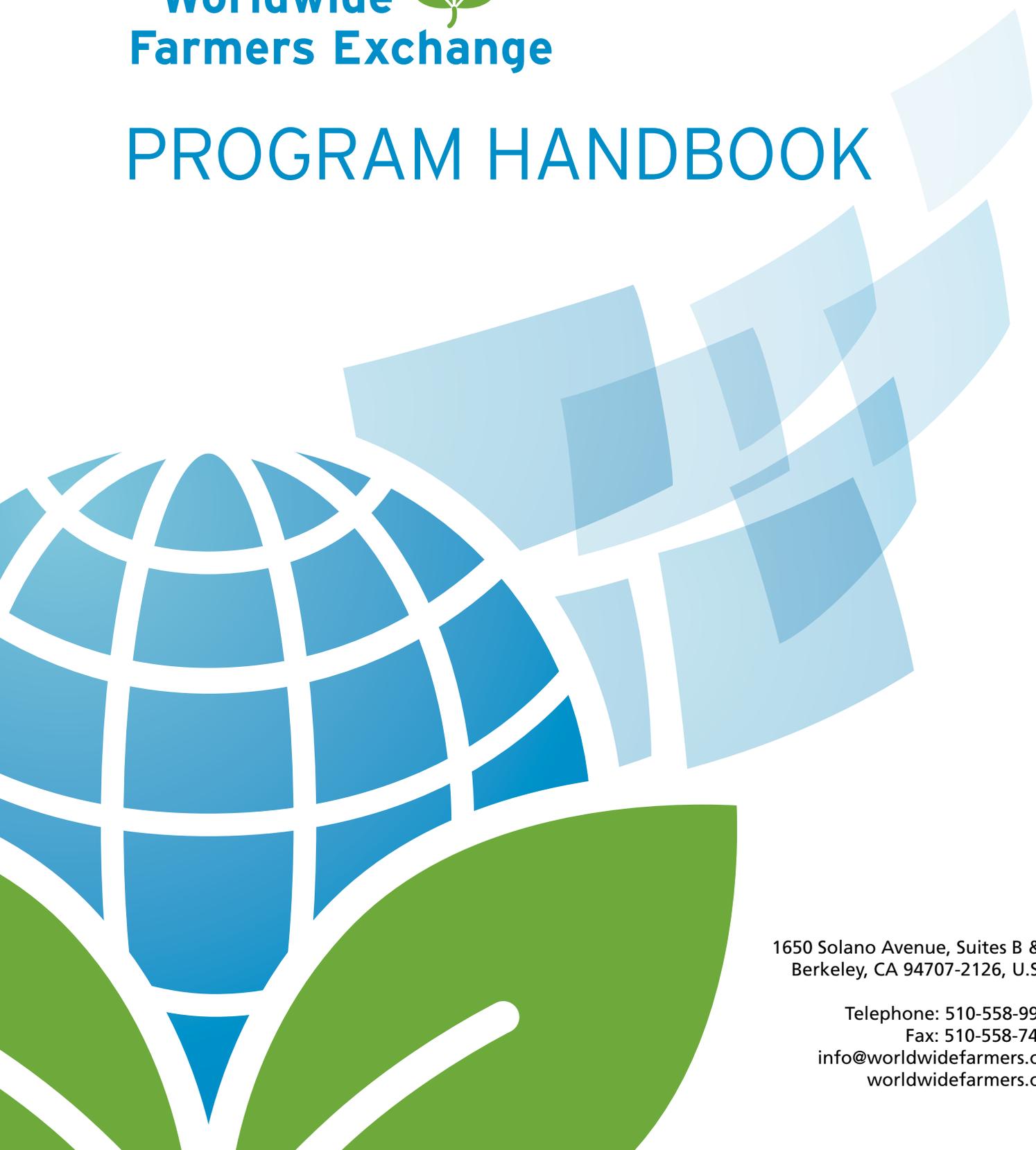


**Worldwide
Farmers Exchange**



PROGRAM HANDBOOK



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I. INTRODUCTION TO WORLDWIDE FARMERS EXCHANGE'S PROGRAMS

Worldwide Farmers Exchange (WFE) is a non-profit, non-governmental sponsor of programs for young men and women seeking to improve their agriculture-related skills in a different culture and country. This handbook has basic information about WFE's programs. WFE will happily answer questions or provide further explanations by e-mail (info@worldwidefarmers.org) or telephone (510-558-9933).

WFE has two basic programs for exchange visitors coming to the United States: 1) a viticulture and enology program and 2) a general agriculture program. While similar in many respects, there are some differences, which means that applicants and hosts must understand in which program they are seeking to participate.



