

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Status: Seasonal, 40 hours/week, now until December 15th, 2023

Supervisor: Director of Education



About Project GROWS: Project GROWS (PG) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit educational farm situated on 10 acres in the rolling hills of Augusta County Virginia. Our mission is to improve the overall health of children, youth, and families in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County, Virginia by connecting our community to nutritious food through 1) hands-on, garden-based **education** and 2) increased **access** to healthy local food. The Project GROWS farm stewards soil life to support a healthy ecosystem that yields 12,000+ pounds of nutrient-dense and accessible food each year as well as beautiful, engaging natural spaces that promote self-discovery and joy. We also manage multiple farmers markets across the community that seek to improve food security, individual and family health, and the overall local food economy by connecting local producers to the community and the community to nourishing foods. To learn more about our food production and our food access programs, please visit www.projectgrows.org.

About Project GROWS Education Programs: At Project GROWS, we facilitate engaging, hands-on programming that improves the health and wellbeing of children and youth in the SAW region through formative garden-based education experiences focused on food, self, and nature. Our farm and school gardens are outdoor classrooms where we invite students to learn alongside us as we grow, explore, cook, and eat together. As a nonprofit partner to both schools and afterschool programs, Project GROWS engages students in food education at multiple points along their preschool through 12th grade journey. Our education programs happen not just in cafeterias, but also in classrooms, the school garden, and on the farm—during school hours, after school, and during the summer. Some of our current programs include cooking classes and field trips with the Boys and Girls Club in Waynesboro and in Staunton and management of the school garden and garden lessons at Dixon Education Center in Staunton. We facilitate an 8-week program called Youth Leaders in Agriculture, which provides first-time job experiences for high school students on the farm during the summer who are interested in building their farming, gardening, and leadership skills as well as learn more about careers in sustainable agriculture and the food system. We also run several weeks of summer camp on the farm each year. In 2023, Project GROWS will begin managing the Waynesboro Education Farm at Berkeley Glenn Elementary School in Waynesboro, working closely with Waynesboro Public Schools to provide outdoor learning opportunities for K-12 students at that site.

POSITION OVERVIEW: The Program Coordinator will work closely with the Director of Education to facilitate prek-12th grade garden-based education programs, with an emphasis on programs for middle and high school aged youth, and will take a leadership role in the gradual expansion of our education programming to the Waynesboro Education Farm (WEF). The ideal candidate has experience in two areas: **farming/gardening** (a baseline knowledge of ecological, year-round vegetable production as well as the temperament and interpersonal skills to train and lead volunteers and staff in farm tasks) and **education** (experience working with or mentoring children or youth). **If you only have experience in one of these (but you have strong interest in the other!) we still encourage you to apply.** A demonstrated aptitude in managing groups of teenagers and cultivating new and existing relationships within our community are important aspects of this position, as is a passion for teaching young people about food and farming.

The Program Coordinator will work closely with the Director of Education to:

Supervise Youth Staff (June - July)

- Serve as the lead supervisor and mentor, including communicating with supportive supervisors, for the June-July farm crew of Youth Leaders in Agriculture teenagers (5 to 6 students, ages 16-18) at the PG farm and the Waynesboro Education Farm and for other youth garden programs and field trips in the fall

- Create and manage farm task lists for staff/student/volunteer workdays at the PG farm and the WEF in all tasks, including but not limited to: field and soil management, irrigation, propagation, transplanting, weeding, processing, etc.
- Give direction to youth employees; lead 1-1 checks-ins and team building activities and games; give positive and constructive feedback to encourage learning and quality task completion; and facilitate debriefs
- Manage the work schedule and timesheets for all youth employees
- Manage behavior of youth employees; communicate and reinforce rules on PG farm, WEF, and off-site field trip locations
- Refine and implement our evaluation strategies for youth programs as directed

Design and Maintain Education Spaces (March - December)

- Collaborate on design, planning, and implementation of child-friendly educational spaces at the WEF
- Work independently on farm maintenance tasks at school garden sites as needed, including developing a weekly farm task list
- Collaborate with staff to develop a growing plan to achieve harvest and education goals for Year 1 of the WEF

Other Education Programs and Tasks (March - December)

- Co-design and co-lead outdoor preschool through 12th grade garden-based lessons farm & school gardens
- Assist in purchase and organization of educational supplies for outdoor education
- Develop and maintain professional relationships with staff, teachers, and students
- Collaboratively produce a weekly recap of activities for newsletter and help with social media updates as directed
- Represent Project GROWS at weekend community tabling events such as Kids Matter Day, Earth Day, etc.
- Attend weekly check in meetings with supervisor; attend bi-weekly all-staff meetings and other program meetings as needed
- Participate in other programs, markets, and farm work as needed in order to build integration and collaboration across our diverse programs and teams

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Passionate about teaching young people about food, farming, and nature
- A desire to continue to learn and grow as a person and as a professional
- Excellent communication and listening skills; ability to build strong rapport with middle and high school students
- Ability to remain calm, patient, and upbeat around groups of energetic children
- Dynamic, creative, flexible, and team spirited, especially when plans need to change quickly because of weather or group needs
- Reliable, punctual, and self-motivated
- Ability to delegate tasks and diligent follow-through to close communication loop
- Comfortable working outside during hot, cold, and inclement weather. 100% of our education programs happen outdoors!
- Must be able to lift 40+ pounds regularly and repeatedly. The Program Coordinator will be expected to model safe lifting techniques, lead pre-work stretching, and exhibit healthy and safe working habits for youth.
- Familiarity with Google Workspace programs (Gmail, Docs, Sheets, etc.)

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Supervisory, mentoring, or management experience in an education or farm context
- Fluency in Spanish and/or written Spanish translation is a plus

- Basic working knowledge of flora and fauna commonly found in our area
- Light construction skills and experience is a plus

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Because our farm is located in an area without access to reliable public transportation, we recommend that applicants with access to a vehicle apply. In addition, a valid driver's license is required to fulfill job duties as is a clean driving record, for insurance purposes.
- Criminal, child protective service, and state police background checks will be required for final applicants
- Compliance with random drug screening

COMPENSATION: This is a seasonal, paid position with an hourly rate between \$18.00 - \$19.00 per hour depending on experience, for 40 hours per week. Although this position is currently funded through December 15th, 2023, it has the potential to turn into a year-round position depending on organizational fit and employee performance. We are looking for candidates committed to Project GROWS' mission who wish to make a lasting contribution to youth in our area. Benefits include paid time off, share of farm produce, paid CPR/First Aid/AED certification course, professional development, and the opportunity to work with an engaged and supportive team. This position will require working on occasional weekends and occasional evenings. Note: the Program Coordinator will be expected to work on holidays if they fall on a program day; however, they will be able to take off the week of a holiday to compensate.

HOW TO APPLY: Please send a resume, cover letter, and three professional references to hire@projectgrows.org with "Program Coordinator" in the subject line. With the education programming season fast approaching, this position will ideally be filled by April 1, 2023.

Project GROWS is committed to inclusion, trust, respect, and a collaborative work life. We are committed to being rooted in and of our communities where we serve. We are committed to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status, disability, gender identity or Veteran status.

For more information about Project GROWS, visit www.projectgrows.org