



Vegetable Farm Apprenticeship

The Food Bank operates its *Cultivating for Community* regenerative and education farm initiative on the Food Bank Farm in Hadley. We seek to contract a Vegetable Farm Apprentice for the 2024 growing season (March 18 – November 15) to work **full-time** alongside our field crew, farm manager and volunteers. This 8-month apprenticeship is an intensive educational training program for individuals interested in farming full time and who are ready to increase their farming knowledge to prepare for a career growing vegetables. Apprentices will gain a solid foundation in the skills necessary to manage a small-scale commercial vegetable operation using minimal-till methods.

The Food Bank is an equal-opportunity employer that celebrates diversity and is committed to an inclusive environment for all its contracted workers, employees, and volunteers. **Emerging Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) farmers are encouraged to apply.**

The starting pay for this position is \$17.50/hour with the possibility of a higher starting wage based on experience. See below for the job description and position requirements.

Benefits:

- 3/4-hour paid lunch break
- Paid sick time
- An average of 3-5 hours per week of paid in-field educational training including principles of farm management, decision making, and apprentice mentorship
- Professional development stipend

To apply, please email your resume and cover letter along with two references to Lee Gadway, Farm Manager at: leeg@foodbankwma.org This position will remain open until filled.

Responsibilities include:

- Greenhouse seeding and management
- Transplanting and direct seeding, hand weeding, hoeing, cultivating, harvesting
- Washing and packing, cover cropping, mulching, pruning and trellising, irrigating, compost making, pest and disease control
- Walk-behind and ride-on tractor operating
- Machine and tool maintenance
- Basic record keeping and competency with word processing, spreadsheet, and email/calendar software

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Typical workday schedule: 8:00am - 4:00pm (Monday-Friday with occasional weekend work)
- This is a physically challenging apprenticeship. Apprentice must be able and willing to:
 - Stand, crouch, kneel, and bend for extended periods doing repetitive tasks
 - Lift and move crates, materials, hoses, etc.

- Lift up to 50 pounds on a regular basis
- Perform other physical activities as needed
- Work steadily outdoors in all weather including heat, cold, rain, and wind. (Working outdoors is not required when conditions are hazardous per policy.
- Use of hand tools and power equipment, including lawn mower, and walk-behind and ride-on tractors

QUALIFICATIONS/ REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum one-year/season work experience on a farm
- High school diploma or GED
- Capable of both working alone and on a team

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Cultivating for Community (CFC) is a minimal-till organic farming initiative currently on 1.3 acres. We grow 40+ types of vegetables on permanent beds for the Food Bank's member food pantries and meal sites. We have two heated greenhouses, irrigation systems, four-wheel and two-wheel tractors, storage barn, coolers, and other equipment.

CFC seeks to promote minimal-till organic farming and support the next generation of farmers to succeed by offering apprenticeships, Food Bank Farm incubator pathways, and access to technical assistance.

[Food Bank Farm – Cultivating for Community | The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts \(foodbankwma.org\)](http://foodbankwma.org)