II. RULES AND INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO BOTH PROGRAMS

- 1 **Training and Internship Programs.** Both of WFE's programs provide practical work experience in the U.S. as part of a larger cultural exchange. Both programs are oriented around agriculture. Placements are competitive. The steps from application to visa and travel may take from three weeks to six months or longer.
- 2 **Culture Shock.** Participants and hosts must be prepared to deal with culture shock. Living for an extended period of time in another country is different from a short visit. Every participant will experience some degree of culture shock during the first weeks of internship or training. This may be caused by homesickness; differences in climate, food, or living environment; or a combination of these and other factors. Our experience is that all participants can adjust, but it may require two to three months before they can be fully comfortable. Symptoms of culture shock may include anxiety, headaches, stomachaches, tiredness, depression, and difficulty concentrating on training tasks. Hosts may also experience culture shock, particularly when they receive a participant from a new country. Failure to recognize the symptoms of culture shock and to adjust may make things worse and reduce the value of the program for everyone. The first step in making an adjustment is for the host and the participant to discuss all concerns openly and regularly during the program. WFE's staff is always available to help.
- 3 **Exchange Visitor ("J") Visas.** WFE is certified by the U.S. State Department as a Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act program, which permits WFE to issue documents that allow selected applicants to apply for "J-1" nonimmigrant exchange visitor visas. A "J" visa obtained through WFE is valid only for participation in one of WFE's programs.
- 4 **Sponsor, Host, Applicant, Candidate, and Participant.** As used in this handbook, the terms "sponsor", "host", "applicant", "candidate" and "participant" mean:
 - a. **Sponsor** – Worldwide Farmers Exchange, which is responsible to the U.S. State Department for the programs.
 - b. **Host** – the agribusiness providing the actual internship or training experience.
 - c. **Applicant** – a person seeking to participate in a program sponsored by WFE.
 - d. **Candidate** – a person who has been selected by WFE to participate in a program.
 - e. **Participant** – a person who has received a visa and has arrived at the host in the U.S.
- 5 **Minimum Requirements.** As a minimum for selection for a program an applicant must:
 - a. Have English skills sufficient to understand instructions, to learn and perform training activities, and to avoid injury to self and others.
 - b. Demonstrate an educational focus or significant practical experience in the area in which training or internship is sought.
 - c. Be prepared to pay for all visa costs and travel to and from the host site in the U.S.
 - d. Agree to and comply with the rules of the program as set out in this handbook.

6 Intern or Trainee? The U.S. government classifies exchange visitors as interns or trainees with different qualifications and rules for each. WFE will determine which category best fits an applicant. A brief explanation of each is as follows:

Intern. To qualify as an intern, on the day the program begins a participant must be enrolled in, or have graduated within one year from, a post-secondary academic institution outside of the U.S. and seek to receive internship in his or her field of agricultural study.

Trainee. To qualify as a trainee, the applicant must either:

a. Be enrolled in or have graduated from a post-secondary academic institution outside of the U.S. and have at least one year of practical experience in the field of agriculture in which training is sought.

or

b. Have at least five years of practical experience in the field of agriculture in which training is sought.

7 Visas. A visa is needed for a participant to enter the United States. Once a participant has entered the U.S., the start and end dates shown on the *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status (DS-2019)* specify the authorized period of time a participant may remain in the U.S. to participate in a program. Normally the program start dates are flexible and can be adjusted by WFE to reflect actual arrival in the U.S. and beginning of participation in the program. When a program ends, the participant is allowed up to 30 days additional to leave the U.S., but may not engage in internship, training, or work during that grace period.

8 Visa Process. The following summarizes the steps from receipt of an application by WFE to arrival of a participant at the host location:

a. Upon receipt of an application, WFE seeks to match the applicant with a host that would best meet the applicant's goals.

b. Upon acceptance by a host, WFE and the host prepare a Training/Internship Placement Plan (DS-7002).

c. When the host has signed the DS-7002, the DS-7002 form is sent to the applicant for signature confirming that the placement is accepted.

d. When the candidate signs and returns the DS-7002, WFE prepares a *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status (DS-2019)* and other documents to permit the candidate to apply for a J-1 visa. WFE sends the documents by international courier to the candidate, directly or through one of WFE's regional partners.

e. Upon receipt of the DS-2019 and other documents, and before scheduling an interview with a U.S. Consular Officer the candidate must pay an *I-901, Fee Remittance for Certain F, J and M Nonimmigrants* (SEVIS fee, currently \$180). In order to schedule an appointment the candidate must also complete an *Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160)*. Before or at the interview, the candidate must also pay a visa fee (currently about \$140).

- f. The decision to grant or deny a visa rests solely with the U.S. Consular Officer. If a J-1 visa is granted, the U.S. Consular Officer will sign and stamp the DS-2019 and return it, but will retain the passport for the visa to be printed inside. The DS-2019 will be needed to enter the U.S. If the visa is denied, the candidate may ask if he or she may reapply for a visa.
- g. When the passport with the visa has been returned, the candidate must contact WFE and the host to coordinate travel arrangements. Failure to coordinate travel may create problems, including denial of entry at U.S. passport control.
- h. Upon arrival in the U.S., the participant must immediately contact WFE by telephone or e-mail to confirm arrival so that WFE may validate the program in the SEVIS database. The validation data from the DS-2019 is entered into the SEVIS database by WFE. Validation must be made before a participant may apply for a Social Security number. It takes seven to ten days for the SEVIS system to notify Social Security that the program participant has been validated. The SEVIS data is shared by several U.S. government agencies, and is used to record status, entry into and departure from the U.S., and other information relating to the participant.

- 9 **Visa Restrictions.** Participants are allowed to perform work as part of their internship or training program and to receive pay as part of the arrangement. Working outside an assigned placement without prior approval by WFE is strictly prohibited by U.S. law. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE. Participants working away from the host without prior approval by WFE may be disqualified and subject to deportation.

