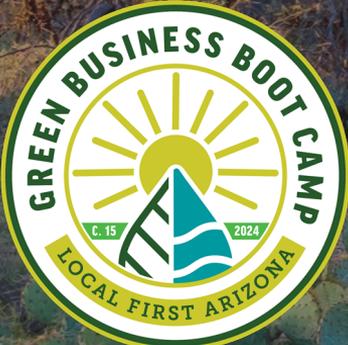




# Small Producer Workshop

February 28, 2026



Lisa Page  
Sustainable Small Business Program Manager  
Local First Arizona



# A little about my background...

- FFA/ worked on the college farm (managed the sheep unit)
- Worked at a variety of feed stores/ feeding animals as a side job/ horse trainers/ worked on ranches/ went to school to AI cattle
- AS in Livestock Management (CA) - BS Agriculture Education & Extension (NM)
  - Ag. teacher/ FFA Advisor in New Mexico and Arizona
  - NCAT (National Center for Appropriate Technology) ATTRA program (Ag, information service)
  - Production crop research in Yuma
  - UofA Cooperative Extension - Camp Verde (V Bar V Ranch - Youth Rangeland Education Program)
  - Third Party ag. Auditing company - verified cattle and ranch records to award Process Verified Programs (ie NHIC, source & age, natural etc.)
  - Sustainable Small Business Program Manager - Local First Arizona

# Helpful Resources NCAT (National Center For Appropriate Technology)

- ATTRA Program provides information, technical assistance and resources on sustainable/regenerative agriculture and energy solutions
- Especially for beginning farmers and underserved populations/ areas
  - Agriculture specialists, 1000's of publications available



A screenshot of an ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture article titled "Marketing Manure: A Value-Added Product for Small Operations". The article is by Lisa Page, NCAT Agriculture Specialist, published May 2019. It discusses how manure marketing can be a beneficial low-risk way for livestock producers to diversify income and reduce costs. The article includes a table of contents, an introduction, and a photograph of a large pile of manure in a metal trough. The introduction explains that manure can be a valuable product in its own right, and that marketing it can be a profitable way to diversify income and reduce costs. It also mentions that manure can be used for various purposes, such as fertilizer, bedding, and biogas. The article is part of the ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture program, which is a part of the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT).

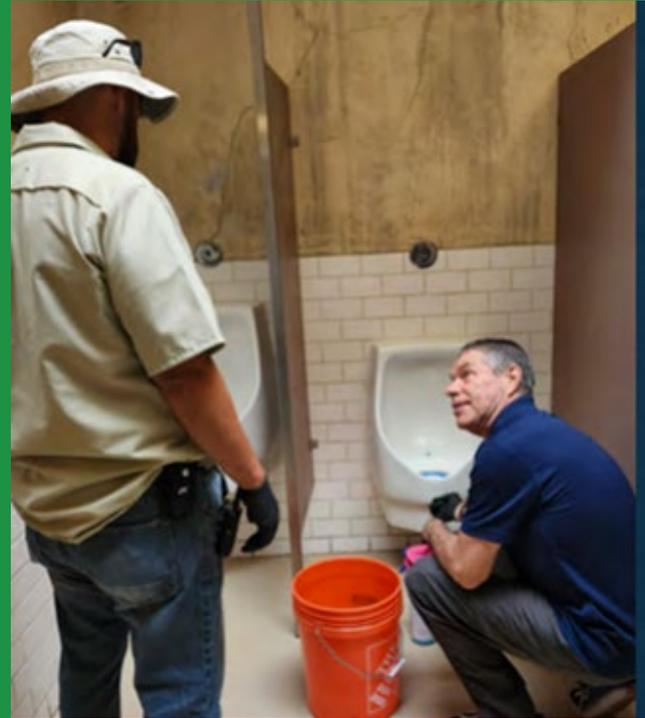


# LOCAL FIRST ARIZONA

Local First Arizona is a nonprofit organization committed to community and economic development throughout Arizona.

