



COLORADO YOUNG FARMER WATER FELLOWSHIP

About the Program

The Colorado Young Farmer Water Fellowship is managed by the National Young Farmers Coalition (Young Farmers). Young farmers and ranchers are underrepresented in Colorado’s water policy decision-making bodies, such as the Basin Roundtables, water conservancy districts, agricultural advocacy groups, local water districts, and conservation districts. As a result, the next generation of Colorado’s producers are denied a critical opportunity to help shape the implementation of Colorado’s water plan and their farming conditions, and the State of Colorado misses the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge of young producers.

The decisions made around Colorado’s water resources today will impact the state’s agricultural community for decades to come. The Fellowship will bring together stakeholders that will be most impacted by these decisions: Colorado’s next generation of farmers and ranchers. By providing opportunities for young producers to take a more active role in water planning conversations, and by providing them with knowledge and resources to educate their local peers around water issues, the Fellowship will lead to more farmers and ranchers deeply engaging in the water supply planning process.

The Fellowship is designed to address this gap through an educational program that will guide ten young farmers and ranchers towards water leadership positions in Colorado. Selected fellows will participate in a series of five virtual trainings and two in-person gatherings, and will receive support from Young Farmers staff in running for a seat on a water board or commission. Within six months of completion of the Fellowship, participants will be expected to lead a workshop training a cohort from their peers in water conservation techniques, as well as to seek a position on a water decision-making body.

Applicant Qualifications and Program Requirements

Eligible applicants must:

- Own or work on a for-profit, cooperative, or non-profit farm or ranch, or plan to start a farm or ranch in 2020 or 2021, within the State of Colorado;
- Be 40 years-old or younger at the start of the program (June 8, 2020); and

- Be a resident of the State of Colorado.

Applicants who identify as being part of a community that has been marginalized or excluded from policymaking processes, such as Black, Indigenous, and other farmers of color, are encouraged to apply.

What to Expect:

Fellows will be compensated for their time and travel if accepted into the program in exchange for full participation throughout the duration of the Fellowship. Each fellow will receive a **\$2,500 stipend** to cover the cost of their time spent in the program and running for boards or commissions. Fellows will receive the stipend in two installments, one during the fellowship and one upon completion of their local water training and final program evaluation.

Travel, meals, and lodging for Fellowship convenings will also be covered by the program.

Fellows will spend approximately 5-6 hrs a month on the program between webinars and independent work, plus one two-day kick-off and one-day graduation.

Webinars and trainings will cover:

- Water planning and policy in Colorado, specifically regarding the issues most relevant to farmers and ranchers;
- State and federal funding opportunities for water conservation;
- Public water decision-making bodies and how to run for boards and sit on such bodies, such as local water board, water conservation board, or basin roundtable; and
- Preparation to educate and mobilize fellow farmers and ranchers towards systems change on relevant local water issues.

Pending: One on one coaching to assist with participant-led water workshops and campaign to be elected to a water policy body.

Please note that stipends of this kind are taxable income. Grant recipients will need to supply a W9 form (including a SSN or ITIN number) in order to receive a check.

How to Apply

To apply, complete the application (www.youngfarmers.org/cowaterfellowship) and submit one **letter of recommendation**. If selected, Fellows will be notified by email on May 4, and need to confirm their participation by May 18.

Deadline: April 13

Contact Erin Foster West at westernwater@youngfarmers.org with questions.

Important Dates

Application closes April 13. Applications will be reviewed by National Young Farmers Coalition staff and a state review committee. The review committee members will be diverse in background, perspective, and experience.

May 4: Fellows will be notified of selection.

May 18: Deadline for fellows to confirm participation.

June 8 - 9: Program kicks off with in-person training in Denver.

June 28: Webinar 1

July 19: Webinar 2

August 9: Webinar 3

August 23: Webinar 4

September 13: Webinar 5

October 11: Graduation, in-person with location TBD.