At the end of the program as shown on the DS-2019 form, participants must leave the U.S. for two years before applying for a new trainee or intern program, except that an intern may request a second higher level program without waiting two years if the applicant still meets all eligibility requirements to be an intern.

If a participant ceases to participate in the program or leaves the host placement without approval of WFE, he or she will be disqualified and must leave the U.S. without delay. Disqualification from the program will be recorded in the SEVIS database and the J-1 visa and DS-2019 will cease to be valid. Remaining in the U.S. out of status may lead to deportation and being prohibited from obtaining a visa to visit the U.S. in the future.

10 **Travel to the U.S., Arrival, and Travel During the Program.**

- a. **Travel to the U.S.** Participants are responsible for travel to their host site in the U.S. and for departure from the U.S. when the program ends. Travel times and the ports of entry must be coordinated with WFE and the host in advance.
- b. **Arrival.** Participants must notify WFE immediately upon arrival in the U.S. with the date of arrival and address where they will be living. WFE strongly recommends that participants bring the equivalent of \$1,000 when traveling to the U.S. to pay daily living expenses until the first stipend check or paycheck is received.

c. Travel During the Program. Under government regulations, travel outside the U.S. while participating in a program is not permitted without WFE's prior travel validation. In order to re-enter the U.S. after travel to another country (even to Canada or Mexico), a participant must have the travel validation portion on his or her DS-2019 signed by WFE before departure. Without a current travel validation, re-entry into the U.S. may be denied. Hosts do not have the authority to sign a travel validation. The DS-2019 must be sent to the Berkeley office for signature. In addition, the participant must have an unexpired multiple entry visa or obtain a new visa before returning to the U.S.

11 Serious Injury, Illness, or Death of a Participant. In the event of a participant's death or serious illness or injury, WFE must be notified immediately by telephone at [1-510-558-9933](tel:1-510-558-9933) or [1-510-334-0121](tel:1-510-334-0121) with as much of the following information available:

- a.** When and where the death or serious injury or illness occurred.
- b.** The name, location, and telephone number of the hospital or doctor where the participant was taken.
- c.** A summary of how the illness, injury, or death occurred.
- d.** Whether the insurance company was notified.
- e.** Whether the host was notified.

If an accident report or police report was made, a copy should be sent to WFE by e-mail or fax.

III. PARTICIPANTS COMING TO THE U.S.

A GENERAL RULES AND INFORMATION

The following rules and information apply to all program participants while they are in the U.S.:

1 Illness or Injury, Medical Insurance, and Workers' Compensation.

- a. **Illness or Injury.** Applicants must be in good health at the time of application. If a participant suffers a serious illness or injury, needs surgery or other significant medical care, WFE will discuss the circumstances with the participant and the host to determine whether it is possible for the program to continue. If a long recovery time is needed, a decision to repatriate may be made.
- b. **Medical Insurance.** WFE provides medical insurance for participants while they are in the U.S. with the program. The cost for the participant for medical treatment is a \$50 payment ("co-pay" or "deductible") for each injury or illness (except for treatment at an emergency room if not admitted to the hospital, in which event the payment is \$100). This co-pay is required by the insurance company. The participant is responsible for paying the co-pay, and it should be paid at the time of the visit to the doctor or hospital. The medical insurance includes coverage for repatriation if a long recovery is needed, or to bring a family member to the U.S. if there is a serious illness or injury. The medical insurance is effective while a participant is active in the program in the U.S. and for the 30-day grace period after the end of the program to allow time to leave the U.S. The medical insurance coverage begins on the day of arrival and ends on the day of departure from the U.S. if a participant provides a copy of his or her travel plans to WFE. If a participant does not leave the U.S. within 30 days after completing the program, the medical insurance will stop, and the cost of medical treatment will be the sole responsibility of the former participant, which in the U.S. can be extremely high.
- c. **Medical Insurance ID Card.** WFE will send a medical insurance ID card, along with other information about the medical insurance provided, by post to each participant shortly after arrival; the insurance information is also available on WFE's website. Participants are encouraged to review the medical insurance information to understand the limitations and exclusions. Some things are not covered, such as routine dental care, eyeglasses, care for pregnancy, or treatment of self-inflicted injury. Participants should always carry their medical insurance identification cards to show to the doctor or hospital. Participants also should take a claim form at the time of treatment and ask the doctor or hospital to complete the provider portion of the claim form or fill in a Universal 1500 form at the time of treatment. The claim form and Universal 1500 form must be e-mailed to aciclaim@visit-aci.com or posted to Administrative Concepts, at the address shown on the claim form. If the medical insurance card information is not given to the doctor or hospital and a claim form completed, the participant will be expected to pay the charges for treatment and will have to wait for reimbursement from the insurance company. Each doctor or hospital visit requires a separate claim form.

d. **Workers' Compensation.** Laws governing work-related injuries vary from state to state. Hosts will have Workers' Compensation insurance to cover work-related injuries, if it is required by the state in which training is taking place. The medical insurance provided by WFE covers illness or injury whether or not there is also Workers' Compensation insurance coverage.

2 **Serious Injury, Illness, or Death of a Participant.** In the event of a participant's death or serious illness or injury, WFE must be notified immediately by telephone at 1-510-558-9933 or 1-510-334-0121 with as much of the following information available:

- a. When and where the death or serious injury or illness occurred.
- b. The name, location, and telephone number of the hospital or doctor where the participant was taken.
- c. A summary of how the illness, injury, or death occurred.
- d. Whether the insurance company was notified.
- e. Whether the host was notified.

