



For Immediate Release, November 29, 2018 - From the Agricultural Justice Project

## **Soul Fire Farm receives Food Justice Certification**

The [Agricultural Justice Project](#) (AJP) is proud to announce that [Soul Fire Farm](#) has become the latest family farm to received Food Justice Certification.

**Soul Fire Farm**, a small highly diversified farm in Grafton, New York, provides weekly doorstep deliveries of in-season, farm fresh, certified naturally-grown food to hundreds of individuals in the Albany inner city living under food apartheid and targeted by state violence. Soul Fire Farm is committed to ending racism and injustice in the food system.



Upon receiving news of their certification, the Soul Fire Farm team responded:

“Soul Fire Farm proudly sought the Agricultural Justice Project's Food Justice Certification, recognizing that to date, it is the only farm certification that commits to an unequivocal focus on the rights of food systems and food chain workers, centers farm worker-led organizations, and was developed primarily by farmworkers and farmers in a participatory stakeholder process. As collaborators in a movement that honors the people whose labor has built the food system in this country, we pursued FJC in recognition of the striking significance of a certification that amplifies farmworkers’ voices while supporting their lives and livelihoods. In a food system founded on stolen land and labor that continues to perpetuate structural racism and injustice, we value FJC's insistence on fair pricing and fair labor practices that challenge food apartheid and the devaluing of the people who steward the land.

At Soul Fire Farm, we go beyond the organic standards and the FJC standards by working to dismantle the racist structures that misguide our food system. Through programs such as the Black-Latinx Farmers Immersion, sliding scale CSA farm share, and youth food justice leadership training, we are part of a network of farms working to foster land stewardship and leadership by Black and Brown people in the food system, reclaim Afro-Indigenous regenerative farming practices, and catalyze the transfer of resources and power from those with food system privilege to those impacted by food apartheid. In our own team, we strive to mirror the healing justice we seek in the world by uplifting radical self-care, community accountability, compassionate communication, distributed leadership, fair compensation, and commitment to personal and professional development. “

AJP's Food Justice Certification sets a high bar for social justice labeling in the US and Canada. This program is designed for all agricultural production systems, fiber, and cosmetics, as well as food. Candidates must meet rigorous standards that have been negotiated among stakeholders in the food system. The standards (which can apply to farms, buyers, distributors, processors and retailers—every link in the food system) include:

- Fair pricing for farmers
- Fair wages and treatment of workers
- Safe working conditions
- Fair and equitable contracts for farmers and buyers
- Workers' and farmers' right to freedom of association and collective bargaining
- Clear conflict resolution policies for all throughout the food chain
- Clean and safe farmworker housing
- Learning contracts for Interns and apprentices
- Protection for children on farms
- Environmental stewardship through organic farm management practices

This achievement by Soul Fire Farm demonstrates the organic farming community's commitment to improvement for standards in the industry. "This is a rigorous, nationally recognized certification that demonstrates the commitment of this farm to ethical practices, fair pricing and living wages," says Agricultural Justice Project co-founder and board member Elizabeth Henderson.

Leah Cohen, AJP's general coordinator, confirms that the farm meets the rigorous AJP standards for respectful treatment of farm employees, living wages, safe working conditions, and commitment to continual improvement. "Soul Fire Farm is a leading example of the ground-swell of grassroots social justice work happening in rural and urban areas across this country to change the food system. The culture of how people are organized, make decisions, collaborate, and advocate at Soul Fire Farm is tightly aligned with AJP's principle of stakeholder empowerment. This cultural shift will ultimately dismantle the underlying mechanisms of injustice in the food system that result in many bearing a disproportionately large share of the negative impacts and a disproportionately small share of the benefits of our current dominant food system."

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