

Goal: The objective of the College Farm Apprenticeship is to prepare Dickinson graduates for leadership positions on diversified farms. We aim to provide apprentices with the skills, experience and knowledge needed to advance toward assistant manager and manager positions on organic produce and livestock farms elsewhere in the country. The experience will also be applicable should apprentices choose to return to academic studies or seek other employment related to food, sustainability, and education.

Available Positions & Time Frame: Apprentice positions begin after graduation and end in late November. Once the season is up and running, each apprentice is allowed one week of unpaid vacation to be scheduled over the summer, as well as the occasional long weekend when personal needs arise and the farm schedule permits.

Work Environment & Program Structure: The majority of farm apprenticeship training is hands-on, supplemented by educational sessions, field trips, and optional readings. During the summer months, apprentices will be part of a team (5-6 student employees plus farm staff, 2nd Year Apprentice and three fellow apprentices). Apprentices will be asked to take the lead on work assignments, as well as work as a team member.

When classes resume in the fall, apprentices will take much more of a leadership role on the farm, leading students and volunteers on tasks and work projects.

Apprentices are required to attend weekly planning meetings before the work day begins. These meetings provide the foundation for the work week ahead and farm progress reports plus allow for time to discuss the needs of our apprentices.

Additional study through reading and research on your own time is encouraged but not required. The farm has an extensive library of useful farming books on many topics that will be available upon request.

This apprenticeship will be based on “constant feedback”. Our goal is to equip apprentices with the knowledge and skills to do their work well. At times this will require the farm managers to provide constructive feedback, both positive and negative. We value open communication and request that applicants be receptive to the idea of receiving feedback in an effort to improve upon their work and overall experience.

Work Responsibilities: Each apprentice will be assigned an area(s) of responsibility at the farm in addition to the day to day work of the farm. These responsibilities are designed to give each apprentice “ownership” of a particular aspect of the farm operation. Some of the responsibilities require daily attention while others entail weekly oversight though continual attention to detail remains essential. Examples of focused areas of responsibility for apprentices in 2016 include livestock management, irrigation, crew leaders/harvest leader, biofuels production, farmers’ market assistant and compost management.

Work Requirements: The basic “work and learn” day is from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday thru Friday, with one hour for lunch (times may adjust seasonally or to accommodate weather extremes). Each Monday afternoon in the summer, apprentices will also join student employees for a farm meeting and educational program. On occasion, apprentices may be asked to lead an educational program.

Since this is an educational program, apprentices can expect to be exposed to ongoing experimental and investigative projects at the farm, including insect scouting, toad research and disease management; fertility, worm compost and compost projects; agroforestry, and other educational outreach functions to arise over the season.

Tractor training is not an apprenticeship requirement. Apprentices who prove their proficiency with the push mower, weedwackers and riding mowers will be considered for tractor training. Of equal importance is the sincere interest for and future aspirations to farm. The College Farm tractors are expensive program implements and are guarded as such. Apprentices who are trained on the tractors can expect to learn and practice these skills in the fall. During the spring and summer months, farm managers will be the main tractor operators, with intern training coming into play as the farm’s production schedule permits.

Compensation Package: In addition to earning an hourly pay wage (\$9), apprentices are provided housing in one of the Farm’s yurts which are off the grid and fully furnished. Apprentices will share a kitchen, common room (with Wi-Fi) and bathroom facility. Food raised on the farm is up for grabs to our apprentices, including a weekly supply of eggs and discounted access to retail items such as meat from our farm.

Expectations: An underlying goal of the Apprenticeship Program is to allow for opportunities that help build skillsets and confidence through hands-on learning. We will do our best to facilitate chances for learning both on and off the College Farm. The Apprenticeship Program is also a chance to live and work on a farm- baring witness to the seasonal transitions and glimpses that can only be caught by on-farm residents. By living on the farm, we also hope that this program cultivates a sense of community among the farm residents – this can only be achieved through the commitment of the apprentices to fully embrace this opportunity and decision to make the apprenticeship their top priority.

Two-Year Apprentice Position: The opportunity to for one apprentice to continue on at the College Farm as a Second Year Apprentice is available to our 2016 First Year Apprentice applicants. If you have a sincere interest in pursuing a two year position with the College Farm, please be sure to indicate this on your application. However, during the 2016 apprentice season, we will be sure to extend the opportunity for applying to stay on for a second year.

During their second season on the College Farm, this position will take on main management roles on the farm, including employee training and supervision, tractor work and assisting with class visits throughout the summer and fall semester.