

Black Dirt Farm

Produce Manager

Job Description

Farm Description

Black Dirt Farm is a diversified family farm, focusing on an integrated enterprise loop based on the decomposer cycle. Our farm collects roughly 30 tons of discarded food scraps from about 70 businesses and institutions. Food scraps are delivered to another farm for composting and to our own farm for our own laying hen operations. We raise the laying hens on a food scrap-based compost for eggs, which are sold to retailers and an aggregator. What the hens don't eat we use to make compost and worm castings. Worm castings are primarily sold to retailers and directly to professional growers. Compost is largely sold locally in bulk. In addition to selling these products, we use them to grow produce for market. We focus our vegetable production on salad greens and tomatoes, micro greens and a small variety of other crops. Produce is sold to restaurants and local grocers.

The farm is in its early stages of development and is growing in order to further improve and scale our operations, while creating greater efficiencies through synchronizing our various enterprises. We also raise broiler chickens for meat and board horses. Being a part of Black Dirt Farm means working in an environment that is both caring and efficient, and a small growth-stage farm business that is growing and needs creative, resilient people to help it mature. The farm requires individuals who can be part of a dynamic and often fast paced team, while being responsible for managing their own tasks with professionalism and quality, and working independently.

Job Description

The Produce Manager is a critical part of daily and seasonal operations of the farm's small produce operation. The Produce Manager is charged with managing the Produce Sphere of Responsibility and in order to do this for our small but intensive operation, they must manage their schedule and execute tasks with an exceptional degree of time management and organization. We specialize in a variety of greens that have high turn over rates and require routine and regular harvesting and seeding, including adjusting seedings to scheduled changes in production goals and adapting schedules to reflect on-going changes throughout the season. Specifically, the Produce Manager is in charge of the routine aspects of the produce operation, including executing daily chores, such as watering crops and opening and closing greenhouse, and stocking and rotating the farm stand. Weekly tasks include seeding, weeding and harvesting, as well as washing, packing and delivering orders. Keeping the weekly schedule on track is extremely important and requires good time management and organizational skills. In addition to the routine weekly operations, seasonal tasks include soil preparation, pruning and trellising, potting, purchasing seeds and amendments, tool maintenance, and irrigation and greenhouse maintenance and repair. Additionally, the Produce Manager supports other farm operations with chores, including laying hen and worm chores, as well as miscellaneous projects and tasks as needed. This is a physical job often requiring the lifting and movement of substantial weight, as well as bending over. Each enterprise on the farm is small and therefore requires the operator be

committed to working at a good pace, utilizing existing organizational and operational systems and contributing to their improvement, and focusing on efficiency.

Reports to: Owner

Hours per Week:

February – March: 12 hrs/ wk

April – September: 24 hrs/ wk

October – December: 12 hrs/ wk

Total hours per year: ~800 hrs/ yr

Job Tasks/ Sphere of Responsibility*

Crops

- a. Crop planning, and management of task schedule and execution, including managing seasonal help associated with these tasks
- b. Water, ventilate covered crops
- c. Soil and Bed Preparation
- d. Seeding (starts, and weekly direct seedings of various greens)
- e. Weeding
- f. Harvest
- g. Pruning and trellising tomatoes and cucumbers
- h. Compost Tea Brewing and on-going fertility management
- i. On-going professional development and systems improvement
- j. Time tracking and task refinement
- k. Tool care and organization
- l. Misc irrigation, greenhouse and garden bed repair and maintenance, string trimming, etc.

Wash and Pack

- a. Prepare crops - Wash and dry greens and other crops, grade tomatoes
- b. Pack Orders
- c. Maintain wash and pack area and equipment
- d. Time tracking and task refinement
- e. Food safety
- f. On-going professional development and systems improvement

Farm Stand (June – Sept)

- a. Open and close stand
- b. Cull and rotate produce, restock
- c. Tidy and clean
- d. Reconcile cash box
- e. Update products and pricing lists
- f. Maintain farm stand flower bed and window boxes

Miscellaneous

- a. Collect and back haul sawdust from wood shops after produce deliveries

- b. Fill in on hen and worm chores as needed when Hen & Worm Wrangler is off

***Note:** In addition to lifting considerable weight during many of these tasks, this position requires handling fine sawdust, manures, active compost, and other materials that can be irritating to breath for some people. Protective respirators are available for use, however for individuals with sensitive respiratory systems or compromised immune systems, this may not be adequate and you should consider this position potentially compromising to your health.

Job Requirements

1. Hardworking and focused
2. Capable of driving stick
3. Experience operating tractor
4. Experience in vegetable production
5. Basic carpentry and plumbing experience (ie comfortable with a drill and skill saw, plumbing fittings, etc)
6. Willingness and experience in managing tasks, including planning, problem solving and repair
7. A desire to master tasks and make excellent products
8. Excellent communication skills and emotional maturity
9. Superior time and task management skills and *experience*
10. Experience in team environment and comfortability with providing and receiving constructive feedback. Genuinely eager to help build the farm, and a desire to be a part of a co-creative process with a thriving farm as our shared goal.
11. Appreciation of hard work and how farm's work; comfortable with changes in seasonal hours and willingness to work late to complete tasks as needed
12. Comfortability with busy work environments and following schedules and standard operating procedures
13. Appreciation for the value of organizational systems and a willingness to utilize and improve them. Equal willingness to do planning and management tasks, in addition to working with plants/ outside, to support on-going organization and efficiency.
14. Appreciation for the importance of efficiency in operating a small-scale farm and the necessary requirements to keep tasks as contained as possible.

Schedule

Preferably this position will perform their hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and one weekend morning. Most days start at 8am but during hottest days of the year the Produce Manager starts at 7am on harvest days to harvest before heat sets in.