

# **BattleGround to Breaking Ground**

## **Program Introduction**

### **What We Do**

BattleGround to Breaking Ground (BGBG) program is a 4-phase program designed to increase the number of veteran, active duty military, and other beginning farmer/ranchers in Texas and across the nation, as well as, to enhance their sustainability.

### **About the Program:**

The BattleGround to Breaking Ground Program is now available for participants in two ways.

#### **1. Tuition Waived Option (Application Required)**

Through various USDA funded grants, the BGBG program is able to provide 10 tuition waivers per cohort for veterans, active military, and 5 waivers for other beginning farmers and ranchers. This option is for completing Phase 2 & 3.

*Key things to note for this program track are:*

- Only 15 spots per cohort; Competitive application process
- In-person attendance to Basic Training & Graduation required
- 100 hours of hands-on training are required.
- Registration cost: \$125 for Basic Training

\*Must complete all assignments by due date to continue into Phase 3

#### **2. BattleGround to Breaking Ground Fee Based Program:**

The BGBG program offers a fee-based program, allowing participants to skip the applications process. This program provides Phase 2 & 3 of the BGBG program, as well as, the additional services provided by BGBG partners with some added flexibility in meeting program requirements.

*Key things to note for this program track are:*

- Available for veterans, active duty military, and all other farmers/ranchers
- No application process
- In-person attendance to Basic Training & Graduation are optional
- 30 spots per cohort available
- 100 hands-on learning hours required in Phase 3 and may be completed with a mentor or through hands-on learning events
- Cost: Phase 2 tuition \$600; Phase 3 tuition \$900

Please see the chart at the end of this document to compare the programs and their requirements side by side.

If you want to enroll in the BGBG Fee-based Program, please access the Phase 2 course directly through AgriLife Learn or through our website then pay the tuition to be added into the Phase 2 course.

### **What We Offer**

The BGBG training consists of:

1. Face-to-face and online educational training in farm management and production specific agriculture practices
2. Individualized educational planning to support diverse agriculture business interests
3. Hands-on learning opportunities connected to online course content
4. Follow-up mentor support.
5. Peer-to-peer learning utilizing a structured Community of Practice
6. Veteran transition, VA benefits, health & wellness, and disability coaching services
7. \$1,000 stipend for Phase 3 graduates
8. Opportunity to become a certified Battleground mentor and earn additional stipends for offering hands-on learning hours.

# **BattleGround to Breaking Ground**

## **Program Introduction**

### **Phase 1**

Phase 1 - Introduction to Agriculture Business (*Online Course*)

And

Phase 1: Introduction to Agriculture Production Bootcamp (*In-Person*)

- Designed for veterans, active duty military, their families, and all beginning farmer/ranchers
  - Online topics include business planning, rural business ideas, farming/ranching with a disability, funding sources for agriculture businesses, and more
  - In-Person topics include Basic Livestock Production, Farm & Ranch Safety, land management, conservation practices, Basic vegetable & crop production
- \*Phase 1 attendance is NOT required for application to program but is suggested

### **Phase 2**

Phase 2 - BattleGround to Breaking Ground Business Planning

- 16 weeks of online business planning courses including operations planning, marketing planning, financial planning, and more
- Individual Education Planning (IEP) to set your individual goals, make an action plan, and explore resources tailored to you to reach your goals
- Educational modules from agencies/organizations that provide additional services, like funding
- Transition and career services through VetAdvisors
- Disability/chronic health conditions services through Texas AgrAbility
- Plan an agritourism event

### **Phase 3**

Phase 3 - BattleGround to Breaking Ground Production Training

- 7 months of online agriculture production courses specific for your enterprise
- 100 hours of hands-on learning provided through mentorship and tailored learning opportunities to meet participant's skill needs
- Ongoing transition and disability support services
- Participation in the community of interest
- Individual Education Planning calls

Certificate of Completion are awarded to those who complete all the requirements of Phase 2 & 3. Certificates highlight skills participants gained through the program and may provide participants increased access to funding to start or expand their farming/ranching operation.

### **Phase 4**

Phase 3 Graduates who have at least 1 year of farm or ranch owner/operator experience are eligible to apply for Phase 4. Phase 4, also known as the Mentor Training Program, is designed to teach graduates of the BGBG program to mentor future participants. This course covers topics such as mentorship best practices, establishing relationships, networking, and goal setting. This program is **ONLY** open to BGBG graduates who successfully complete Phase 2 & 3. Mentors who complete the program will be eligible for a stipend for conducting mentorships and hands-on learning hours with mentee(s).