# Local First Arizona Priorities

- Increase Access to Capital and Financial Power
- Retaining Wealth & Talent in Rural & Tribal Communities
- Increasing Local Ownership
- Strengthening Arizona's Food System
- Reducing Small Business Environmental Impacts



 LOCAL FIRST  
ARIZONA™

# Local First Arizona Who We Are and What We Do

- Create a sustainable, thriving and inclusive Arizona economy
- Strengthen local business and communities
- Advocate for locally owned businesses
- Establish equitable systems
- Support entrepreneurship
- Promote local food systems
- Champion a self reliant economy

# Small Business Looms Large In Arizona

- 97% (600,000) of Arizona businesses have fewer than 20 employees
- Small Businesses (<20 employees) employ 40% of Arizona workers
- Small business in Arizona is less than 100 full-time employees

# Local First Arizona Key Areas of Focus

- **Business Support:** Serves as a coalition for locally owned businesses to increase their visibility and competitive advantage.
- **Economic Development:** Provides education, resources, and grant facilitation to rural and tribal communities to foster economic growth.
- **Consumer Education:** Educates the public on the benefits of choosing local.
- **Sustainability & Equity:** Promotes environmental action, such as energy rebates and waste reduction incentives, and works toward racial equity in business.
- **Food Systems:** Operates kitchen incubators and farm-to-fork programs to strengthen the local food network.

# Local First Arizona Business Incubator Programs

- Community Kitchen Incubator: Offers fully licensed commercial kitchen spaces in the valley with a two-year program to help food businesses scale, featuring walk-in refrigeration and storage.
- Fuerza Local Accelerator: A 6-month program that educates and assists local Hispanic business owners in expanding their entrepreneurial capabilities
- We Rise: A 6 month program that provides Black entrepreneurs with business plan training, mentorship, and access to capital
- Rooted Relative Fund: Provides culturally relevant, relationship-based loans and support to Indigenous entrepreneurs.

# Agriculture Related Boot Camps

- **Ag. Business Boot Camp**
  - 8 week hybrid program/ regional
  
- **Green Business Boot Camp**
  - 7 week in person or virtual program

# Ag. Business Boot Camp

**Ag Business Boot Camp** : 8-week hybrid program is designed to help small and beginning farmers in Arizona build the skills, confidence, and tools to succeed in the business of farming.

- **Central Arizona (Phoenix)** — March 16, 2026 - May 4, 2026 (Spring)
- **Southern Arizona (Tucson)** — July 13, 2026 - August 31, 2026 (Summer)

## What You'll Gain:

- **Business Mastery:** Learn to craft a robust business plan and set clear, achievable goals.
- **Growth Opportunities:** Discover funding strategies and explore new markets to expand your reach.
- **Safety and Innovation:** Receive guidance on food safety certifications and value-added products.
- **Marketing Savvy:** Uncover the secrets to sharing your farm's unique story and connecting with buyers.
- **Community Connection:** Become part of a supportive network of Arizona farmers and industry leaders.
- **Hands -On Learning:** Experience tours of successful farms and facilities.



# Ag. Business Boot Camp

Montapata Farm (Cornville)  
Pine Creek Canyon Lavender Farm (Pine)



## ARIZONA AG BUSINESS BOOT CAMP

### ARE YOU READY TO TAKE YOUR FARM TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

The Arizona Ag Business Boot Camp is here to help small and beginning farmers in Arizona build the skills, tools and confidence to succeed in the business of farming. The Boot Camp will take place over 8 weeks in a hybrid model, including in-person, Zoom and field trip sessions.



### WHAT YOU'LL GAIN

- A strong business plan and clear goals
- A network of fellow small and beginning farmers and farming resources
- Funding opportunities to grow your farm
- Tools to expand markets and reach diverse buyers
- Guidance on food safety and value-added products
- Marketing strategies to share your farm's story

