



Staff Farmer

Seasonal, Full-time, Hourly

The Talking Farm's mission is to provide education, example, and hands-on experience to members of the community to expand the awareness, importance, and availability of food grown sustainably. The Talking Farm operates the Howard Street Farm, a 2.5-acre urban farm in Skokie, as well as offsite educational gardens. It sells produce at local farmers' markets, to restaurants and purveyors, and through its Farm Membership produce box program.

Position Overview

Staff farmers report to the Production Manager and assist in the cultivation, maintenance, harvest, and operation of the Howard Street Farm and/or off-site gardens by implementing the crop plan and facilitating its smooth operation. This position also serves as the primary farmer at a partner garden at Orchard Village.* This is a full-time, seasonal position requiring approximately 35-40 hours/week seasonally (March-October) and is split approximately 50/50 between the Howard Street Farm and Orchard Village. This seasonal position starts in March and runs through the end of October (approximately 20 hours/month in the offseason may be required for crop planning and other preparation and can be done offsite and worked around other commitments).

Duties & responsibilities – Howard Street Farm (approximately 20 hours/week):

- Implement crop plan as directed by the Production Manager
- Responsible for seeding, planting, cultivating, weeding, watering, managing pests, harvesting, composting, washing, processing, and packaging vegetable, fruit, and herb crops, and/or winterizing the Howard Street Farm and off-site educational gardens
- Help oversee, lead, and train interns and volunteers
- Create a positive team environment for other staff, interns, and volunteers around farm and garden activities
- Interact positively with members of the public and donors who visit and/or volunteer on the farm, and with off-site program partners
- Assist market staff with preparation for farmers' markets and farm membership distribution
- Responsible for daily and routine upkeep and maintenance of the farm and educational gardens, as well as equipment and facilities.
- Provide tours and media content
- Assist in set-up, execution, and clean-up for and/or attendance at fundraising events
- Assist other staff and the board of directors as directed

Duties & responsibilities – Orchard Village (approximately 20 hours/week):

- Develop and implement a crop plan for a small urban farm.
- Responsible for fieldwork, including seeding, planting, cultivating, weeding, watering, managing pests, harvesting, pruning, fertilization, and winterizing the site.
- Responsible for washing, processing, and packaging vegetable, fruit, and herb crops for small CSA and periodic farmers' markets.
- Assist with and make requests for purchasing materials for the garden.



- Responsible for the starting, maintenance, and inventory of seedlings to be planted on the farm.
- Occasionally lead intern(s) provided by The Talking Farm or volunteers.
- Create a positive environment for clients visiting the garden, interns, volunteers, and Orchard Village staff who assist with the garden.
- Interact positively with Orchard Village staff and volunteers in the planning and execution of the garden, as well as any constituents, members of the public, or donors who visit and/or volunteer on the farm.

Preferred Qualifications:

- At least 1-2 full years' experience in all aspects of intensive organic field farming, including crop planning, planting, weeding, watering, integrated pest management, fertilizing, harvesting, bed prepping, pruning, site management, washing, processing, packing, and overwintering crops.
- Certification, degree, or job training in urban or organic farming practices a plus.
- Certified in or knowledgeable about safe food handling, including any state, local, federal, or trade regulations, Product Safety Alliance guidance, or USDA GAP/GHP practices.
- The ability to take direction, be flexible, learn new farming and growing techniques and communicate and explain farming practices clearly to others.
- A friendly, patient, and open disposition and a willingness to work with adults with developmental disabilities.
- Physical requirements: Ability to regularly lift up to 50 pounds; bend and crouch; walk on uneven surfaces; use hands and arms to pick/pull/grasp; be around stinging & biting insects; work outdoors in all types of weather.

Compensation & Benefits: \$21/hour paid bi-weekly. Up to (8) days accrued paid leave (may be taken as partial days). Free produce and discounts. Accessible by public transportation.

To apply: Qualified candidates should submit a resume with a cover letter and two professional references to jobs@thetalkingfarm.org. Applicants must be willing to complete an application.

** Orchard Village is located in Skokie and serves individuals with developmental disabilities.*

The Talking Farm provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, national origin, age, disability or genetics.