



SYLVESTER MANOR

LIVESTOCK APPRENTICE **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Job Title: Livestock Apprentice
Reports to: Farm Manager
Position Type: Full-time, Seasonal
Dates: March/April - December 2024

Summary

We're hiring a Livestock Apprentice for the 2024 season. The Livestock Apprentice's focus will be the day to day care for our pigs, chickens and pastures. This person will also help with fruit and vegetable production.

Our Farm

We grow 10 acres of small fruits, vegetables and cover crops and raise pastured laying hens and pigs in marginal woodlands. The farm also has 60 acres of perennial pasture. Our food is distributed through a CSA program, Farmstand, farmer's markets, wholesale to local restaurants, and a growing donation program in partnership with the Center for Advocacy, Support and Transformation (CAST) in Southold Town and the Shelter Island Food Pantry.

Our goal is to grow in a way that focuses on soil and ecosystem health through the use of cover crops, crop rotation, compost, and reduced tillage when possible. We do not use herbicides or fungicides and only OMRI-approved amendments. We produce compost on-farm using food scraps collected from staff and CSA members, local equine manure, wood chips and leaves from Mashomack Preserve, a 3,000 acre nature preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy.

Our animals are raised without the use of hormones, steroids, and preventative antibiotics. We treat sick animals as needed. All livestock have access to the outdoors and are raised on pasture or woodlands.

Job Description

This position begins March/April 2024 and runs through December 2024, with potential for year round employment for the right person.

This is a *hands-on* learning experience. Apprentices will gain practical knowledge on the in's and outs of our farm operations. This Apprenticeship *does not include formal, structured education and skills are acquired through work experience*. This is an ideal position for someone who has at least one season of farming experience and is looking to refine their skills and continue learning. The farm is growing and this is an opportunity to participate as we scale up operations. We strive to keep tight systems and efficiency so this is a great position for someone who likes to work hard, challenge themselves, keep a fast pace, and have fun getting the job done.

We are looking for excellent team players with time management skills who love working outdoors and having fun. Shelter Island is a beautiful place with access to bay and ocean beaches, nature preserves, fishing, sailing, biking and more in a somewhat isolated, small community accessible only by ferry.

Responsibilities

- Daily chicken and pig chores
- Fencing installation and maintenance
- Help to monitor animal health and well being
- Grazing and inventory record keeping
- Assist with basic veterinarian care
- Receive feed deliveries
- Egg collection, washing, packing and inventory
- Moving animals
- Assist with basic equipment and infrastructure maintenance
- Pasture maintenance
- Optional participation in [CRAFT](#) (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training) meetings involving other farmers and apprentices from the community, including bi-weekly/monthly farm tours, meet-ups, potlucks, etc.
- We are a multi-faceted organization with public walking trails, farm-based educational initiatives, history and heritage programming, fundraising events, and other community events. Farm employees are encouraged to participate and there may be some occasions where attendance is required.

Vegetable & Fruit Growing Responsibilities

- Greenhouse seeding & monitoring
- Bed/field preparation
- Field seeding/transplanting
- Installing and running irrigation
- Weeding and cultivation
- Harvesting, washing and packing produce
- Pest & disease scouting and treatment
- End-of-season breakdown and field clean up

- Help ensure a clean, safe working environment by cleaning up and maintaining organization
- CSA distribution
- Assist with farmstand

Please note that duties, responsibilities, and schedule of this job may change, adapt, and/or be added at any time with or without notice throughout the year.

Desired Qualifications

- A positive attitude, respectful nature and willingness to work and live well with a diverse group of people.
- At least one full season of farming experience is preferred
- Must be willing to work quickly and efficiently to perform livestock chores in a timely manner
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to take direction and stay on task
- Excellent communication skills and timely responsiveness to emails
- Use of Google Sheets/Excel, Google Forms and Google Docs is required
- A strong interest in Shelter Island, Sylvester Manor, and our mission as an organization
- This job is very physical. Employees are expected to fulfill the following physical tasks: bending, kneeling, sitting, carrying, walking, squatting, standing, sometimes up to 8 hours at a time. Employees are required to lift up to 50 lbs.
- We work outdoors in all weather conditions including: cold, wet, windy, rainy, hot, humid, dry and sunny
- Willingness to interact with CSA members, Farmstand customers, potential donors and the general public
- Applicant must be able to legally drive a vehicle on and around the farm property
- English fluency

This position is about 40-50 hours, 5-6 days/week, depending on the changing needs of the farm. This position will require working weekends and holidays. Weekend responsibilities are shared among 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.
- Starting \$17/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 in season 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.

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.