### READY TO TAKE THE LEAP?

2025 SOUTHERN COHORT

• TUCSON

📅 JUNE 30 – AUGUST 18

2025 NORTHERN COHORT

• CAMP VERDE

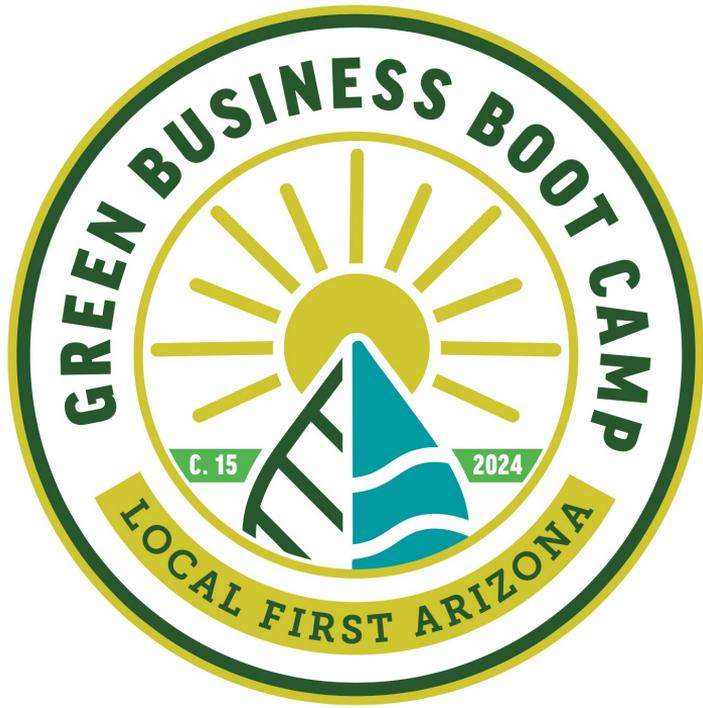
📅 OCTOBER 27 – DECEMBER 15

LEARN MORE AND APPLY: [WWW.GOODFOODFINDERAZ.COM/AG-BOOT-CAMP](http://WWW.GOODFOODFINDERAZ.COM/AG-BOOT-CAMP)  
QUESTIONS? REACH OUT TO [SWRFBC@LOCALFIRSTAZ.COM](mailto:SWRFBC@LOCALFIRSTAZ.COM)

# Green Business Boot Camp (Verde Valley & State)

- 7 week in person workshop series for all types of small/ independent businesses/ nonprofits in the Verde Valley (Especially farms/ ranches/ ag. producers)
- Help your business become more sustainable and resilient
- Connect with local subject matter experts for technical assistance
- Identifying challenge areas and finding sustainable solutions -  
SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT
- **FREE** (Nina Mason Pulliam Trust Grant)





## What To Expect

- Develop a plan to assess and reduce business emissions and costs related to energy, water, waste, and transportation by at least 20%
- Building business resilience to future shocks, especially those from supply chain and climate-related impacts
- **Access to green lending to make plans and projects a reality**
- Plan for long-term benefits to employees, the surrounding community, and environment.

# Green Business Boot Camp Benefits/Resources

- \$1,500 Intuit energy efficiency grant
- \$5-10k FVR River Friendly Living water conservation grant
- Free water audits
- Up to \$25k Green Loan Fund to complete sustainability upgrades/projects
- Becoming Green Business Certified (FREE)
- Knowledge and resources from industry experts
- Technical Assistance for up to one year after completion
- Connection with other locally owned businesses
- Being part of North America's largest locally owned business coalition

# Green Loan Fund

For Small Business Owners Looking to  
Save Money by Reducing Water and Energy Usage



Character Based Loan:  
Your GBBC project plan is your collateral

**These micro-loans will provide the  
following financial support:**

Loan amounts of:

**\$2,500 - \$25,000**

Low Interest Rate:

**3%**

Loan Term:

**Up To 3 YEARS**



<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DMawc80Nnrj/>

# Green Business Certification Available

- Certification process that recognizes businesses that follow best practices when it comes to energy consumption, water conservation, waste diversion, pollution prevention, transportation emissions and stormwater/wastewater management
- Ensures eco friendly standards and can result in monetary savings and improved customer loyalty/broadened customer base
- Self check/self paced inventory of your business's current sustainability practices



[az.greenbiztracker.org](http://az.greenbiztracker.org)

# Boot Camp Format Over 7 Weeks

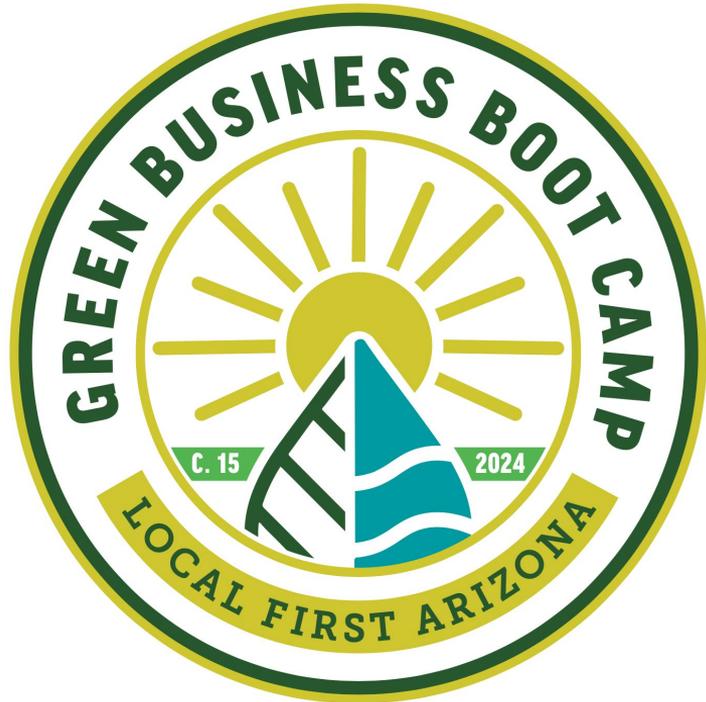
- WEEK 1: **Orientation (FVR) Sustainability Team, *Local First Arizona***
- WEEK 2: **Go Green - Save Green! (FVR) Sustainability Team, *Local First Arizona***
- WEEK 3: **Water Session (FVR) Isaac Dudley, *Friends of the Verde River***
- WEEK 4: **Energy Session (Sedona Airport) Bryce Beck, *City of Sedona Sustainability Dept.***
- WEEK 5: **Waste/Circular Economy Session (BRIC) Kelsey Hammond, *VV Compost***
- WEEK 6: **Transportation/Local Sourcing Session (FVR) Annamay Cory, *Pines Inn & Suites***
- WEEK 7: **Project Pitch Presentations (Camp Verde Library/BRIC)**