If an accident report or police report was made, a copy should be sent to WFE by e-mail or fax.

3 **Mail, Computer Access, and E-Mail.**

- a. **Address and Mail.** Immediately upon arrival at the host site, participants must notify WFE of their safe arrival and the actual street address where they will be living. Until a residential address is established, mail may usually be sent in care of the host.
- b. **Computer Access and E-mail.** Some hosts may allow use of the host's computer to access e-mail, but before using the host's computer, a participant must obtain permission and agree to all limitations placed on computer use by the host.

4 **Driving and Motor Vehicles.**

- a. **Driver's Licenses.** When possible, a participant should obtain an international driver's license before traveling to the U.S. If a participant does not have a current international driver's license, he or she will need to obtain a driver's license from the state in which he or she is placed before driving. Hosts may require a U.S. state driver's license in any case. All states require that drivers have insurance to protect others. Before borrowing a car, truck, or motorcycle, permission must always be obtained from the owner. A PARTICIPANT SHOULD NEVER DRIVE OR RIDE IN A CAR OR OTHER VEHICLE THAT IS NOT INSURED. WFE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE IF THERE IS AN ACCIDENT.
- b. **Cars and Other Motor Vehicles.** WFE recommends that participants not purchase a car, motorcycle, or other motor vehicle while in the program. If a car is purchased, WFE will help a participant understand the legal requirements for ownership, but only if WFE is contacted before the purchase. If a car is purchased, the participant is responsible for all maintenance and service. WFE will not be able to help if there is a problem. All states require that cars and other motor vehicle owners have Financial Responsibility insurance. Failure to have Financial Responsibility insurance is a criminal offense. WFE cannot assist a participant to obtain Financial Responsibility insurance.

5 Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs, and Obeying Laws.

- a. **Smoking.** There are many places in the U.S. where smoking is illegal, such as food stores, airplanes, elevators, public buildings, restaurants, wineries, and bars. Participants must be aware of areas where smoking is not allowed. If in doubt, one should ask or refrain from smoking. Because many people are allergic to smoke or find it offensive, it is best to ask before smoking in any confined space. Hosts may set rules prohibiting smoking or limiting the time and place that smoking is allowed.
- b. **Drugs and Alcohol.** The program will be terminated if a participant is found to be using illegal drugs or drinking alcohol to excess. The minimum legal age for drinking alcohol in the U.S. is 21.
- c. **Littering.** It is illegal to throw any trash on the ground or to vandalize or deface property. Participants should set an example of taking care of the environment. In many areas recycling is required. Hosts should know about recycling programs.
- d. **Obeying U.S. Laws.** For the most part, American laws are simply reflections of courtesy towards others, and are usually similar to the laws in most other countries. Respecting other people and their property will generally keep one out of trouble. Exchange visitors are subject to local, state, and federal laws to the same extent as U.S. citizens. If a problem occurs, WFE must be notified immediately with as much information as possible about the time, place, and nature of the problem. A program may be terminated by WFE if a participant's conduct or actions are deemed harmful.

6 Personal Safety. Everyone must be alert to safety risks. Hosts are expected to establish and enforce clear and effective safety rules and procedures. These rules may also cover housing. Participants are expected to follow all safety rules, including wearing of gloves and use of eye protection, when necessary.

7 Personal Hygiene, Grooming Standards, Dress, and Cleanliness of Housing. Most people in the U.S. bathe frequently. Some use deodorants to avoid disturbing others with their body odor. Similarly, they generally wash their clothes regularly and keep their living areas clean and tidy. Participants are expected to adhere to the host's standards of cleanliness while participating in the program. The host's standards of personal hygiene, grooming, dress, and cleanliness are usually obvious, but if there is any doubt the host should be asked about the standards.

8 Independence, Liberty & Freedom. Some see the U.S. as a country of extreme freedom, independence, and liberty. It might be surprising to learn that many of the laws and values in the U.S. are conservative. In the U.S., freedom does not mean: "do whatever you want", but freedom comes with a responsibility to not interfere with the rights of others. The rights of society are balanced against the rights of individuals every day in America. Because the U.S. has a diverse population with people from every country, there are many different customs and cultures, which means that the beliefs of others must be respected, whether or not they are agreed with. Americans often disagree with each other, but generally accept the right of others to have different views.

- 9 **Program Achievement and Early Departure.** Programs are normally for up to one year, but a program may be shorter to meet individual needs or those of a host. Participants must contact the WFE's main office approximately one month before the program end date as shown on the DS-2019 to coordinate travel arrangements to leave the U.S. Once the program has been achieved and required reports have been submitted, WFE will send a Certificate of Achievement upon request. If for any reason a participant needs to leave before the end of the program, WFE must be notified before departure. WFE may be able to grant a leave of absence so that the participant can return later to complete the program, or the program may be shortened by WFE and a Certificate of Achievement issued.
- 10 **Program Termination and Disqualification.** WFE may terminate a program at any time that WFE determines a condition has arisen that is likely to be detrimental to the health or safety of the participant, the health or safety of a host, or others. WFE may also terminate a program if the host's or WFE's rules are violated or for other disciplinary or legal problems. If a program is terminated by WFE, the participant must depart the U.S. as soon as travel can be arranged.

