



Position Title: FARMING & BUSINESS SPECIALIST

Application Deadline: Rolling until filled

Position Start Date: March 2017 is ideal

Employment terms: This is a full-time salaried position, averaging 35 hours/week. Due to the seasonal nature of responsibilities, this position is 40 hours/week April – October and closer to 30 hours/week November – March. The position is grant funded until December 2017, with the possibility to renew based on funding and performance.

Salary & Benefits: \$32,000 – 37,000/year depending on experience. Health benefits provided through Center for Transformative Action.

Groundswell Center for Local Food & Farming is an agriculture education nonprofit based in Ithaca, NY, operating under the Center for Transformative Action and serving the broader Finger Lakes area. Our core work is to foster a diverse next generation of small-scale sustainable farmers and land cultivators by lessening common barriers to land access, resources and business ownership.

This position primary supports the farm and business needs and aspirations of a diverse group of farmers enrolled in the Groundswell Farm Business Incubator Program and coordinates Groundswell Farm Business courses. The Incubator Program provides affordable access to land, agricultural infrastructure, and business support for diverse beginning farmers including New Americans, refugees and those with limited resources. This position is funded is by USDA BFRDP Grant # 11674923, the Park Foundation and Groundswell General Funds.

Specific duties and responsibilities:

A. Incubator Farming & Business Coaching 60%

- Support New American refugees, people of color and American-born farmers to develop farm business from conceptualization and goal setting to production, financial planning and marketing
- Help participants develop crop plans and establish creative record keeping systems appropriate for English fluency
- Provide or coordinate Incubator participant trainings, workshops and tours on production and business-related topics and identify other training pathways and resources available from other organizations when needed (e.g. AFCU, SBDC)
- Conduct end of season review with Incubator participants
- Expand and coordinate GS Farmer Mentor network
 - Build relationships, identify and recruit Mentors
 - Support/train Mentors to conduct appropriate workshops and learning opportunities for English speakers and ESL learners

- Expand marketing channels for Incubator Farmers and/or create new channels that meet the participants' goals and address community food needs
- Collaboratively strategize innovative business models and marketing channels that address a triple bottom line model and address community food needs
- Recruit, coordinate and engage the Incubator Committee
- Develop and monitor annual program budgets, expenses and revenue; coordinate payments and bills
- Work with GS staff to build public awareness of program
- Attend and occasionally present at professional trainings and conferences
- Assist staff to identify and solicit funding opportunities to support Incubator program, follow reporting and evaluation procedures
- Oversee issues regarding liability insurance of the Incubator Program

B. Site and Land Maintenance 20%

- Coordinate, maintain and develop physical infrastructure (fencing, cooler, irrigation, shed, wash station, classroom) and equipment and supplies (BCS, tractor, weed whacker, hand tools, etc.) including purchasing materials, light construction, basic plumbing and electric
- Perform all site and prep work to support participants cultivating healthy, certifiably-organic farmland, including operation of tractors and implements for field work and activities related to the operation of participant farmer enterprises in field and hoop houses
- Identify infrastructure needs for Incubator Farm
- Recruit, train and supervise volunteers

B. Farm Business Coordination & Support 20%

- Coordinate GS's Farm Business Planning Courses with GS staff, outside contractors and partners as needed including refining curriculum, engaging instructors, recruiting trainees, managing application and enrollment, review assignments, conduct evaluation
- Support the enrollment and active participation of Farm Business Incubator Participants in Farm Business Planning Courses
- Serve as a resource for beginning farmers and food entrepreneurs on enterprise planning, incubation, land justice, pathways for diverse and socially-disadvantaged farmers, Whole Farm Planning, triple bottom line models, etc.
- Develop regional partnerships and work collaboratively to identify innovative ways to address the needs of beginning farmers and food system inequalities
- Develop and implement an approach to support Groundswell graduates utilizing the Mentor network

F. Community Engagement & Professional Development 5%

- Build and strengthen community relationships with regional farmers, business owners, community members from diverse backgrounds, and with organizations including Incubator Networks, colleges, and refugee support organizations
- Maintain a regular presence at cultural and community events
- Proactively identify areas for growth and professional development
- Develop awareness of important cultural histories relevant to Incubator Program

Supervision received: Direct supervision is provided by Groundswell Center Director.

Supervision provided: This position will supervise mentors and consultants involved with the Incubator Farm and the Farm Business Planning courses, volunteers and may hire and supervise a seasonal employee.

Key Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Desired:

- Demonstrated cross-cultural competency is required. Experience working with New Americans and ESL learners, in particular speakers of Burmese and Karen
- Strong interest and demonstrated commitment to addressing food system inequalities and a willingness to participate in social and racial justice workshops
- Minimum 2-years hands-on experience with crop or livestock production and sustainable farming principles including familiarity with USDA or NOFA-NY organic farming regulations, Farmer's Pledge, biodynamic, CNG
- Minimum 2-years experience with business development or management, ideally a farm business, including experience with enterprise budgets, financial planning, taxes, marketing, and sales.
- Familiarity or passion and willingness to learn about alternative business structures, especially a triple bottom line model, Fair Justice Certification and any that integrate social elements including cooperatives, food hubs, vertical integration, etc.
- Demonstrated ability to teach/mentor, build relationships and work collaboratively with individuals and groups both as a leader and a team player
- Highly organized and able to juggle multiple tasks and deadlines while maintaining attention to detail
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively and solve problems with little supervision
- Proficiency in entire Microsoft Suite of computer programs, skill with Excel and QuickBooks is a plus

Minimum Formal Education: Bachelors Degree

Special Requirements: As a mission-based and community-involved organization, Groundswell staff positions require frequent flexible hours including some evenings and occasional weekends. However, to balance this requirement we also strongly support a work-life balance, using personal and vacation time, and offers occasional flexibility such as working from home. Must possess a valid driver's license, have access to regular personal transportation, be able to lift 50 pounds, have intermediate carpentry skills and experience operating tractors and small farm equipment.

The Center for Transformative Action and Groundswell is an equal opportunity employer. Employees are hired on the basis of their merit, ability, experience, and training without regard to race, creed, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, sexual preference, or disability.

To apply: Please email a cover letter and resume as one attachment to Elizabeth@GroundswellCenter.org with "Last Name_FarmBizSpecialist" in the subject line. We prefer emailed submissions, however you may also drop off or mail your application to 225 S Fulton Street, Ithaca, NY 14850.