



Backbone Food Farm
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Assistant Farm Manager Job Description

Backbone Food Farm is hiring an Assistant Farm Manager to work with us for the 2012 growing season and subsequent years to come. We are looking for a person to join our crew to supervise, in conjunction with the two head farmers, our 12 acre produce operation. Our season runs March 15- October 30.

About Backbone

BBFF is a 530 acre farm located in the rich farmlands and rolling mountains of western Maryland. About 100 acres of the farm are fields, which we use for produce, hay and pasture. The remainder is wooded. We are entering our thirteenth year here, and have been growing produce since the day we moved in. We are Certified Naturally Grown, using only sustainable and organic methods in a bio-extensive system. Animal manure and regular cover cropping provide our soil health, with minimal amendments added. In addition to a small tractor, we use two teams of Percheron draft horses for most field and garden work. All other work is done by hand. Season extension is important here in our zone 5 growing area, and we supplement our main gardens with a 24x96 high tunnel and several smaller hoopouses. In addition to growing a wide variety of vegetables, we have a small livestock operation. We raise pigs and cows for beef as well as milk for the farm. Another focus for the farm is our expanding culinary mushroom production. We rotate 1200 logs during the season, and fruit about 300 a week. Oyster mushrooms will be included in our offerings this year, as well as an expanded mushroom fruiting facility.

We provide produce for a wide circle, our local community and nearby small towns with an appetite for local, organic produce. We operate a 50 family CSA, and attend 5 markets a week- two here in Oakland, one in Morgantown, WV, one in Frostburg, MD and one in Cumberland, MD.

About the job

This position involves the overseeing and implementation of vegetable production using sustainable and organic methods including the following:

Planting- seeding in the greenhouse, soil block making, greenhouse management, direct seeding, trans planting, raised bed preparation

Growing- weeding, trellising, pest and disease management, irrigation using drip tape and sprinklers

Harvesting- carrying out the harvest schedule, selecting and harvesting high quality produce for CSA and markets.

Processing- coordinating and assisting with the washing, bunching, packing and preparing produce for market

Marketing- assisting in farmers market sales and display set up, and CSA distributions

Shiitake Mushroom Cultivation- weekly rotation of 1200 logs, soaking, stacking, and harvesting of shiitakes

Management – respectfully and efficiently assign duties to crew of interns, WWOOFERS and other misc. volunteers

Who are we looking for?

Applicants must have a minimum of two years experience working on an organic produce operation or similar situation. A knowledge of small farming skills listed in duties above, and experience with small tractors and equipment preferable. The assistant farm manager needs to develop a good understanding of the rhythm of farm work. This includes knowing the appropriate time to do certain tasks both on a daily and weekly schedule, but also how long to allow for task completion and maintaining a schedule. A good candidate will be able to be self-directed but also to take direction from the head farmers. The position requires physical stamina. The assistant farm manager will be expected to work long hours outside, lift heavy objects and use hand tools regularly.

We are looking for someone to lead our crew who is dedicated, dependable, flexible, good-humored and genuinely interested in growing wholesome, chemical-free food on a small sustainable family farm. Organization and self-motivation are imperative at Backbone.

We pride ourselves on having a crew that works well together and enjoys the work we do. Being able to support fellow workers and get along well with a variety of personality types is as important as being able to maintain speed with repetitive physical tasks.

Applicants must have a valid driver's license and submit a resume with three references.

Direct all inquiries to:

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Visit www.backbonefarm to learn more about us!