

Growing Matters Garden Manager Position



About Us: Fair Food Matters strives to educate, empower, build, and sustain community connections around local food. Our urban educational gardening program, the Growing Matters Garden, provides hands-on learning experiences for at-risk youth ages 5 to 17 and the larger community. During our educational programs, students gain a better understanding about local and global food issues, learn how to grow healthy organic produce, and enjoy spending time outdoors.

The Growing Matters Garden program currently has two garden sites. Our main site is a 6,000 square foot garden located just north of Kalamazoo. Our second site is located at the school garden of a local elementary school. At both sites, we focus primarily on vegetable gardening (using sustainable, organic practices) but we also have areas for annual flowers, herbs, strawberries, and native flowers.

Position Summary: Fair Food Matters is seeking a creative, well organized, and responsible individual to manage the Growing Matters Garden program. The garden manager is expected to work in conjunction with the executive director, program and school staff, volunteers, and the community to create a safe, positive environment in which all participants can feel empowered and can learn valuable organic gardening skills. Applicants must be self-motivated, enjoy working outdoors, and have experience with program management, organic gardening/farming, and leading educational programs with children of all ages. Strong written and verbal communication skills are required. Prior experience working with at-risk youth and at farmers' markets is preferred.

Position Duties:

Management Duties

- Work in conjunction with the executive director to create yearly goals and budget for the garden and to ensure that the program is meeting the mission and goals of the organization.
- Work in conjunction with the principal and elementary school staff to ensure the program is meeting their needs.
- Manage the garden program within the specified budget, maintaining accurate records of garden expenses and income.
- Create and maintain timely publicity for the garden program (including web pages, fliers, brochures, signage, etc).
- Assist executive director with fund-raising and grant writing for the garden program.
- Communicate regularly with the executive director and school staff about progress, difficulties, and needs.
- Recruit, interview, train, schedule, and regularly meet with garden staff (educators, market assistants, etc).
- Recruit, interview, train, and schedule volunteers, coordinate volunteer events, and ensure meaningful volunteer experiences for interested community members.

Educational Program Duties

- Serve as a representative of the Growing Matters Garden program, sharing information about the program with the community.
- Recruit student groups, maintain contacts, schedule and coordinate educational sessions with local youth development agencies and educational partners.
- Work in conjunction with school and program staff to create curriculum, provide educational sessions and workshops for youth and the community. Coordinate lessons, planting, maintenance, and harvesting at all garden sites.
- Work together with school and program staff, volunteers, and students to create a safe, positive learning environment in which all participants are treated with respect and are able to enjoy being in the gardens.

Garden and Market Duties

- Work to ensure that organic, sustainable gardening practices are a priority at all garden sites.
- Work in conjunction with school and program staff, volunteers, and students to plan, plant, and maintain gardens throughout the year.
- Coordinate and assist with harvest preparations and sales at Farmers' Markets.

Hours and Scheduling: The Garden Manager position is a year-round, full time, salaried position. Some evening and weekend work may be required.

Annual Salary: \$25,000 – \$32,000, depending on experience.

How to Apply: Submit cover letter, resume, and completed application form to: Growing Matters Garden Program, Fair Food Matters, 323 N Burdick St, Kalamazoo MI 49007. Applications are due by March 12, 2010.