visit, and their interest in Red Earth Farms. The purpose of this is to help us focus our time and energy on those who might be a good fit for our community, and to increase the likelihood of a positive experience for all concerned.
2. **The first visit:** We typically ask that people visit for about a week, in order to allow enough time for integration and developing an acquaintance. During this visit, people are expected to offer members a hand, explore the land, imagine what life could be like for them here, and generally make themselves available so that we can get to know each other. This visit is free of charge.
3. **Letter of intent:** Visitors who are interested in pursuing membership should write to us about their wishes and intentions. In this letter, prospective members are asked to tell us why they would like to be a member of Red Earth Farms.
4. **Residency forum:** This meeting should ideally be attended by the applicant and the current members. The purpose of the forum is not to make a decision but to answer questions and address, if possible, any outstanding concerns that either party may have.
5. **Residency decision:** This decision, to be made by consensus of the current members, will result in one of the following choices: accepted for residency, declined for residency, or requested to visit again. The person will be notified immediately of our decision.
6. **Invitation to begin residency:** If the members consent to invite someone to become a resident, that invitation is held open for one year. If the person does not begin residency during that period, their residency invitation will lapse. In that case, if they still wish to pursue membership they must re-initiate the process at step 3.
7. **Residency at Red Earth Farms:** Upon signing a Residency Agreement, the person becomes a resident of REF Community Land Trust. We require that prospective members reside at REF for at least six months before requesting membership. The six months need not be continuous; residents may live elsewhere for some time in the middle of their residency, but if they are away from REF for more than one year, their residency will lapse. If they still wish to pursue membership they must re-initiate the process at step 3, unless the members consent to grant an exception.

A current member will be assigned as the resident's liaison to help with the transition. During residency, members will hold monthly check-ins with the resident to answer questions, air concerns, and help everyone discern whether or not the resident is a good fit for the community.

Unless they are residing on an existing leasehold, residents pay a monthly land use fee (until they become a leaseholder) plus a refundable deposit to cover the possible necessity of site remediation upon the resident's departure. Residents may not build any structure or otherwise alter the land without the consensus of the members, and residency confers no right to lease any particular area. Residents are encouraged to participate in Red Earth Farms business, including

meetings, but may not block any consensus of the members. They are also encouraged to begin creating a land use plan for any land they are considering leasing.

8. **Request for membership:** After a six-month residency, residents become eligible for membership. They may alternatively request a residency extension of up to six months, which requires a consensus of the members.

If they choose to request membership, they may apply either in writing or at a meeting of the members. There is an application fee, and a background check will be carried out. Any information gained through this background check will remain confidential, and all records of it will be destroyed after the membership decision is made.

9. **Membership forum:** Like the residency forum, this meeting should be attended by the applicant and the current members. The purpose of the forum is to address, if possible, any outstanding concerns that either party may have.
10. **Membership decision:** This decision, to be made by consensus of the current members, will result in one of the following choices: accepted for membership, declined for membership, or requested to extend residency. If the person is declined for membership, they will be given a reasonable period to wrap up their REF business and then are expected to depart.
11. **Invitation to begin membership:** If the members consent to invite someone to become a member, that invitation is held open for one year. If the person does not begin membership during that period, their application for membership lapses. If they still wish to pursue membership they must re-initiate the process at step 3, unless the members consent to grant an exception.
12. **Membership at Red Earth Farms:** Upon signing a Membership Agreement, the person becomes a member of REF Community Land Trust. Members may lease land at Red Earth Farms, and all leases must be approved by the Board. Alternatively, members may join an existing leasehold, in which case they may add their name to the existing lease, or they may continue residing on unleased land for up to two years. Any remaining funds from the deposit will be either returned to the member or applied against the member's lease fee, at the member's discretion.

All members, whether holding a lease or not, are bound by the Membership Agreement, the Red Earth Farms Community Land Trust bylaws, and the decisions of the Board of Directors. Members are expected to take part in Red Earth Farms meetings and other business, including participating fully in the consensus decision-making process, and to uphold and promote the purposes of Red Earth Farms.