



GUIDE FOR BLOOMING GLEN FARM INTERNS

Our General Philosophy: We are committed to creating a sustainable environment for both the farm and its stewards. The Internship is, at its core, a working/learning experience. The primary method for learning about organic farming at Blooming Glen Farm is by hands on work. All work assignments are made within the context of working as a team, and as part of the overall farm operations. Our farm depends on mutual cooperation and willingness to help one another accomplish the overall goal of a successful season.

Our Farm Work Ethic: While we work hard on the Farm, we are also committed to creating a farm that improves our quality of life while balancing the very real need to be financially sustainable. Successfully working long hours of physical labor can only be accomplished through self-sacrifice for the common good and respect for ourselves and each other. Each individual must continually strive to find a balance between speed and efficiency, looking at each day's unique challenges with maturity and intelligence, and balancing an eye for details while maintaining a grasp of the greater vision of the farm, the crew, and the season as a whole. There are a finite number of days in a farm season to accomplish what needs to be done, so everyone must bring their best to the effort to make it a success. A positive attitude and enthusiasm, a strong work ethic, the ability to communicate honestly, a serious interest in agriculture and the physical ability to work the long hours of a farming schedule are all supremely important qualities to possess.

Internship Work Agreement: Interns work in all aspects of the Farm's production from seeding, transplanting, greenhouse production, irrigation, field preparation, cultivating/weeding, harvesting, washing and packing and assisting with the CSA. During the course of the full season, Interns are given the information and time to learn organic farming's essential skills, CSA operation and other marketing methods. In return, Interns are expected to give their labor for the daily work of the Farm. Interns receive a bi-monthly taxed stipend. Housing is available on the farm, and produce from the farm is provided to the Interns.

Regular Work Schedule: The schedule in April and May will be very much weather dependent, requiring flexibility on the part of the interns as we will be doing a lot of planting- watching for the soil to dry out, keeping an eye on approaching storms and hustling to get things in the ground before the next soaker. Typically it will be five days a week, (though which five is flexible), 7-6pm, though we may call on folks to work late if we are trying to get something planted before rain, or beds shaped and covered with black mulch. The schedule becomes more dependable as we get into

mid-May and will be as follows: The work week is everyone works Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sundays are on a rotating schedule of one intern being on call at the farm to water the flats in the greenhouse two times over the day once the market starts in May, until about the beginning of September (time commitment is only about 30 min. total). There may also be four weeks in late May/early June of early morning strawberry picking for about an hour before the truck leaves for the markets on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Daily hours for the majority of the season are from 7a.m. to 6:30p.m., allowing for flexibility due to weather and time of year. (We will also start very early if it's going to be a scorcher, or we want to get something planted before it gets hot!) Harvest days for the CSA are Tuesday and Fridays starting at the end of May until beginning of November. We will work from 7a.m. until the pick-up begins at 1:00, then break for lunch. Lunch break is for one hour every day. On Saturdays we harvest for the Sunday farmer's market and as the season progresses we may be harvesting every morning for various markets and wholesale. This schedule will take us to the end of the season. Breakfast should be eaten before the work day begins.

Weekly Meetings:

We will set aside a time each week to gather as a group in the workshop and review the week's goals. Throughout the week revisit the large chalk board for messages, and daily and weekly tasks and goals. There is also a large farm map, calendar and various notebooks for recording information located in the workshop and/or distribution room. Recordkeeping is a shared responsibility.

Safety and Common Sense:

- **Footwear Policy**

Boots or footwear that completely protects the foot is required, for both farm work and market work. Please no crocs or flip-flops. You will also want something tall and waterproof like a Muck Boot.

- **Put Tools Away**

It is easy to set tools down in the field and forget about them. Be aware of the act of putting a tool down; harvest knives, hand tools, clippers, rubber bands, and twisties can be easily strewn in a field on a busy day. *Always return tools to where they belong.* If you stop for lunch, or the end of the day, do not assume you will be returning to that activity later. Bring all tools back to where they are stored. It is your job to become familiar with where things belong. Do not leave things strewn about for someone else to clean up (or to get run over by a tractor!). We also encourage you to take ownership over common areas like the workshop. Got a few spare minutes? Sweep the floor and tidy up the tool area.

