



Student Farm Apprentice Program

Summer 2024

The Ecology School at River Bend Farm is looking for two Maine high school students to join us as Student Apprentices at our farm this summer. The Student Farm Apprentices will get their hands dirty, spend lots of time outdoors, and develop useful skills while learning all about growing vegetables on a small-scale farm, and building and caring for permaculture education gardens.

Job Description

The student farm apprentices will work with our farm manager and farm assistant to grow a wide array of vegetables in our one-acre no-till production field, and our main campus permaculture education gardens. Apprentices will participate in all aspects of production, from seeding in the greenhouse, planting, tending, and harvesting in the field, to washing and weighing produce, among other tasks. The produce we grow is used for onsite meals and donated to area food pantries. The farm apprentices will also assist in delivering farm education, and help to support the overall mission and operations of The Ecology School at River Bend Farm.

Learning will include:

- **Foundational Concepts and Context:** As a farm team we will build foundational knowledge through readings and discussions of agroecology topics, attending workshops and demonstrations, and visits to other farms. We hope to build a larger knowledge base of why the work of small-scale farming is important, and to provide the opportunity for self-driven learning and curiosity.
- **Hands-on Skill Building:** The daily work of farming is an excellent way to learn, and we will have ample opportunities to practice a number of farm skills throughout the summer season. This ranges from seeding and soil blocking in the greenhouse, to transplanting, weeding, safe harvest and handling of produce, and more!
- **Leadership Development:** Throughout the season we will provide opportunities for Student Farm Apprentices to develop their leadership skills. This will include assisting in delivering farm-based education, providing farm tours to visitors, managing groups of volunteers, and helping to manage various aspects of the farm operation. We hope to give Student Farm Apprentices a taste of what it's like to run a small farm, and the confidence to do it well!

We are looking for students who have an interest in pursuing agriculture in the future, or are curious to learn more about farming and growing produce. We think farming is a great way to develop a wide range of skills, from adaptability and communication, to creative problem solving, leadership, and time management, and of course the technical skills involved in growing vegetables.

Since River Bend Farm operates seven days a week, the work schedule is created based on the needs of the onsite programming, weather, and farm needs. Weekend work may be required, as well as assisting other departments including the kitchen, operations, and programs on occasion.

Skills Desired

We are looking for students who are excited about farming with us at The Ecology School and all that comes with it! Our ideal candidate is excited about the prospect of spending their days outdoors performing hard physical farm labor, has good attention to detail and pace, and is resourceful, passionate, and curious about agriculture and environmental issues.

- Some amount of garden and/or outdoor physical labor experience is preferred, though not required.
- The ability to work hard under pressure and time constraints, and in all sorts of weather with a positive attitude.
- Farm tasks are ever-evolving and shifting, so flexibility and the ability to roll with changes are essential.
- Good communication skills and a willingness to ask questions and follow directions is key!
- Must be able to lift and carry 50 lbs
- Applicants who are available to work for the duration of the position will be given preference

Compensation

The Student Farm Apprenticeship is an 8-week summer program that provides youth, grades 9-12, with 280 hours of hands-on training in regenerative farming. The student apprenticeships are paid positions that will run for 8 weeks in the summer from June 24th- August 16th. Apprentices will work 35 hours per week and will be compensated at \$15/hour. The apprenticeship is open to Maine students in high school. Housing is NOT provided for this position.

Maine Department of Education funded this because of the American Rescue Plan Act GEER, Reverted EANS Funding received from the USDOE support the implementation of this project. The project has an award totaling \$6.6 million dollars of which 100% is federally funded and directly attributed to project implementation. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by the USDOE or the U.S. Government.

Applications can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions please reach out to Marguerite Wiser, Farm Manager at farm@theecologyschool.org. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the positions are filled.

The Ecology School provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type with regards to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.