

Job Title: Farm Manager (contract)

Purpose of Position:

Responsible to the Executive Director and Programs Manager, the Farm Manager is a hands-on – dirt under your finger nails – role responsible for managing/operating Providence Farm’s market gardens and related greenhouses to produce crops for retail sales, all within an organic and caring farm environment.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Horticulture

- Develop, communicate and execute the Farm’s growing strategy, which should consider crop selection, crop rotation, weed, pest and disease management, production of transplants, soil health and tillage, farm site and animal management, record keeping, budgeted revenues and expenditures and product marketing.
- Create and maintain an attractive and thriving organic growing environment, where quality and health of plants is emphasized.
- Order plant materials, seeds and hard goods in time for the growing season.
- Adhere to the budget allotted for maintenance and production.
- Implement various methods of propagation to replenish stock.
- Maintain a diverse selection and well-timed succession of row crop production.
- Direct seed and transplant for scheduled harvests.
- Research and develop new perennial plantings.
- Carry-out and/or direct all field activities: cultivation, irrigation, planting/transplanting, harvests, etc.
- Supervise farming staff.
- Maintain and inventory basic tools and equipment.
- Maintain tree fruit production, including pruning, thinning, pest control, replanting, etc.
- Maintain all farm equipment and facilities.
- Maintain the irrigation system.
- Set pricing for retail sales.
- Support CSA development and local farmers markets.
- Work with nursery and store staff to market goods and maintain sales records for all materials and services sold.
- Maintain a neat and tidy appearance of garden areas and related structures.
- Maintain accurate records of all relevant farm activities, e.g. crop selection, growing, harvest, etc.
- Manage all post harvest operations, including the proper storage of crops

Livestock Husbandry

- Ensure the care, health and wellbeing of all livestock.
- Manage all tasks related to breeding and herd/flock development.
- Purchase food, nutrient and medications for the livestock.
- Keep records of all livestock related to breeding, production, purchasing and processing.
- Set prices for all livestock related products for sale.

Training

- Transfer skills in basic growing that pertain to market garden crop production and retail sales to interns, volunteers and others who contribute to the growing environment.

- Model, demonstrate and teach employment skills where applicable.

Communication and Reporting

- Maintain appropriate levels of communication with other growers, participants and supervisors.
- Complete and submit critical incident and accident reports when needed.
- Participate in the staff assessment process when required.

Other

- Facilitate open interaction and problem solving between co-workers, volunteers and staff.
- Make available and account for plant material to support other programs and fund raising activities on the Farm.
- Act as an ambassador for the Farm during farm tours and when working with school groups, volunteers and others interested in working on the Farm.
- Assume additional responsibilities, when agreed on, at the request of supervisor.
- Attend in-service training sessions when required, as available.
- Attend Grower Meetings and/or Farm Planning Meetings as needed.
- Collaborate with other staff to help organize the daily work assignments.
- Represent Providence Farm within the agricultural industry.

Qualifications and Attributes:

- Minimum 5 years market farming field and business experience.
- Formal horticultural education or training.
- Experience with crop selection, crop rotation, weed, pest and disease management, production of transplants, soil health and tillage, farm site and animal management, record keeping and product marketing, all within an organic farm environment.
- Ability to keep financial records and manage spending in accordance with budgets.
- Strong interpersonal, supervisory and communication skills.
- Knowledge of basic tools, machinery operation and maintenance.
- Ability to think broadly and problem solve.
- Good organizational skills.
- Driver's license.
- Capacity to respectfully work alongside individuals with challenges and barriers to full engagement in the community.

Work Conditions and Physical Capabilities:

- Outdoors.
- Physically demanding.
- Combination of sitting, standing, walking, bending, crouching and kneeling.
- Standing for extended periods of time.

Hours of Work:

This is a contract role and hours are self-set to accomplish all the aforementioned duties throughout the calendar year. It is anticipated to be an 8-month position with some weeks in the peak season being 60 hours (5-6 days per week) offset by weeks in low season being 20 hours (3-4 days per week).

Contract Terms:

The Farm Manager posting closes on Saturday, February 25th. The position will run from approximately mid-March through mid-November, and compensation is currently under review.

The Organization:

Providence Farm is a therapeutic farm nestled at the base of Mount Tzouhalem in the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Since 1979, the Vancouver Island Providence Community Association, a registered charity and non-profit society, has been operating creative and innovative programs at the Farm for adults in the Valley with mental health issues, brain injuries and development challenges.



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