- **Be prepared**

Have water available in the field (or granola bars!), hats, gloves, proper clothes- "think weather." You are a farmer now! Frequent and/or lengthy breaks slow the work down and degrade teamwork.

- **First Aid**

Familiarize yourself with the location of the first aid kit. Alert us immediately to any farm injuries. Be aware of your limitations. Stretch every morning before work if you can. Lift heavy crates properly, or ask your fellow farm workers for help.

- **Protection from the elements**

The sun and humidity can be deceptively strong in the summer. Drink lots of water, and dress appropriately. Harvest for markets and CSA must occur no matter what the weather. We will start very early on days we know will be brutally hot so that we can take off during the hottest times of the day, then we may resume working a bit in the evening.

Compensation

A stipend of \$500 is provided **twice** a month. Taxes and other required withholdings are deducted from this stipend. You are also provided with on-farm housing and farm food (see descriptions below) and workers compensation insurance.

Education

As previously stated we take a **hands-on learning** approach. We will do our best to explain the why behind what we do, while still balancing the need to accomplish tasks in a timely manner. We will also provide you with access to resources to explore topics in depth that may interest you further. We can tailor discussions, readings and informal lessons to specific interests of the Interns. We will also arrange a handful of field trips to go on as a crew to neighboring farms to expose you to the diversity of options available in sustainable farming- these field trips typically occur in spring and fall. We will provide you with a list of workshops held by SAITA (Southeast Apprentice/Intern Training Alliance)- these are typically on Saturdays, a busy day for us at the farm, so only one intern will be able to go to these at a time- you may choose one or two that interest you, or explore more on your days off. PASA (Pennsylvania Assoc. of Sustainable Agriculture) and the Bucks County FoodShed Alliance also offer local workshops, potlucks, farm tours etc. that may be of interest and we will pass on that information to you.

Upon the start of the season, every intern will be expected to provide a list of goals for the season, as well as your own plan of action for achieving them. We are here to assist you in your learning, however you are ultimately responsible. We will meet over the course of the season to see if those goals are being met, or have changed, and to establish ways in which we can help you to meet those goals. You are also responsible in making sure those meetings are scheduled and occur as needed. The resources and possibilities for learning on the farm are endless, but ultimately you will get out of the experience what you put into it. It is important to remember that even the most mundane tasks can teach us something, and that the season needs to be looked at in its entirety.

Farm Food

All interns are allowed to take as much farm produce as they can personally use. Typically we use market and CSA leftovers for our consumption first, then harvest if needed. Any products that we buy for re-sale to our CSA, is available to you at wholesale cost. We try to have one weekly meal together as a farm crew.

Housing/ House Rules

Housing is on the farm in the farmhouse, which is divided into two apartments. One (#98) is used by the farm family- Tricia, Tom and Dakota. The other (#100) is shared by the interns. Each intern gets their own private bedroom. The intern apartment includes a shared kitchen, living room, laundry and 1½ baths. Utilities are included, as well as internet service. You may receive mail at the Intern house (#100 Moyer Rd, Perkasie, PA 18944); just remember to have it forwarded with you when the season ends.

The Intern House must be kept clean at all times. Interns can decide as a group how they will achieve this goal, but all Interns living in the house will be responsible for the care and clean appearance of the house's common areas and surrounding porch. Day employees will have access to the intern kitchen for use at lunch time, but must use the porta-potty outside. They are also responsible for keeping the kitchen clean if they use it. Please notify us if this becomes a problem.

At the end of the season the house will be inspected as interns move out and is expected to be clean and undamaged. Please notify us immediately of any housekeeping problems over the course of the season, for example broken items like doors/windows/appliances, etc so that we can take care of them right away.

Intern House rules to be followed:

- Vacuum common areas once a week, and bedroom as necessary.
- Clean stove and refrigerator once a month in addition to cleaning up after daily use.
- Clean bathrooms once every week.
- Leave muddy shoes on porch or in garage.
- Keep porch area clean and presentable at all times- especially for CSA pick-up days.
- Kitchen must be cleaned daily. Keep compost scraps in a bucket with a tight fitting lid- remove as needed to compost pile specifically designated for kitchen scraps.
- Recycling is required- a recycling guide will be given to you so you know what our service accepts. Garbage and recycling go out by the street every Tuesday night. This is your responsibility.
- Be respectful of your housemates and please no loud music. You share walls not only with your fellow Interns but our apartment as well.
- No smoking in the farm house or anywhere on farm property. Same goes for visitors.