B VITICULTURE AND ENOLOGY PROGRAM

WFE's Viticulture and Enology Program provides work-experience internships and training at vineyards and wineries in the U.S. as part of a larger cultural exchange. Most programs are for the harvest and crush season. Placements are very competitive. Selection for this program requires substantial prior experience in the wine industry. The steps from application to visa and travel may take two weeks to two months and possibly longer.

- 1 **Housing.** Participants are responsible for arranging and paying for their own housing, but most hosts have a list of local accommodations that may be available.
- 2 **Program Length.** The length of the program usually depends on the crush season. The host will determine the start date and the end date of the program. Participants must inform WFE of travel arrangements for departure from the U.S. so that WFE can make certain medical insurance remains valid until departure.
- 3 **Program Reports.** The U.S. State Department requires that each participant submit a report to WFE about educational and cultural experiences during in the program. The report must be sent before the end of the program. The report may be made using the report form in WFE's website or as an e-mail.
- 4 **Finances and Payroll.** Because the program involves practical work-experience internship or training in viticulture and enology, and the host receives some benefit from the internship or training activities, the host is required to make payments for the benefit of participants. Hosts must place participants on payroll. Deduction from pay will be made for income taxes in the same way as with American employees, except that Social Security and Medicare should not be deducted. It is wise to check the first paycheck to make certain that no Social Security or Medicare deductions have been taken.

- 5 Income Taxes.** Income taxes will be deducted from paychecks, but most participants will be able to receive a partial refund of income tax withheld. To obtain refunds participants must file income tax forms with the government tax authorities. WFE will assist by preparing drafts of the necessary tax forms if a copy of the W-2 form (Wage and Tax Statement) is sent to WFE by e-mail or post. Participants must sign and send the tax forms by post to appropriate tax offices. The tax offices do not begin to process tax returns until mid-January, and processing usually takes about a month from receipt by the tax offices, but may take longer. Refunds can be transferred directly into a U.S. bank account by the tax offices if routing and account numbers are shown on the tax forms, otherwise the refunds will be mailed to the participant's home address shown on the tax forms. WFE will send detailed instructions to participants when tax forms become available, usually in mid-December.
- 6 Social Security Numbers.** A Social Security number is required to be added to the host's payroll, to open a bank account, and to file tax returns to obtain tax refunds. If a host cannot provide the address of the nearest Social Security office, it can be found online at www.ssa.gov/ along with an application form. Before a Social Security card can be issued, WFE must validate the arrival of a participant through the SEVIS database. It takes seven to ten days before the SEVIS system forwards a notice of validation to the Social Security system of a participant's validation. A Social Security card may be stamped "Valid For Work Only With DHS Authorization", or similar language. The DS-2019 form is the DHS authorization for the period of the program shown on the DS-2019 form. A participant who already has a Social Security number from a prior U.S. visit should use that number and not apply for a second number.
- 7 Bank Accounts.** A bank account will be needed to cash or deposit paychecks. Most banks require a Social Security number to open an account. WFE recommends that a bank account be opened with an international bank to make it easier to transfer funds out of the country. WFE has also arranged with a foreign exchange company to make low-cost transfers of funds to a bank account in most other countries. Contact WFE's Berkeley office for details of this program.
- 8 Tax Treaties.** Several countries have tax treaties with the U.S. that affect income taxes, but these treaties usually do not provide any benefits to participants in WFE's program. Tax treaties can be found at www.irs.gov/.
- 9 Program Achievement, Early Departure.** Most programs are for a few months, but a program may be longer to meet individual needs or those of a host. Participants must contact the WFE's main office approximately one month before the program end date as shown on the DS-2019 to coordinate travel arrangements to leave the U.S. Once the program has been achieved and the required report has been submitted, WFE will send a Certificate of Achievement upon request. If for any reason a participant needs to leave before the end of the program, WFE must be notified before departure. WFE may be able to grant a leave of absence so that the participant can return later to complete the program.

- 10 **Program Termination and Disqualification.** WFE may terminate a program at any time that WFE determines a condition has arisen that is likely to be detrimental to the health or safety of the participant, the health or safety of a host, or others. WFE may also terminate a program if the host's or WFE's rules are violated, or for other disciplinary or legal problems. If a program is terminated by WFE, the participant must depart the U.S. as soon as travel can be arranged.

C GENERAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

WFE's General Agriculture Program provides a practical, work-experience internship or training in a specific field of agriculture at a selected agricultural enterprise in the United States as part of a larger cultural exchange. The program will vary from host to host and requires prior experience in agriculture. Placements are competitive. The steps from application to visa and travel may take three to six months and possibly longer. Programs are for one year, unless other dates are shown on the DS-7002 form.

