



TAC Teaching and Innovation Farm Lab Farm Design RFP

Background:

The Allensworth Progressive Association (APA) was established in 1908 by the township's founders as the official governing body to conduct the community's business and foster civic engagement. Reestablished in 1997 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit, the APA is the community's development organization, serving a largely Latinx population, and handful of Black families.

The APA is tasked with identifying, implementing, and managing education, health, infrastructure, economic and regional restoration and revitalization projects, including the TAC Teaching and Innovation Farm Lab (TAC Farm Lab.)

TAC Farm Lab's mission is to create an agrosystem with structural and functional similarities to the natural ecosystem of the Tulare Lake biogeographic region; an ecosystem to improve the welfare of Allensworth residents and regional neighbors through intercultural processes. TAC seeks to develop alternative food networks that bring together food producers and consumers with a primary focus on food security, food sovereignty, nutrition, health, and regeneration. Together supporting a food system based on resilience, participation, localness, fairness, and justice that is sustainable and helps restore and protect Earth's support systems.

TAC Farm Lab is divided into sections: ten (10) acres for a Beginning Farmer Training Program dedicated to creating new farmers from historically Disadvantaged Groups, ten (10) acres for a commercial vermiculture and rabbitry operation, and close to 35 acres for crop production. All of the land mentioned is completing its third and final year of California's Healthy Soils Program. Currently planted are Montezuma Oats as a cover crop.

Location:

Totaling 58.56 acres

Latitude: 35.842643 Longitude: -119.391255

Tulare County Assessor's Parcel Numbers

APNs 333-370-010, 333-390-003, 333-400-001, and 33-400-002

Property is located at the southeast corner of Avenue 32 and Young Road, just south of the community of Allensworth, in Tulare County,

Project Description:

Regenerative Agriculture Definition:

Many descriptions and definitions are used to describe and define Regenerative Agriculture. TAC agrees with the description given by the California State University Institute for Sustainable Development's Regenerative Agriculture Initiative:

Regenerative Agriculture is a holistic land management practice that leverages the power of photosynthesis in plants to close the carbon cycle, and build soil health, crop resilience and nutrient density. Regenerative agriculture improves soil health, primarily through the practices that increase soil organic matter: low soil disturbance, living cover crop, crop rotation, Ecosystem diversity and managed grazing practices. Tac Farm Lab includes agro ecological principles of humane treatment of animals; the welfare and justice of workers and farmers, with both receiving fair pay.

TAC Farm Lab seeks to procure an individual or firm to design a model of TAC to serve as a communications and education tool with Allensworth residents and community interests. The design influences will come from TAC Farm Lab staff and Allensworth residents.

Goals:

Allensworth residents are creating a novel project for food sovereignty. TAC Farm Lab is attempting to create a circular economy. The creation of a visual design will assist in communicating the mission and values of TAC Farm. A design supports the storytelling to various audiences within a framework that allows individual creativity. A successful design is an *intuitive manifestation* not a Master Plan. It inspires conversation, healthy discussion and vision for Allensworth residents.

It is vital the design shows interconnection of micro-projects in respect to Regenerative Agriculture cycles. Designers will consider climate, local ecology, labor, equipment, tourism and commercial operations flow. A TAC Farm Lab goal will work on a multi-functional and varied level food production system with consideration of local ecology and social culture and worker's quality of life.

Statement of Work:

TAC Farm Teaching and Innovation Farm Lab is determined to create a multi-level diversified food system. TAC will grow crops that feed growing children. A food system that fuels parents doing physical work as farm laborers and the animals supporting the farm. A crop production system that celebrates the heritage and recipes of Allensworth residents.

The various micro-projects will support a circular, regenerative system focused on a multifunctional, diversified, resilient agroecological system.

Applicants will submit a previous design of existing work with details of design purpose and description of important aspects of the design.

The successful design will incorporate as many of the following aspects:

Crop Production is 35 acres with one (1) well:

- a. Multi- level for diversity, crop production, regenerative agriculture methods and water management
- b. Section for row crops
- c. Section for fruit trees
- d. Shading trees
- e. Section for flowers, herbs
- f. Section for experimental farming
- g. Section to grow rabbitry feed (up to 5 acres)
- h. Section for cover crops
- i. Pond or water catchment area
- j. Walking trails for tourism
 - i. Separate trail for small motorized vehicles: atvs, carts, small tractors
- k. Section for children to play- picnic area for workers and family to spend time together
- l. Border vegetation for security: wind break, fire prevention, hedgerows, bushes complimentary to ecosystem
- m. Infrastructure
 - i. Barn: equipment storage, offices, bathroom, kitchen area
 - ii. Green houses (two)
 - iii. Washing and processing area
 - iv. Cold storage (three)
 - v. Bathroom shed opposite end of barn
- n. Loading dock

2. Rabbitry- ten (10) acres
 - a. Rabbit barns: 10
 - b. Rabbit pasture
 - c. Rabbit Crew office
 - d. Commercial truck loading and unloading- designed for security and safety
 - e. Small barn: equipment, feed storage,
 - f. Section for vermiculture- windrows
 - g. Tree shading
3. Agritourism
 - a. Ethnic gardens - honoring different cultures and their contributions to agriculture
 - i. Filipino
 - ii. Black
 - iii. Indigenous American
 - iv. Latinx
 - v. Hmong
 - b. Infrastructure
 - i. 10 single personal dorms
 - ii. 4 small family dorms (parents and child)
 - iii. Community and gift store
 - iv. Outdoor common area
 - v. Outdoor kitchen
 - vi. Building: classrooms & TAC Administration office space
 - vii. Parking area

Submission Criteria:

Applicants are to submit up to three (3) examples of similar projects to TAC Farm Lab Goals and Statement of Work. Secondly, provide descriptions of your team and experience. Thirdly, elaborate your interest in the project. Lastly

In a few sentences answer the following questions:

1. Describe the experience your firm has working with small rural communities?
2. Can you describe a project serving BIPOC communities?
3. Provide your firm's statement on diversity and social justice.
4. What is your firm's experience creating regenerative agriculture ecosystems?

5. Describe your ideal 21st century food system for rural California.

Send electronic attachment: jam@allensworthpa.org

Project Timeline:

RFP Deadline: Open until closed

RFP Selection: Selection made by TAC Farm Lab staff and APA community

Project budget:

Submissions may include their own budget

Evaluation criteria:

Designs will be selected by a committee of Allensworth stakeholders and selected based on designs submitted, answers to summary questions. We encourage submissions from people of color, and historically socially disadvantaged groups.

Preferred submissions will be invited to interview with TAC Farm Lab. Eventual selection will work with Allensworth residents and TAC Farm Lab to finalize design.