

# Cycle To Farm® Metric Century *Training Series* Team Plan



Velo Girl Rides is sponsoring a team of like-minded individuals to enjoy the 3rd annual [Cycle To Farm ride](#) in Black Mountain, NC). We'll train as a group for **6 weeks**, line up at the starting line as a group, ride as individuals, and then celebrate our accomplishments together at the Fabulous After Party. This document attempts to tell you what it means to join the team!

We're excited about it, because both David and Jen have led two successful Cycle To Farm® Metric Training Series (2012 & 2013) and we know what a difference it can make for the participants. We've seen folks get off the couch, and a few months later, finish 62 miles and 5,000 ft of climbing in style!

We're very familiar with the routes for training, as we've ridden and driven these roads more times than we can count. Jen designs the schedule and routes, and both David and Jen will be leading the rides. We can help you not just finish this ride, but perhaps even enjoy it!

## **THIS TRAINING SERIES**

Many of you may be new to cycling, or perhaps you've never attempted a Metric Century in hilly country. If you need guidance in improving your skills, or simply want to build your endurance – this is a deliberate and consistent training schedule that will help you finish the demanding Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain route.

This training series will start **June 8, 2014** and run through to **July 13**. We will generally ride on Sunday, but if weather or other issues interfere, we'll have a make-up ride. You do not have to ride each of the six training rides, but we strongly recommend it.

In those **6 weeks** we will build our strength, power, and endurance. And perhaps pick up a few tricks-of-the-trade along the way.

Our training rides will follow a progression, consistently building us stronger and stronger, and will include routes specifically chosen to prepare us for known challenges of the Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain route (also known as "fun climbs").

All of the training rides in this series will be "supported". This means we'll have the VGR Van & Trailer available (nifty changing room), water for your bottles, bag-shower for post-ride cleaning up, snacks, and pumps/tools/spares. When appropriate (longer distances, challenging conditions) this will provide SAG support, with the VGR Van trailing you and/or leap-frogging ahead.

Above all, no one will be left behind.

And we will have some good company along to help guide you along the journey. Velo Girl Rides utilizes the expert help of training **Cycling Ambassadors** – these are cyclists who were once in your shoes, have grown in their love of the sport and skills on the road, and have volunteered to help you meet your goal of completing a Metric Century.

## **COST**

You'll pay Velo Girl Rides **\$99** to participate in this training series.

What you'll get for your \$99:

- SAG support from the VGR Van & Trailer on each training ride
- Coaching and encouragement on the training ride
- A Velo Girl Rides [quality tee-shirt](#) (\$20 value)
- Reserved spot (no matter what) in [Cycle to Farm® Black Mountain\\*](#)
- Sense of accomplishment when you roll across the finish line (priceless)

## **SIGNING UP**

You will need to do three things right away, in order to join us:

1. **Send VGR a check for \$99** to hold your place in the team. This is first-come, first-served and is capped at 15 cyclists... so do not delay. It is not refundable, given the many up-front expenses we have.
2. **Complete the Training Series About Me and Liability Waiver** forms. These will be provided to participants who secure their spot on the team by completing Step 1.
3. **Register for Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain.** You will be given a good old-fashioned paper registration form for this purpose – do **not** register by using the Active.com site as it may be sold out. (If you have already registered, just let us know).

Please do not delay, and please take all three steps. Call 540-320-2849 or email [jen@VeloGirlRides.com](mailto:jen@VeloGirlRides.com) if you have questions or concerns.

\*Event registration is transferrable to *Cycle To Farm® Sandy Mush* on October 11, 2014, should you be unable to ride the Black Mountain event on July 19, 2014.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Okay, once you've got the three-step process of signing up done, you can focus on your long-range strategy to enjoy *Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain*. A few things to consider:

You will **need to build a base**. Developing a cycling base means that you should log some miles on the bike prior to the start of this Training Series on June 7. Do not wait until then to start!

Ideally, you will have ridden 150-200 total miles on your bike during the 2014 cycling season before the first Training Ride with us. You do not have to ride "hard" -- the important thing is to regularly ride (2-3 times a week).

Then, as you build your strength in March, April and May... be sure to add some hills into your routine. We will start climbing mountains on the very first training ride, and we won't let up until you cross the finish line!

## LOGISTICS

**Show up early.** As you can tell, training and traveling as a group means that everyone has to be on time, no matter what. This is true for every Training Ride.

We will provide you with a detailed schedule of the 6 training rides, including where to be and when to be there.

**Bring food.** While we'll have energy food bars and other snacks in case you don't, it's a good idea to start developing a routine for food that works for you specifically. We'll have water in the VGR Trailer, along with extra bottles, but this too is a routine you will want to develop (if you haven't already).

## PREPARING EQUIPMENT

It's never a good idea to change equipment at the last minute before a big ride – so don't do this for *Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain*.

Instead, use the Training Series as an opportunity to **break in new equipment** such as shoes/pedals, shorts, or even a new bike, well before *Cycle To Farm®*. Plan ahead, so that you can test and modify your approach to a formula that works for sure.

