

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Organization: Sustainable Connections, www.SustainableConnections.org

Title: Food and Farming Program Manager

Reports to: Program Director

Supported by: FT VISTA, Part time events, policy and communications staff

Location: Bellingham, WA

Term: Full time, permanent

Application Deadline: 5pm Monday, July 27

Summary: Sustainable Connections is an entrepreneurial non-profit membership organization of nearly 700 local businesses and community leaders working together to transform and model an economy built on sustainable business practices. The organization's work has won top praise from Bill McKibben to Paul Hawken to NPR Marketplace, and has catalyzed replication in dozens of North American communities. Our Food & Farming Program currently works with 100+ local agricultural producers, 70+ food-buying businesses, and the community at large to grow a sustainable local food system through networking & market connections, promotion & market development, and education & technical assistance. The program has built a strong reputation for bringing local food to regional markets and for putting a "face on farming". The opportunity ahead is to continue the extraordinary work that has been accomplished in this program, while bringing the program to the next level, including the launch of a new farm incubator.

The position responsibilities include working with team members, farmers, businesses, government and strategic partners to **support and build** a sustainable local food system in Northwest Washington by:

- 1) Increasing the share of agricultural products consumed locally that are produced locally, and
- 2) Increasing the number, diversity, prosperity, and sustainability of local agricultural producers.

Must have demonstrable professional level experience, a current understanding of sustainability and food and farming issues, and be strategic, articulate, solutions-oriented, personable, and proficient with office software products. The organization is a rapidly growing, results-oriented, small team workplace located in downtown Bellingham. The Food & Farming Program Manager supervises a full-time Americorps VISTA, has event, policy and communications support, and reports to the Sustainable Connections Program Director.

Position Responsibilities

Program Management

- Lead the direction of the Food & Farming Program for maximum impact on the local food system
- Cultivate and respond to guidance from an advisory committee of community leaders, as well as Sustainable Connections' Board of Directors
- Network with regional and national leaders to stay current with emerging trends and best practices

Program Activities

Manage and implement the activities of the Food & Farming Program, which at present include:

- Educational events and resources for program participants
 - Workshops on pertinent topics for small food & ag businesses
 - *Food To Bank On* farm incubation program (coordinated by VISTA)
 - *Whatcom Farm Incubator* project (in development, coordinated by VISTA)
 - Resource library and connections to regional educational events
- Networking events and resources for producers and buyers
 - Trade Meetings
 - Chef/Buyer Farm Tours
 - Wholesale Directory
 - Participation in the developing [Puget Sound Food Network](#)
- Market development and promotion of local food & agriculture
 - Branding/messaging campaign

- “Whatcom Food & Farm Finder” guide to local food & agriculture
- Eat Local EVERY Week event series
- Communications work including media relations, e-newsletter, etc
- Point of Sale material development and distribution

Program Administration

- Develop and manage the program’s budget
- Work with Development Director to meet income thresholds through grants, sponsorships, donations, fundraising events, and fee-for-service activities
- Work with Development Director to administer grant contracts and reporting, and cultivate relationships with sponsors and donors
- Manage one FT VISTA and additional volunteers and support staff
- Manage collaborations and relationships with other community groups and regional organizations
- Increase the number and commitment level of food businesses participating in the program, as well as participant satisfaction
- Track deliverables, outcomes, and program results on ongoing basis

Skills & Qualifications

Required

- Program and/or food business development experience: 3 + years preferred
- Budget and/or grants management experience, including creating budgets, reporting, and cultivating funder or customer relationships
- Strong understanding of local food systems and related environmental, social and economic issues
- Staff supervisory experience and a dedication to developing and coaching entry-level as well as more experienced staff, interns, and volunteers: 3 + years preferred
- Project/event management experience
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, ability to represent Sustainable Connections and the Food & Farming Program in a professional manner with diverse constituencies
- Enthusiasm for the mission of Sustainable Connections, alignment with organizational values
- Highly organized and self-motivated
- Demonstrated strong skills in MS Word, Excel, & Outlook
- Good team player, flexible work style, and excellent interpersonal skills
- Ability to work in an office (even in the summer!)
- Bachelors Degree

Preferred

- Familiarity with Pacific Northwest food & agriculture community
- Business sales and/or fundraising experience
- Marketing and communications background
- Hands-on farming experience

Hiring Timeline

July 27—Application deadline

Sept 8—Ideal start date

Sept 8-18—Training with outgoing staff

Compensation

This is a full-time salaried position \$34,000 -\$40,000, DOE, with a healthcare stipend and a starting 16 paid time off days. Additional benefits include a great office space, fun and supportive coworkers, a flexible working schedule, and the opportunity to lead a core program of a nationally recognized local business network!

To Apply: Qualified applicants send a cover letter and resume with three references by email to shonie@sconnect.org by 5pm on July 27.