- 1 **Housing.** Housing will be provided by the host without charge to the participant and will be different with each placement, but housing should meet the following basic standards:
- a. The participant must have a single bed in a room shared with not more than two others.
 - b. The room must have adequate heat, ventilation, and electricity.
 - c. The participant must have access to a bathroom with washbasin and bathtub or shower.
 - d. The participant must have access to a kitchen, unless all meals are provided by the host.
 - e. The participant must have access to a telephone, but the cost of telephone calls is the responsibility of the participant.
 - f. Access to Internet, television, automobiles, and other privileges is at the discretion of the host. Use of such privileges may be refused or withdrawn by the host.
- 2 **Program Reports.** The U.S. State Department requires that participants submit two reports to WFE about educational and cultural experiences during in the program. The first report must be sent to WFE six months into the program, and the second report must be sent before the end of the program. The report may be made using the report form in WFE's website or as an e-mail. WFE cannot issue a Certificate of Completion until both reports have been received.
- 3 **Independent Study.** Participants are encouraged to engage in independent study while in the program. How much is learned during the program depends upon the amount of effort made and the willingness to ask for help. A great deal can be learned by talking with the host's family, neighbors, and employees and simply showing interest. WFE can assist in obtaining books for self-study in an area of particular interest. Participants are strongly encouraged to undertake a project, which may be research or may involve practical work. A report on the project may be used as one of the reports or may be submitted separately before the end of the program.

- 4 **Finances.** Because the program involves practical work-experience internship or training in agriculture and the host receives some benefit from the internship or training activities, the host is required to make payments for the benefit of participants. Participants will either receive a monthly stipend from WFE or be placed on the host's payroll. The details will be set forth in a Training/Internship Placement Plan (DS-7002). The two payment plans are as follows:
- a. **Stipend Method.** While in the program, the participant will be provided housing by the host at no charge, and WFE will send a monthly stipend to the participant. Participants are responsible for visa costs, travel to and from the host, and food and other personal expenses while in the U.S., and may be charged for utilities at the housing. WFE will provide medical insurance, at no cost to the participant except a co-payment for medical treatment required by the insurance company. The stipend amount is set by WFE in relation to minimum wage in accordance with an informal agreement with U.S. Department of Labor. The gross stipend amount will depend upon the placement and will be shown in the DS-7002, and from that amount WFE will deduct a prorated portion of its program fee each month. Stipends are deemed to not be taxable income under a private ruling issued by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
 - b. **Payroll Method.** While in the program, the participant will be provided housing by the host at no charge and placed on the host's payroll. Participants are responsible for visa costs, travel to and from the host, and food and other personal expenses while in the U.S., and may also be charged for utilities at the housing. Participants on the payroll method must authorize the host to make deductions from their pay to cover WFE's program fee. WFE will provide medical insurance at no cost to the participant except the co-payment for medical treatment required by the insurance company. Deductions from pay will be made for income taxes in the same way as with American employees, except that Social Security and Medicare should not be deducted. Exchange visitors with a "J" visa are not subject to deductions for Social Security or Medicare. It is wise to check the first paycheck to make certain that no Social Security or Medicare deductions have been taken. Participants generally will need to file a federal and possibly a state income tax return each calendar year.
- 5 **Income Taxes.** If a participant is on the Payroll Method, income taxes will be deducted from paychecks. Some participants may be entitled to a partial refund of some of the income tax withheld. Participants must file income tax forms with the tax authorities to obtain the refunds. WFE will assist by preparing drafts of the necessary tax forms if a copy of the W-2 form (Wage and Tax Statement) is sent to WFE by e-mail or post. Participants must sign and send the tax forms by post to appropriate tax offices. Taxes are on a calendar year basis, and tax offices do not begin to process tax returns until mid-January. Processing takes about a month from receipt by the tax offices, but may take longer. Refunds can be transferred directly into bank accounts in the U.S. by the tax offices if routing and account numbers are shown on the tax forms, otherwise refunds will be sent by post to the participant's home address shown on the tax forms. WFE will send instructions to participants when tax forms become available, usually in mid-December.

- 6 Social Security Numbers.** A Social Security number is required to be added to the host's payroll, to open a bank account, and to file tax forms in order to obtain tax refunds. If a host cannot provide the address of the nearest Social Security office it can be found online at www.ssa.gov/ along with an application form. Before a Social Security card can be issued, WFE must validate the arrival of a participant through the SEVIS database. It takes seven to ten days before the SEVIS system forwards a notice of validation to the Social Security system of a participant's validation. A Social Security card may be stamped "Valid For Work Only With DHS Authorization", or similar language. The DS-2019 form is authorization by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to perform work-experience internship and training for the period of the program as shown on the DS-2019 form. A participant who already has a Social Security number from a prior U.S. visit should use that number and not apply for a second number.
- 7 Bank Accounts.** A bank account will be needed to cash or deposit stipend checks and paychecks. Most banks require a Social Security number to open an account. WFE recommends that a bank account be opened with an international bank to make it easier to transfer funds outside of the country. WFE has also arranged with a foreign exchange company to make low-cost transfers of funds to a bank account in most other countries. Contact WFE's Berkeley office for details.
- 8 Tax Treaties.** Several countries have tax treaties with the U.S. that affect income taxes, but these treaties usually do not provide any benefits to participants in WFE's program. Tax treaties can be found at www.irs.gov/.
- 9 Program Achievement, Early Departure.** Programs are normally for up to one year. Some programs may be shorter to meet individual needs or those of a host. Participants must contact the WFE's main office approximately one month before the program end date as shown on the DS-2019 to coordinate travel arrangements to leave the U.S. Once the program has been achieved and all required reports have been submitted, WFE will send a Certificate of Achievement upon request. If for any reason a participant needs to leave before the end of the program, WFE must be notified before departure. WFE may be able to grant a leave of absence so that the participant can return later to complete the program, or the program may be shortened by WFE and a Certificate of Achievement issued.
- 10 Program Termination and Disqualification.** WFE may terminate a program at any time that WFE determines a condition has arisen which is likely to be detrimental to the health or safety of the participant, the health or safety of a host, or others. WFE may also terminate a program if the host's or WFE's rules are violated or for other disciplinary or legal problems. If a program is terminated by WFE, the participant must depart the U.S. as soon as travel can be arranged.

