

**JOB DESCRIPTION: Director of Farming**  
**SUPERVISOR: Executive 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 the Central Shenandoah Valley through garden-based education and access to healthy food. Project GROWS (PG) partners with 22 local schools and organizations annually to serve 5,000 youth with gardening, environmental, nutrition, and cooking education.

The Project GROWS (PG) Farm cultivates 4 acres of mixed vegetables and perennial fruit on our 10-acre farm in the rolling hills of Augusta County, Virginia where we grow 15,000 pounds of food 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 to local public schools, afterschool programs, and community food access initiatives; at multiple farmers markets; and through our 40-member Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. New barn facilities include an indoor processing room, two walk-in coolers, office and meeting space, and multiple storage rooms.

Project GROWS manages two local farmer's markets (North Augusta and Waynesboro Farmers' Markets). Both of these markets, as well as our CSA program, offer a SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) matching program for families using their SNAP benefits at our markets and for the purchase of CSA shares. In addition, PG partners with senior living facilities, afterschool programs, and the Staunton-Augusta Health Department to provide "mobile" farmers markets serving food insecure and low-income families.

**POSITION SUMMARY**

The Director of Farming oversees the diverse agricultural production that is central to Project GROWS' mission and day-to-day operations. This position requires someone with significant agricultural 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, sometimes under stressful conditions characteristic of outdoor work. A demonstrated aptitude to engage and cultivate new relationships within our community and a strong, self-motivated work ethic are essential to this position, as is a passion for sustainable agriculture and a desire to work collaboratively with others who are committed to food justice. The Director of Farming will work with our Leadership Team and Board of Directors to explore and develop ways for the Project GROWS farm to support and advance the food education and access goals of the organization.

**PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Develop and oversee cropping systems for vegetable and fruit production on the 4-acres currently in cultivation, with attention to nutrient management using organic practices. Production capacity includes a heated greenhouse, three high tunnels, and field production -- all within a deer enclosure
- Develop and monitor irrigation systems and hand-water as needed, creating and managing a watering schedule for greenhouse and all other plants
- Hire, train, and supervise farm staff and interns
- Create and manage weekly farm task lists and lead small groups of staff and volunteers in farm work
- Oversee 20-week CSA, including customer communication and coordination of weekly shares
- Weekly coordination of direct sales to schools, afterschool programs, and other mission-aligned partners as well as donations through community partnerships and programs
- Develop annual crop plans consistent with organic standards to achieve harvest goals for our various distribution channels (i.e. CSA, farmer's markets, direct sales, and donations)
- Work with Executive Director to create annual production and sales goals
- Develop and monitor annual farm budget, ensuring appropriate purchases of materials and supplies
- Detailed record keeping for all harvests, sales, and donations
- Oversee farm maintenance, machinery, and tools (i.e. BCS walk-behind tractor and attachments, John Deere cab tractor with loader, mowers, weedwackers, and full size pickup truck)
- Maintain barn facilities (i.e. two walk-in coolers, indoor processing room, and multiple storage rooms)
- General clean-up of garden beds, paths, and materials
- Coordinate basic plumbing, electrical, and construction work as needed
- Program support and other general tasks as requested by the Executive Director

## QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of 2 years experience in farm management or 5 years experience in organic/ecologically-grown vegetable production (including greenhouse management and experience with machinery and power equipment such as BCS walk-behind tractor with implements and riding tractor with implements)
- Strong knowledge of the principles of sustainable 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
- Excellent communication and leadership skills and the ability to work well with a variety of customers and community members
- Excellent interpersonal skills including a strong work ethic and positive attitude, collaboration, receptiveness to feedback, and conflict management
- Supervising experience and the desire to train, mentor, and work alongside staff, interns, and volunteers across racial, ethnic, generational, socioeconomic, rural/urban, and religious lines
- 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
- A track record of success working in a cooperative team environment requiring a high level of planning, communication, and documentation
- A desire to produce food of the highest nutritional, culinary, and ecological quality
- A desire to continue to learn and grow as a person and farmer. Continuous personal and professional development is encouraged and supported at Project GROWS
- Must be able to lift 50+ pounds regularly. The Director of Farming 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
- Email communication (timely and proper etiquette), knowledge of Google Drive, Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Construction, plumbing and electrical skill and experience is a plus

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Reliable transportation, valid driver's license, and clean driving record
- 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
- Ability to work independently and as a key part of the Project GROWS team

## COMPENSATION

This is a salaried position starting at \$37,740, assuming 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](mailto:hire@projectgrows.org) with "Director of Farming" 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](http://www.projectgrows.org)