

FARM MANAGER

Supervisor: Operations Director

ABOUT PROJECT GROWS

Project GROWS is a 501c(3) non-profit and educational organization whose mission is to improve the health of children and youth in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County through garden-based education and access to healthy food.



The Project GROWS (PG) farm stewards soil life to support a healthy ecosystem that yields nutrient-dense and accessible food as well as beautiful, engaging natural spaces that promote self-discovery and joy. The farm is situated on a 10-acre parcel of land in the rolling hills of Augusta County where we grow over 12,000 pounds of mixed vegetables and perennial fruit annually. A portion of our produce is donated or used in educational programs and the remaining is sold in order to sustain our programming. PG's produce is sold through our mobile market program (multiple sites) and through wholesale arrangements with local public schools, afterschool programs, community food access initiatives, and restaurants/catering businesses. Through partnerships with local agencies, schools, and afterschool programs, PG's educational programs serve area youth each year on food programs including field trips, summer camps, school garden projects, cooking programs, farm to school tastings, and online education lessons and videos. In addition, PG manages two local farmers markets (Verona and Waynesboro). All PG farmers markets and mobile market sites accept and double Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as well as participate in other nutrition access programs, including the WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).

POSITION SUMMARY

The farm manager will possess strong experience and knowledge of ecological, year-round vegetable production as well as the temperament and interpersonal skills to train and lead volunteers and staff in farm tasks. A demonstrated aptitude to cultivate new and existing relationships within our community and a strong, self-motivated work ethic are important aspects of this position, as is a passion for sustainable and regenerative agriculture and a desire to work collaboratively with others to explore and develop ways for the farm to support and advance the food education and food access goals of the organization. The ideal candidate will be adaptive and possess a strong willingness to learn and grow in their role.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The farm manager will work closely with the operations director on all aspects of organic/ecological vegetable and fruit production on the farm, including:

- Oversee systems and schedules for planting, weeding, pest and nutrient management, crop rotation, and pest and nutrient management for approximately 1 acre of production. Production capacity includes a heated greenhouse, three high tunnels, and field production - all within a deer enclosure
- Oversee systems and practices for all food harvests, processing, storage, and distribution
- Hire, train, schedule, and supervise staff and interns on farm tasks and procedures
- Maintain strong relationships with schools, afterschool programs, and other mission-aligned partners through coordinated produce sales and donations
- Create and monitor annual production and sales goals as well as annual farm budget, ensuring appropriate purchases of materials and supplies
- Ensure maintenance of walk-in coolers, indoor processing room, equipment, tools, and storage spaces
- Maintain clear walking paths and education spaces across the farm

The farm manager will be directly responsible for the following:

- Create and manage weekly farm task lists
- Collaborate with food access team to develop annual crop plans consistent to achieve harvest goals for various distribution channels
- Collaborate with education team as needed to develop weekly lists of farm tasks for education programs
- Lead small groups of staff and volunteers in farm work
- Detailed record keeping for all harvest, sales, and donations
- Work independently on the farm

In addition to production responsibilities, the farm manager may also assist with the following activities as needed:

- Assist education team with hands-on garden based education
- Assist food access team with loading and unloading for markets

- Attend community and special events as well as lead farm tours and occasional workshops
- Other general tasks as requested by operations director

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Minimum of 2 years experience in garden or farm management or 4 years experience in organic/ecologically-grown vegetable production
- Knowledge of the principles of sustainable and regenerative agriculture, soil biology, low-till crop production, permaculture, growing perennials, using cover crops, and utilizing living mulches, incorporating stale/false seed beds, composting, soil testing, and other growing methods
- A desire to produce food of the highest nutritional, culinary, and ecological quality. A strong commitment to advancing equitable access to this food is essential
- A desire to continue to learn and grow as a person and as a farmer. Continuous personal and professional development is encouraged and supported at Project GROWS
- Excellent interpersonal and leadership skills including a strong work ethic and positive attitude, collaboration, receptiveness to feedback, and conflict management. A track record of success working in a cooperative team environment requiring a high level of planning timely communication, and documentation
- Detail-oriented with considerable attention to order, tidiness, and an ongoing commitment to improving systems
- Strong problem-solving skills and ability to adapt to changing conditions. Ability to juggle multiple relationships, projects, and responsibilities
- Supervising experience and the desire to train, mentor and work alongside staff, interns, and volunteers on the farm across racial, ethnic, generational, socioeconomic, rural/urban, and religious lines
- Must be able to lift 40+ pounds regularly. The farm manager will be expected to model safe lifting techniques, lead pre-work stretching and exhibit healthy and safe working habits
- Must be comfortable working outside including during hot, cold, and inclement weather and must be comfortable working both independently and as a key part of the Project GROWS team
- Knowledge of Google Workspace (Gmail, Docs, Sheets, Hangouts, etc.)

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience working with adults and children in a farm or garden context
- Experience with greenhouse management as well as machinery and power equipment, including BCS walk-behind tractor with implements and riding tractor with implements is a plus
- Light construction skills and experience is a plus

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Because our farm is located in an area without access to reliable public transportation, we recommend that applicants with access to a vehicle apply. In addition, a valid driver's license is required to fulfill job duties as is a clean driving record, for insurance purposes.
- Criminal, child protective service, and state police background checks will be required for final applicants
- Compliance with pre-employment drug screening and ongoing compliance with random screening
- Compliance with Covid-19 protocols established by PG to ensure health, safety and welfare of all parties

COMPENSATION

This is a salaried position starting at \$37,000, based on experience. This position assumes approximately 40 hours/week with some seasonal fluctuation. Benefits include health insurance, two weeks accrued time off (plus the week between December 24 and January 1st), federal holidays, share of farm produce, and the opportunity to work with an engaged and supportive team. This position may require occasional weekend and/or evening work during the growing season and for special events.

TO APPLY

Please send a resume, cover letter, ideal start date, and two farming-related references to hire@projectgrows.org with "Farm Manager" in the subject line. Cover letter should address how the applicant's personal values relate to this position and Project GROWS' mission.

Project GROWS is committed to inclusion, trust, respect, and a collaborative work life. We are committed to being rooted in and of our communities where we serve. We are committed to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color,

ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status, disability, gender identity or Veteran status. **For more information about Project GROWS, visit www.projectgrows.org**