IV. GENERAL RULES AND INFORMATION FOR HOSTS

A GENERAL RULES AND HOST INFORMATION

- 1 **Minimum Wage Exemption.** Under U.S. laws and regulations, training programs that meet the following six conditions are exempt from the minimum wage provisions of the Federal Labor Standards Act:
 - a. The training, even if it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to that which would be given in a vocational school;
 - b. The training is for the benefit of the trainees or students;
 - c. The trainees or students do not displace regular employees, but work under their close supervision;
 - d. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees or students, and on occasion his operations may actually be impeded;
 - e. The trainees or students are not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period; and
 - f. The employer and the trainees or students understand that the trainees or students are not entitled to wages for the time spent in training.
- 2 **Selection of Participants.** WFE does its best to find candidates for appropriate internship or training for the entire program period. WFE bases placement assignments on the information in applications from hosts and applicants and from interviews. Proposed placements are subject to the host's acceptance.
- 3 **Minimum Requirements for Applicants.** As a minimum, for selection to participate in a program an applicants must:
 - a. Have English skills sufficient to understand instructions, to perform training activities, and to avoid injury to themselves and others.
 - b. Demonstrate an educational focus or significant practical field experience in the area of internship or training sought.
 - c. Be prepared to pay for all visa costs, and travel to and from the host training site.
 - d. Agree to and comply with the host's rules and the program rules.
- 4 **Placement Changes.** WFE may occasionally change or terminate a placement for the best interests of the program. This may occur when
 - a. WFE has asked the host and participant to accept a temporary placement until a more suitable placement becomes available.
 - b. The host has failed to abide by the rules of the program or meet financial or other obligations.
 - c. The participant's conduct is deemed harmful to the host, to the general public, or to the program.

5 Social Security Numbers. Participants will need a Social Security number and may need help in locating the nearest Social Security office. The participant must be validated by WFE through the SEVIS database before a Social Security number can be issued. It takes seven to ten days before the SEVIS system notifies the Social Security system of the validation. A Social Security card may be stamped “Not Valid For Employment” or similar language. The DS-2019 form is authorization by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to perform work-experience internship and training for the period of the program as shown on the DS-2019 form. The Social Security number will be needed to open a bank account and for tax filings

6 Illness and Injury, Medical Insurance, and Workers’ Compensation.

a. Illness and Injury. Applicants must be in good health at the time they apply for a program. If a participant becomes seriously ill or injured, needs surgery, or requires other significant medical care, WFE will discuss with the host and the participant to determine whether it is possible for the program to continue. If a long period is needed to recover from the illness or injury, the participant may be repatriated to recover. In the event of illness or injury, WFE should be notified immediately.

b. Medical Insurance. WFE provides medical insurance for participants while they are in the United States with our program. The cost for medical treatment is a \$50 co-pay or deductible for each injury or illness, which is required by the insurance company (except that treatment at an emergency room, if not admitted to the hospital, requires an increased co-pay or deductible of \$100). The participant is responsible for paying the co-pay or deductible, and should pay it at the time of the visit to the doctor or hospital. Medical insurance includes coverage for repatriation, if needed, and to bring a family member to the U.S. in case of serious illness or injury. Medical insurance provides coverage as long as the participant is in the U.S. and for the 30-day grace period after the end of the program. It begins on the day of arrival and ends on the day of departure from the U.S. If a participant fails to leave the U.S. within 30 days after program completion, medical insurance will stop. A medical ID card and other information about medical insurance is sent by post to the participant shortly after arrival. A claim form and more information is available on WFE’s web site.

c. Workers’ Compensation. If a host’s state requires Workers’ Compensation insurance to cover work-related injuries, interns and trainees should be included. Medical insurance provided by WFE covers illness or injury regardless of whether or not there is Workers’ Compensation insurance coverage.

7 Serious Injury, Illness, or Death of a Participant. In the event of a participant’s death or serious illness or injury, WFE must be notified immediately by telephone at [1-510-558-9933](tel:1-510-558-9933) or [1-510-334-0121](tel:1-510-334-0121) with as much of the following information available:

a. When and where the death or serious injury or illness occurred.

b. The name, location, and telephone number of the hospital or doctor where the participant was taken.

c. A summary of how the illness, injury, or death occurred.

- d. Whether the insurance company was notified.
- e. Whether the host was notified.

If an accident report or police report was made, a copy should be sent to WFE by e-mail or fax.

B GENERAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAM HOSTS

WFE's General Agriculture Program provides practical, work-experience internship or training in a specific field of agriculture at a selected agricultural enterprise in the United States as part of a larger cultural exchange. The training program will be different from host to host and requires prior experience in agriculture. Placements are competitive. The steps from application to visa and travel may take three to six months and possibly longer. Programs can be for up to one year.

