

Beginning Farmer Education Program Manager
Job Posting

The MSU Student Organic Farm (SOF) is hiring a *Beginning Farmer Education Program Manager*. The position is three-quarters time (30 hrs/wk) and is part of a recently awarded USDA grant titled “Michigan’s Emerging Farmers – Strategies and Tools to Enhance Success,” a collaboration among the MSU SOF, Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS), and the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS). The *Beginning Farmer Education Program Manager* will work closely with and report to the SOF Organic Farmer Training Program Director and work closely with the MIFFS and CRFS members of the project team. This position has secure funding through November 2017.

The overall goal of the grant is to increase new farm success in Michigan by developing networks and resources for land and capital access while providing increased access to education and training. Project-supported resources will be adapted as appropriate for specific groups of beginning farmers with differing needs and perspectives in an attempt to help all of them move toward business viability.

The goal for the SOF-led portion of the grant is to increase access to beginning farmer training across Michigan through co-development and delivery of hands-on workshops and educational materials. Project strategy encompasses three sites:

- The MSU Student Organic Farm, with an eight year history of beginning farmer training and focus on generalized statewide beginning farmers;
- Farmers on the Move, already established as a Hispanic farmer cooperative in need of training development in a variety of areas as well as site development; and
- Women in Agriculture, a newly-developed site for women focused on cooperative farming.

The project focuses on developing site and people-appropriate training programs that both utilize the lessons learned in previous trainings in Michigan and ensure that they are useful and engaging for the particular audiences intended at the three sites.

Area of Work

This position will be the program manager for all trainings and workshops. This will include:

- Co-development of workshop topics, content, materials, and timing with representatives of project audiences.
- Workshop delivery
 - Coordination of workshop logistics including presenters, promotion, site, materials and execution
 - Educational content delivery in collaboration with farmer co-presenters
 - Co-development (with project evaluator) and facilitation of workshop evaluations
- Advising and reviewing business plans required for Women in Ag and Farmers on the Move stipend recipients
- Development of educational tools and materials to help beginning farmers achieve economic viability and scale up production and sales as needed for use both in workshops and as standalone tools
- Administrative tasks as needed associated with the project

Special Requirements

- The successful applicant must be available for evening and weekend work in order to accommodate farmers' schedules
- This position requires both a high level of autonomy and self-direction as well as an ability to collaborate and work with others. The project manager will work with the managers of the Land Access and the Capital Access components of the grant to provide input as necessary and to make resources related to land and capital available to participants in the training programs.

Qualifications

- Highly organized and a self-starter
- Strong written and oral communications skills (especially with project audiences)
- Digital media skills, including Microsoft Office suite, knowledge and use of social media sites, and an ability to navigate and update web content on the program's web page
- Experience with vegetable production, preferably year-round in cold climates
- Teaching skills and experience
- Farm and farm business management experience
- Demonstrated success in program development and project management in a highly collaborative environment

Preferred

- Educational program management experience
- Knowledge of Michigan's food and farming landscape and systems
- Experience with training and technical assistance for adults
- Grant project management experience
- Experience with audiences where English is a second language; cross-cultural experience similarly helpful
- Spanish speaker
- Commitment to leading the project for the entire duration of the grant

To Apply

To apply, send resume and cover letter to msufarm@msu.edu. Please put *Farmer Education Program Manager* in the e-mail subject line.

- The position will remain open until filled. Interviews will begin in April 2015.
- Ideal start date is May 2015. Occasional evening and weekend work will occur in order to accommodate farmers' schedules
- Extension of the position beyond the grant may be possible based on availability of funding
- Expansion of the position to 40 hours per week with additional non-grant responsibilities may also become possible
- Salary Range: \$18-21 per hour, commensurate with experience
- Benefits: Healthcare coverage

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