Other Personnel Policies and Procedures

Evaluations and Problem Resolution

Interns will be given feedback regarding their performances at individual feedback rap sessions held twice a season (usually near mid-season and season's end). We expect an exchange of feedback- we want to hear your views on the experience.

Feedback is the honest and open exchange of information regarding Farm operations and the effectiveness of working relationships, both between the Farm staff and Interns and among the Interns themselves. This exchange of information must be ongoing and occur respectfully, recognizing that feedback is an effective way to deal with the conflicts which will inevitably arise. The focus of feedback is on improving farm operations, outcomes and relationships. Without a symbiotic relationship between the farm and its crew and interns, a drastic decrease in performance and overall satisfaction will occur on behalf of both parties.

Any employment-related problems or difficulties can be brought to our attention at any time, or can be brought up at a feedback conference.

Communicate a problem directly to your head farmers as soon as you recognize it, preferably while it's only a potential problem. Tom and Tricia are always available for a personal meeting, no matter how busy we seem! Please do not assume that we know how you are feeling- you must communicate!

General Demeanor

It is expected that all interns will be on-time for work in the morning, dressed appropriately for work, and professional in their attitude for work. All employees have an obligation to maintain a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and offensive and degrading remarks. It's also important to implement Good Agricultural Practices, or "GAPs"- most importantly maintain good personal hygiene and wash hands after using the restroom. If you are sick, please do not come to work. Let us know what's going on- keep the lines of communication open. Please report any injuries, major or minor, immediately.

Time Off

Requests for personal time off will be considered for approval with enough advance notice. Generally however, we consider that you usually have two days off a week, and the fact that this is a seasonal position and you will have a chance for vacation after the farm season ends on Nov. 15th. However, we know that things do arise, and on average we consider two full personal days off per intern for the season to be fair. All scheduling needs and time-off must be recorded in the schedule book **and** communicated directly to Tricia for pre-approval.

Visitation

Visitors are welcome at the Farm and Intern House for short stays- as in an out-of-town friend or relative. Just let us know, please. Regular overnight house guests, however, (as in boyfriends/girlfriends) are not permitted. If your out-of-town visitors wish to volunteer on the farm, please inform us first.

CSA Member Interactions

During pick-up days there are a lot of people coming and going on the farm. Please be professional, polite and helpful. If something needs to be restocked, do so. If someone needs to know where a pick-your-own crop is, show them where it is and how to harvest it. But realize that you are working, and are not obligated or encouraged to stand and talk to everyone who wants 10 min. of your time. Remind them that they can come to work opportunities to have a chance to work with you side by side and ask all the questions they want, or join us at a farm potluck for social interactions.

Tools/Clothes

The Farm provides hand tools, cloth gloves and big bulky raingear. You will be assigned three essential tools at the beginning of the season: a hand hoe, hand clippers and a harvest knife. If you are someone who has a tendency to lose track of your tools and gear, we will ask you to pay for lost items. Interns must provide any other desired tools or clothes (pocket knives, rain boots, hats, water bottles, fancy leather gloves, etc)

Farm Vehicles

Interns may drive the red Ford pick-up truck around the farm property. When driven on farm, you must stay at **5mph** and *always* be aware of the location of children (who are small and tend to dart out from behind greenhouses!), irrigation headers and pipes, greenhouses, etc. **Do not** drive near the discovery garden or other pick-your-own fields during CSA pick-up hours- use farm carts. Farm vehicles are not to be borrowed for personal use. You will find that unless you are a serious bicyclist you will be much happier here with a car for transportation. There are a few bikes on the farm for Interns to borrow. Before driving any of the large tractors, you must be trained in safety practices and have read the owners manual.

And lastly.... don't forget to have fun and enjoy the farm season!!

Upon hire: I have read over the Blooming Glen Farm Intern Guide, discussed the details with the head farmers, and have had a chance to ask any questions which have been answered to my satisfaction. I am ready to commit to a Blooming Glen Farm internship, for the time frame of April 1st thru November 15th, 20__.

Signature

Date