



CountrySide New Farmer Academy Beginning Farmer Intern Position

Description

CountrySide, a non-profit located in Cuyahoga Valley National Park, is seeking applicants for a beginning farmer intern position. Cuyahoga Valley National Park houses a unique farmland conservation program called the CountrySide Initiative, where farmers lease small farms and manage them using variations of low-impact or sustainable agriculture. CountrySide helps the park by providing agricultural guidance and recommendations around this program and works with farms across northeast Ohio.

The CountrySide New Farmer Academy provides paid internships for beginning farmers and trained help for mentor farms. Interns spend their work weeks training with CountrySide staff at Old Trail Farm and working at selected mentor farms, depending on the intern's skill level.

Interns will have an opportunity to work with CountrySide, its partners, and many northeast Ohio farm businesses to learn and develop strong farming and business skills to help them create their own small farm dream. Internships run from March to November to allow interns to work with farmers through most of the season. CountrySide interns will complete a learning curriculum that will help them develop new skills from a variety of farming styles, including permaculture, sustainable, regenerative, and conservation farming. Each intern will be assigned to a farm for a set period, where they will complete daily farm activities with ample instruction and opportunity to ask questions. Interns will participate in several workshops throughout the summer, supported by CountrySide, as part of the education curriculum. The goal of this internship program is to create an on-farm learning environment, paired with classroom style workshops, to inspire and educate interns who are passionate about pursuing a career in agriculture.

For those who complete the internship portion of our program, a limited number of paid apprenticeships may be available. This program will help apprentices further develop skills, diversify farm experiences, and ultimately find placement in an incubator farm, farm lease, or farmland purchase.

Interns will be matched with mentor farmers based on their experience and learning objectives. In 2021, we have several potential mentor farmers participating in the program, from farms within the Countryside Initiative and throughout our region. Each farm has a unique business model and product/produce line. For context, there are several vegetable & livestock productions, a vineyard, a flower farm, and a berry farm. Some farmers have been in the program for 10+ years.

Learn more about Countryside, the Countryside Initiative Program, and the New Farmer Academy on our website at countrysidefoodandfarms.org.

Expectations

Interns will be working with farmers who work hard to run their small businesses, and it is an expectation that interns will act professionally while on the farms. Interns will work with Countryside staff to set learning goals and meet regularly for progress check-ins. Interns are expected to act within the guidelines of the employment agreement, signed at the time of hiring.

Weekly schedules are somewhat flexible. Please indicate scheduling needs in the application below.

Requirements

- Must be 18 or older at the application deadline
- Must be able to lift 50 pounds on a regular basis and work in diverse weather conditions
- Must have a valid driver's license along with a clean record
- Must pass background check
- Must be willing and able to operate heavy machinery (with ample instruction)
- Must have a reliable vehicle for transportation to the farms
- Outstanding work ethic
- Collaborative team player
- Flexible
- Professional communication skills

How to apply

Please complete the following application questions and submit them via email or mail by January 31, 2021 to:

Ginnette Simko, Farm Manager
Countryside
4965 Quick Rd. Peninsula, OH 44264
gsimko@countrysidefoodandfarms.org

Countryside requires all staff to complete DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) training. We are an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, political orientation, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. We strongly encourage people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and veterans to apply.

Application Questions

1. Do you have past farming, gardening, or related experiences? Please describe them along with what you learned from the experience.
2. What are your long-term goals as a beginning farmer? How will your time as a Countryside farm intern impact those goals?