



## **WE ARE HIRING – New Farmer Academy Novice Interns**

### **About CountrySide**

**Our Mission is** to build a thriving local food community by connecting people, food, and land, in and beyond Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

**Our Values are** Stewardship, Community, Diversity, and Leadership.

**Our Goals are** to preserve farmland, cultivate new farmers, and expand local food.

### **About the New Farmer Academy**

CountrySide's New Farmer Academy is a multi-year program that creates paid career pathways for interns through classroom-style education in the principles of sustainable agriculture, hands-on technical skills training, business and financial planning guidance, and supportive working relationships with mentor farmers.

Novice interns train with CountrySide staff at our training farm at Old Trail School in Bath. They learn the fundamentals of crop production and have opportunities to explore the local agriculture industry through tours and project days on mentor farms, as well as through CountrySide's marketing, farmers' markets, and food access programs. Interns progress to Intermediate status through completion of a required number of both instructional and on-the-job training hours.

Intermediate interns work at our mentor farms, where they complete daily farm activities with ample instruction and opportunity to ask questions. Working with mentor farmers helps interns build their technical skills, along with their professional network. Interns are matched with mentor farmers based on their location and career objectives.

Our mentor farms are located in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout Northeast Ohio, and each has a unique business model and product/produce line. They include market gardens, specialty crop, agritourism, livestock, and permaculture operations. Hosting interns enables our mentor farmers, many of whom are beginning farmers themselves (in business fewer than 10 years), to invest more time and effort towards building the capacity of their farm businesses and create sustainable employment opportunities on their farms.

For those who complete the internship portion of the New Farmer Academy, Countryside assists with placement in an apprenticeship on one of our mentor farms, finding full-time farm employment, or starting their own farm business through an incubator farm, farm lease, or farmland purchase. Participants leave our program “farmland ready,” with a clear vision of the agricultural business or career they wish to create and the tools they need to make it happen.

## **About New Farmer Academy Internships**

Full-term internships run from March to November to allow interns to work with farmers through most of the season. A full-time position is 30 hours/week. Part-time (15 hours/week) positions are also available to accommodate those with additional work or family obligations that might otherwise prevent them from participating. Scheduling is somewhat flexible, although Tuesday availability is required for mandatory instructional training.

This year we are pleased to offer two additional alternative internship opportunities. *Summer term internships* are an abbreviated, 12-week program for students who are graduating high school or college students who are home for the summer. Unpaid *audited internships* are available for those who wish to experience our program at a more leisurely pace and without a formal commitment.

## **Expectations**

Interns will be working at Old Trail School’s farm and with farmers who work hard to run their small businesses. It is an expectation that interns will act respectfully at all times. Interns will work with Countryside staff to set professional development 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.

## **Requirements**

- Must be 18 or older at the application deadline
- Must be able to lift 50 pounds on a regular basis and work in adverse weather conditions
- Must have a valid driver’s license
- 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
- Professional communication skills

## **How to Apply**

Please complete the following application questions and submit them by January 15, 2022 to:

Ginnette Simko, New Farmer Academy Program Manager

[gsimko@countrysidefoodandfarms.org](mailto:gsimko@countrysidefoodandfarms.org)

## Application Questions

1. Please indicate which of the following internship positions you are applying for:
  - Full Term, Full-Time (30 hours/week, February 28 – November 18)
  - Full Term, Part-Time (15 hours/week, February 28 – November 18)
  - Summer Term (30 hours/week, May 23 – August 12)
  - Audit (unpaid)
2. Do you have past farming, gardening, or related experiences? Please describe them, along with what you learned from the experience.
3. What are your long-term goals in agriculture? How will your time as a Countryside farm intern help you achieve those goals?

Learn more about Countryside, the New Farmer Academy, and our mentor farms on our website at [countrysidefoodandfarms.org](http://countrysidefoodandfarms.org).

*Countryside believes that equity is a critical component of our mission and vision, which we cannot achieve without openly acknowledging and directly addressing that our food system has its roots in discrimination and injustice and that this exploitation remains pervasive today. Countryside is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other identity protected by federal, state, or local law. We strongly encourage people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and veterans to apply.*