

Chicken Head Farm



Chicken Head Farm is located in Silver Lake, MN and run by Mohamed Gaabane. Mohamed started the MFA training program in 2011 and after 3 years, graduated from the program and immediately began the process to purchase his own farm.

From the start, Mohamed was very focused on his goal to become a farmer in the United States, and took advantage of every learning opportunity and resource introduced to him. Mohamed came to the U.S. in 2006, a 70 year old refugee from Somalia, speaking no English, but ready to learn and create a new life in the U.S. When he started the program, his goal was to buy a farm. While many participants start the program with that goal, the reality of the hard work of farming and the little economic gain discourage many. But Mohamed never took his eyes off his goal. He eagerly applied himself to all the program has to offer; attending all the trainings, driving out to the farm from Minneapolis and working in his plot often 6 days a week (in addition to another full time job) and asking for all the help he could get from staff in order to learn as much as possible. He sought out assistance and programs from other organizations such as MDA (Minnesota Dept. of Ag), FSA (Farm Service Agency) and NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Services). He was also the first minority farmer to receive a loan from AgStar's Minority Lending Program in 2012.

Now, the second season on his own farm, Mohamed has 90 laying chickens, 15 goats, 5 acres of sweet corn and another 2 acres of mixed vegetables. He leases land to a neighboring farmer who in exchange, provides mentorship where Mohamed is still learning. Mohamed is approached by many in the Somali community who now want to learn to farm and do what he is doing. Mohamed's new goal is to start a training program at his farm for Somali's to learn to farm in the U.S. and to benefit the way he has from the farming lifestyle.