# Sustainability Project???



# What to consider when planning your Boot Camp project?



- Identify a challenge area in your business you'd like to improve
- **Benchmark energy/water use**
- **Create a brief project pitch to present at the end of the 7 weeks**
- **After the workshop, Local First Arizona will provide technical support to help you implement your project**

# Irrigation System Overhaul

- Purchased 25 acres in Alfalfa production
- Converting to Bermuda grass (Less water intensive)
- Laser leveling pastures for more efficient water utilization
- Replacing old leaking, broken and inefficient irrigation system with new pipes/valves and lining irrigation canal
- Will reduce soil erosion and create efficient water distribution on pastures
- Purchased a Trackhoe (through Local First financial partners) to do their own dirt work
- This project will save thousands of gallons of water with every irrigation cycle, putting precious water back into the Verde River for community use and river preservation***



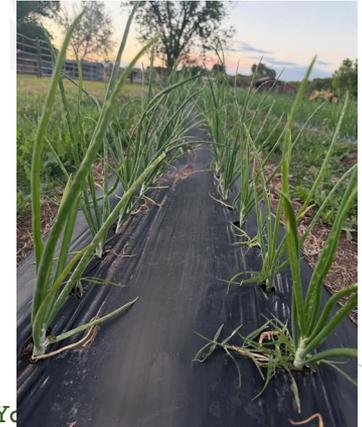
# Root Into Alchemy

- Regenerative agriculture plan for their garden area
- FVR grant award to install 4 rain harvesting tanks with a total capacity of 1100 gallons.
- This will reduce groundwater use for existing planting and also facilitate a future pollinator garden.



## Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement

- 2 acre produce farm in Camp Verde
- Furrow irrigation was not as effective due to Bermuda grass growing in furrows and preventing water movement
- Applied for a FVR RFL grant in Oct. '24
- Awarded \$5,000 for their project to install drip irrigation system to reduce the amount of water used and increase efficiency



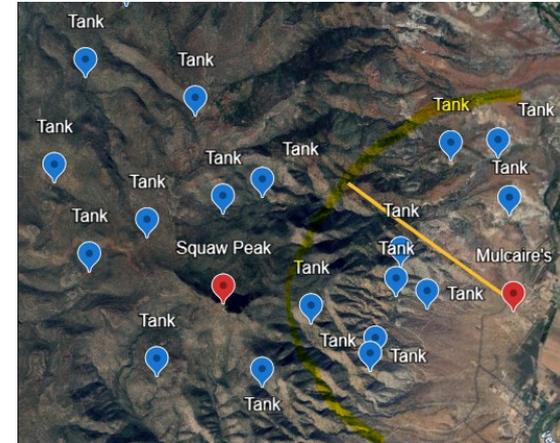
## Pierre's Prime Beef (Part 1)

- Awarded FVR grant to install a rain harvesting system to provide water for livestock.
- This will supplement well water for raising cattle.



## Pierre's Prime Beef (Part 2)

- Received a \$1,000 Intuit grant that allowed them to buy a drone to check their grazing allotments
- Check gates, check cattle location, check stock tanks levels and quickly identify leaks
- Saving an IMMENSE amount of hours, time, money, emissions, wear and tear on ranch vehicles etc.



# Local First Arizona Is Here To Help Support You!

- Resilient Food Systems
  - Support local farmers, ranchers, and food entrepreneurs to improve food access and strengthen local supply chains
- AZERC (Grant assistance for rural communities)
  - Pre Grant project and budget development
  - Funding research/ grant writing/ reviewing
  - Grant implementation/ management/ compliance
- Green Business/ Ag. Business Boot Camps
  - Next WGBBC cohort is May 13 - June 24, 2026



# The End!

Lisa Page

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