



SYLVESTER MANOR

2024 FARM APPRENTICESHIP JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Farm Apprentice

Reports to: Farm Manager

Position Type: Full-time, seasonal

Summary

We're hiring Farm Apprentices for the 2024 season. Apprentices will contribute to all aspects of Sylvester Manor's fruit, vegetable, floral and livestock production.

About Sylvester Manor

The lands known today as Sylvester Manor were home to the indigenous Manhansett People for thousands of years, on the island they called Manhansack-aha-quash-awamock, the "Island Sheltered by Islands." In the early 1650s Dutch-English colonists, Nathaniel Sylvester and three partners, established Shelter Island as a provisioning plantation for sugarcane operations in Barbados. Consisting today of 236 acres, Sylvester Manor is the most intact plantation remnant and former place of enslavement north of Virginia.

Sylvester Manor was owned continuously by one family, Sylvesters and their descendants, from 1652 until 2010 when Eben Fiske Ostby, and his nephew Bennett Konesni, gifted the historic site to the nonprofit organization they established. Over the past 370 years, Sylvester Manor has been a provisioning plantation, an 18th-century Enlightenment-era farm, a pioneering food industrialist's summer estate, and today includes the 1737 built Manor House, a 19th-century restored windmill, an Afro-Indigenous Burial Ground and family cemetery, a working farm, and educational and cultural arts programs open to all. Sylvester Manor was designated a Historic District of national significance on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015.

Our mission is to preserve, cultivate and share historic Sylvester Manor, and the Farm is a critical part of this mission and our work as a community based non-profit.

Our Farm

Our farm operation currently consists of 7+ acres of vegetables, small fruit and an expanding cut flower program. The produce from our farm feeds 150 CSA families, stocks our farmstand, provides food for local farmers markets and is donated to local food pantries. We raise pastured laying hens and pigs in marginal woodlands and rotate them through our growing fields. We have a unique on-farm, composting system and program.

Job Description

We're hiring Farm Apprentices for the 2024 season. We are seeking hardworking, high-energy, positive individuals who are motivated by a career in agriculture. This is a great position for someone who likes to challenge themselves and keep a fast pace, all while having fun growing vegetables, flowers and fruit, and raising livestock!

We encourage both seasoned farmers and first time farmers to apply. The farm's diverse makeup allows for both experienced and new farmers alike to thrive, and offers many different hands-on learning opportunities. From seed to harvest, farmers will take part in all aspects of our small scale farming program. As an apprentice you'll learn and/or advance your skills in seeding, transplanting, harvest techniques, wash & pack, weed management techniques, our CSA, farmers market set up and organization, irrigation set up, compost production, understanding the flow of field prep and planting, and so much more! In addition, you'll spend time with our livestock, caring for our laying hens and pigs.

Time on tractors will be reflective of the individual's experience and skill set. Strong teamwork and communication skills, patience, flexibility, and positivity are required. Farm work is extremely physically demanding, and a willingness and ability to work outdoors in all types of weather — heat, rain, sun, wind, and cold — is also a requirement.

Shelter Island is a beautiful place accessible only by ferry via both Sag Harbor and Greenport on the East End of Long Island. Living on Shelter Island you'll have access to bay and ocean beaches, nature preserves, fishing, sailing/boating, paddle boarding, biking, hiking, and so much more amongst a vibrant community.

Job Duration & Hours

Farm Apprentices start in March/April and work through October/November (exact end date to be determined by the needs of the farm). We are an ever-evolving Farm and if the fit is right, there are opportunities to grow into year round positions and/or part-time winter work.

This position is about 40-48 hours, 5-6 days/week, depending on the changing needs of the farm and time of year. Weekend responsibilities are shared among the farm crew. Due to the nature of farming, we work all major holidays.

What We Offer:

- Free shared housing: private bedroom and bathroom, communal laundry, kitchen and living room. At this time we cannot accommodate pets or significant others in employee housing.
- \$15/hour (based on experience)
- On farm education with monthly themes and weekly topics
- 5 Paid Days Off (to be used within the season outside of the months of July/August/September)
- Professional development/education stipend of \$200

- Professional workwear stipend of \$200 Free vegetables, fruit and eggs from the farm and 20% off all Farmstand products
- Working in an environment where farmers: take joy and pride in their work, look out for their fellow crew members, and learn together

How to Apply:

All interested applicants should send a resume and cover letter, three professional references, and answers to the questionnaire below to our Farm Manager, Arielle Gardner, agardner@sylvestermanor.org

1. Provide an overview of your farm related experience and interest in farming.
2. Describe a situation where you had to overcome a challenge at work.
3. Describe an interpersonal challenge you've experienced and how you handled it.
4. Describe your ideal manager and why you liked working with them. This is a way to gauge working styles, values, and preferred communication to see if we are a good fit.
5. How do you spend your spare time?
6. Where do you see yourself in the next 3 to 5 years?

This position will require interviews with multiple members of staff and, whenever possible, a farm visit/working interview is preferred. We can provide accommodations.

We encourage BIPOC, LGBTQ+ candidates, and people from all backgrounds and/or other underrepresented groups to apply.