- 1** **Housing.** Housing will be provided by the host without charge to the participant and will be different with each placement, but housing should meet the following basic standards:
 - a. The participant must have a single bed in a room shared with not more than two others.
 - b. The room must have adequate heat, ventilation, and electricity.
 - c. The participant must have access to a bathroom with washbasin and bathtub or shower.
 - d. The participant must have access to a kitchen, unless all meals are provided by the host.
 - e. The participant must have access to a telephone, but the cost of telephone calls is the responsibility of the participant.
 - f. Access to Internet, television, automobiles, and other privileges is at the discretion of the host. Use of such privileges may be refused or withdrawn by the host.
- 2** **Finances.** Because the program involves practical work-experience internship or training in agriculture and the host receives a benefit from the internship or training activities, the host is required to make payments for the benefit of participants. Hosts may choose either the Stipend Method or the Payroll Method. The details will be set forth in a Training/Internship Placement Plan (DS-7002). The two payment plans are as follows:
 - a. **Stipend Method.** While a participant is placed with a host, WFE will send the host a monthly invoice. This invoice will include the stipend amount for the intern or trainee and WFE's program fee. The stipend amount is set by WFE in relation to minimum wage in accordance with an informal agreement with U.S. Department of Labor.
 - b. **Payroll Method.** While a participant is placed with a host, WFE will send the host a monthly invoice for WFE's program fee. Participants with hosts on the payroll method will authorize the host to make deductions from their pay to cover WFE's program fee. Deductions from pay will be made for income taxes in the same way as with American employees, except that Social Security and Medicare should not be deducted. By law, "J" visa exchange visitors are not subject to deductions for Social Security or Medicare.

- 3 **Social Security Numbers.** Hosts may need to assist participants to obtain a Social Security number. Before a Social Security card can be issued, WFE must validate the arrival of a participant through the SEVIS database. It takes seven to ten days before the SEVIS system forwards a notice of validation to the Social Security system of a participant's validation. The Social Security card may be stamped "Not Valid For Employment" or similar language, but the DS-2019 form is authorization by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to perform work-experience internship and training for the period of the program as shown on the DS-2019 form. *A participant who already has a Social Security number from a previous U.S. visit should use that number and not apply for a second number.*

C INFORMATION FOR VITICULTURE AND ENOLOGY HOSTS

The program offers practical, work-experience internships and training for young men and women from other countries as part of a larger educational and cultural exchange. Because hosts receive some benefit during practical internship or training, the hosts must pay for that value. To do this, hosts must put participants on payroll.

- 1 **Housing.** Participants are responsible for their own living arrangements, but hosts can be helpful by recommending places that might accept them.
- 2 **Finances, Payroll, and Income Tax.** Because this is a work-experience internship and training program, hosts receive some work benefit during training activities and must make payments for that benefit. Participants must be placed on payroll. Income taxes must be deducted in the same manner as with American employees, but participants are not subject to deductions for Social Security or Medicare because the law provides an exemption for persons with J visas.
- 3 **Bank Accounts.** Participants may need assistance to learn about the American banking system and to open a bank account. WFE has arranged with a foreign exchange company for participants to make low-cost transfers of funds to bank accounts in their home countries.
- 4 **Social Security Numbers.** Participants will need a Social Security number and may need help in locating the nearest Social Security office. The participant must be validated by WFE through the SEVIS database before a Social Security number can be issued. It takes seven to ten days before the SEVIS system notifies the Social Security system of the validation. A Social Security card may be stamped "Not Valid For Employment" or similar language. The DS-2019 form is authorization by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to perform work-experience internship and training for the period of the program as shown on the DS-2019 form. The Social Security number will be needed to open a bank account and for tax filings.

V. AMERICANS GOING ABROAD

- 1 **General.** WFE has a working relationship with similar organizations in several other countries that are also members of the Grow Abroad World Alliance. These partners are able to make placements of Americans in their countries similar to the placements arranged by WFE in the United States. Each program is tailored to an individual's needs and desires. Upon receipt of a request from an American looking for experience abroad, WFE will contact the applicant with a detailed list of the information required for that country. Selection, management, and supervision of placements outside of the U.S. is the province of the cooperating organization.
- 2 **Minimum Requirements.** As a minimum, an American applicant seeking to participate abroad must:
 - a. Demonstrate an educational focus or significant interest in the area of training.
 - b. Be prepared to undertake training in accordance with terms set by the sponsoring organization.
 - c. Be prepared to pay for tickets for travel from and return to the United States.
- 3 **How to Apply.** Americans seeking to participate in an agricultural internship or training program abroad should complete an inquiry request. Upon receipt, WFE will contact an appropriate partner to obtain an application and information regarding placement opportunities in the country requested.
- 4 **Help by WFE.** WFE can assist in obtaining a visa, coordinating travel, and transferring funds to partner organizations.

VI. FINAL THOUGHTS

1 **Final Thoughts.** WFE seeks to promote increased and improved agricultural skills while providing a broad international cultural exchange. Our experience is that both the host and the intern or trainee must keep a positive attitude to obtain the maximum benefits from the program if the program is to be both personally and professionally rewarding for the host and the intern or trainee. We know that there may be difficult times, but frank and open discussions usually solve any problem and make the program a success for everyone.

2 **WFE Main Office**

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