### **What You Gain**

- Business Plan to enhance management of your operation and to increase funding opportunities
- Marketing & Financial skills to enhance your sustainability
- Production skills to more effectively produce agriculture products
- Connection to networks and channels in marketing, financial, and operations
- Funding Options knowledge including loans and grants for veteran and other agriculture producers
- Stipends to grow and sustain participant operations

# BattleGround to Breaking Ground Program

## Phases Overview

Phase 1: Introduction to Agriculture Business Online Course Open year-round		
Who can participate?	Open to all	
What is included?	Online Digital Content	
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$30</b>	
Phase 1: Introduction to Agriculture Business Bootcamp Includes Phase 1 Online Course PLUS Hands-On Agriculture Production Training		
Who can participate?	Open to all	
Application	None	
What is included?	Phase 1 Online Course PLUS hands-on training in farm safety, diversification & marketing strategies, risk management, land management & conservation practices, soil management, basic vegetable production, basic livestock production, alternative & value-added agriculture enterprises.	
Where will training be conducted?	College Station, TX	
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$125</b>	
Phase 2: Business Planning January and July Cohort each year		
	<b>Tuition Waived</b>	<b>*Fee Based*</b>
Who can participate?	<b>Tuition Waivers offered to: 10 Veteran/Active Duty Military 5 Beginning Farmers/Ranchers Per Cohort</b>	Open to all: <b>30 Tuition Paid spots per cohort</b>
Application (Open year round)	Required: \$10 Application Fee	N/A
Basic Training	Required: In-Person only	Required: In-Person or Online
Agritourism Project	Required	Required
What is included?	Weekly agriculture business planning modules, weekly business planning feedback from experts, Individual Education Planning, Career & Wellness coaching services, Webinars on topics of interest chosen by the cohort, referral to additional resources, training in conducting & managing farm/ranch events, connection to an extensive network of successful farmers & ranchers	
Where will training be conducted?	Basic Training will be conducted in College Station. The remainder of Phase 2 can be completed online	
<b>Tuition</b>	<b>Free</b>	<b>\$600</b>
<b>Additional Costs</b>	<b>Basic Training: \$125 for participants &amp; \$75 for additional attendees</b>	<b>1 ticket to Basic Training provided free with tuition</b>

# BattleGround to Breaking Ground Program

## Phases Overview

<b>Phase 3: Agriculture Production</b> Spring and Fall Cohort each year		
	Tuition Waived	*Fee Based*
Phase 2 completion	Required	Optional with approved business plan
Application	Tuition Waivers to Phase 2 participants who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Met assignment deadlines in Phase 2</li> <li>2. Completed a Team Project</li> <li>3. Submitted all weekly assignments including a complete business plan</li> </ol>	Application not required if paying the tuition  <i>Tuition Waivers may be available to those who paid tuition in Phase 2 AND:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attended Basic Training in person</li> <li>2. Submitted all weekly assignments by course due dates including a complete business plan</li> </ol>
Who can participate?	<b>Tuition Waivers offered to:</b> <b>10 Veteran/Active Duty Military</b> <b>5 Beginning Farmers/Ranchers</b> <b>Per Cohort</b>	Open to all
Graduation at training farm location	Required	Optional
Agritourism Project	Required	Required
Hands-On Hours	<b>100 hours</b> - Can be completed with an approved mentor and/or at approved hands-on learning events	<b>100 hours</b> - Can be completed with an approved mentor and/or at approved hands-on learning events
Cost	<b>N/A for tuition waived participants</b>	<b>\$900</b>
<b>Phase 4: Mentor Training Program</b> 2 cohorts each year		
Who can participate?	Open to all BattleGround to Breaking Ground Graduates with 1 year of agriculture owner/operator experience	
Application	Required	
What is included?	Education and training in mentorship best practices including managing on farm safety & liability, establishing mentee relationships, adult education techniques, goal setting and education planning for mentees, and communication strategies.	
Location of Training?	Online	
Additional	BGBG Phase 4 Graduates eligible to receive a stipend of \$1,100 to train Phase 3 Participants.	
Tuition	<b>FREE</b>	
Additional Costs	Current Certificates in CPR, Stop The Bleed, and QPR Required	