You probably do not *need* a new bike to ride *Cycle to Farm*. We've had friends and clients ride 20-year-old bikes (after a tune-up), and we've seen a few mountain bikes on the course too.

But we strongly recommend that you obtain a *road bike* – configured for the hilly terrain of Western North Carolina. This generally means: 18-24 lbs total weight, drop handlebars, narrow saddle, gearing for hills, and (relatively) narrow tires of 25mm. These characteristics mean that you'll be (relatively) comfortable pedaling up hills for 5 to 7 hours (*Cycle to Farm*). Wondering if your bike meets these requirements? Just ask and we'll help you evaluate your steed.

*Mountain bikes* tend to be heavy, have shocks that absorb your pedaling efforts, and lots of friction resistance where the tires meet the pavement. *Comfort bikes* tend to have broad saddles that chafe after the first hour of pedaling, and a frame shape that prevents or limits standing up to pedal up hills – and they're usually even heavier than a mountain bike. Some riders can do Cycle to Farm with either of these types of bikes, but for most it will seriously detract from the fun.

Don't rule out *borrowing* a bike, or buying a *used bike*, for this season (building your base, the Training Series, and the big day). Sometimes using a bike for a season can help you develop an understanding of what *you really want* in a bike – there are *zillions* of choices, and no one configuration fits everyone.

We're happy to provide advice – so ask questions (and be sure to look through the blog posts about equipment, clothing and fit on [VeloGirlRides.com](http://VeloGirlRides.com)).

## PREPARING YOUR BODY

Use the same approach with **food and hydration**. We can help, and may even be able to arrange an educational session with a bicycle-specific nutritionist for this team. If you've had challenges with staying fueled and/or hydrated while exercising, please speak up so that we can address this during the Training Series.

As previously mentioned, use the Training Series as a test ground for your food and hydration choices, and make it a practice.

In addition to preparing our bodies for rigorous riding, we'll also need to start thinking about managing heat – hard to imagine in February, but historically, Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain has seen some hot weather. Third week of July in WNC can be like that!

## OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Velo Girl Rides is organizing and leading the Training Series, and providing support for the training rides during those 6 weeks.

At the Start of **Cycle To Farm® Black Mountain** we will also have the usual water for water bottles, snacks, changing room, spare parts for bikes, spare wheels, water-bag-shower, and other accoutrements we carry in VGR Trailer for tours and training rides – and you're welcome to use whatever you need.

## ONE CAVEAT

We need to emphasize that although we'll train as a group, **we will not actually ride as a group**. There are three reasons for this –

- Most riders will need to “ride their own ride” – varying pace and effort in order to finish. At 62+ miles, even small differences in pace will be magnified.
- Some Training Series members already have plans to ride Cycle to Farm with friends.
- David has a long day serving as the Safety Director and providing EMS support for all riders – you'll see him working, but he can't ride with you.
- Jen also has a long day at Cycle To Farm® serving as the Event Director; so she can't ride with you either.

Some (probably all!) of the Cycling Ambassadors that you meet in the course of the Training Series *will* be riding in Cycle to Farm, so you'll see them on the course.

All of that being said: we will be figuratively and literally sponsoring you throughout the Training Series. We will help you know what to expect on the big day; we'll see you at the Start; and we'll help you celebrate your finish! But bottom line, it will be up to each of you to *Ride Your Own Ride*.

## QUESTIONS?

Just give Jen a call 540-320-2849 or send her an email [jen@VeloGirlRides.com](mailto:jen@VeloGirlRides.com).

## About Velo Girl Rides

We provide Beautiful Cycling Experiences along the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the Asheville, NC area, and in the farmland and forests throughout the North Carolina/South Carolina/Virginia region. In addition to an annual end-to-end [Blue Ridge Parkway tour](#), we offer a variety of scheduled all-inclusive [multi-day tours](#), [one-day tours](#), as well as [custom tours](#) to meet your specific needs.

We also created **Cycle to Farm**<sup>®</sup> -- a farm tour by bicycle, with a challenging metric century route stopping at local farms for local food samples (and purchases). For your custom or scheduled tour, we can arrange reststops to meet the farmer who grows the food you'll eat in any number of the great Asheville-area restaurants, similar to the [Cycle to Farm experience](#).

To prepare for these fabulous experiences, we offer individual 1:1 training, for everyone from complete beginners to experienced adventure cyclists, and lead [2-3 training rides every week](#) to help build your strength and endurance. We often offer a training series focused on a specific ride, such as Cycle to Farm<sup>®</sup> and we bring riders in the VGR Van to other group rides throughout the region; see our [list of trips](#) we will take this year – join us!

[Sign up for our weekly newsletter](#) for more regular, automatic updates on riding opportunities, read more about [our tours here](#). You can reach us at [Jen@VeloGirlRides.com](mailto:Jen@VeloGirlRides.com) and mobile 540-320-2849.

