



Director of the Food & Farm Program

Department: Food & Farm

Reports To: Executive Director

Position Status: Full-time, Year-Round

Position Start: Position open until filled

Exemption Status/Reason: Exempt

Program Overview

The Vermont Youth Conservation Corps' Food & Farm Program is a dynamic youth development, diversified agriculture and food security initiative. At VYCC, we believe in the power that food has to connect us to the land, our community, and each other. We engage young people in organic farming and food education on our historic 400-acre campus in Richmond, Vermont. Annually, the program produces 12 acres of organically certified vegetables and meat and eggs from hundreds of pasture-raised chickens which are all distributed to over 400 families through our nationally recognized Health Care Share project.

The Health Care Share is a public health initiative that connects Vermont families who experience barriers to accessing locally grown produce or have a diet-related illness with a weekly vegetable share they pick up at partnering medical centers. Each year the program provides employment opportunities to youth and young adults from Vermont and around the country who assist in the daily operations of the farm. Additionally, the program has a robust food education component that connects the work we do in the field and the food on our plates, by preparing lunch from the farm every workday in the summer and sharing celebratory meals sourced from our farm with the larger community.

Position Description

The Director of the Food & Farm Program leads an experienced and passionate team in managing an organic farm where young people engage in agriculture, food security, food preparation, and community building. This compassionate leader will create the conditions for staff members to design responsive and impactful programs where young people and communities care for each other and the land that feeds us.

The Food & Farm Program and its team is in a strong place, with a robust network of alumni and partners supporting its success. The new Director will bring experience, networks, and an innovative spirit to the VYCC team to build on the success and impact of the current program

and continue its innovation and development. This position requires a passion for working with young people, education and food justice, a strong practical knowledge of farm and food systems, a deep commitment to community food security, and a collaborative and creative mindset.

Essential Functions

Organizational Leadership

- Facilitate reciprocal relationships with staff across the organization to collectively further the VYCC mission and the goals of the Food & Farm Program.
- Balance on the ground program support with leading the team through organizational processes and systems.
- Attend board meetings and other VYCC events, presenting and contributing as needed
- Collaborate with the team of Officers and Directors individually and in regular meetings, on defining and achieving organizational priorities.

Program Leadership

- In collaboration with staff and partners, identify opportunities for the evolution of the Food & Farm Program in ways that engage and inspire young adults, and lead to a supportive and sustainable program for staff.
- Mentor the Farm Production Team in implementing sustainable agriculture practices that build soil health, meet production needs, and model best practices while looking to future innovations.
- Play a lead role in designing Leader training to ensure they are prepared to support Corps Members in a successful season.
- Collaborate with Conservation Program Director and other staff on cross-program intersections, such as participant learning outcomes, shared use of spaces and resources, recruitment goals, and program policies.
- Collaborate with the Executive Directors to implement risk assessment and safety management in the Food & Farm Program.
- Cultivate a culture of innovation on the team. Building from the success and impact of the current program, explore new program ideas and lead the team into continued development and evolution of the program.
- Facilitate team members in resolving conflict in healthy ways and play a leadership role in mitigating crew-level challenges as needed.

Program Administration

- Mentor Food & Farm Program Staff in their professional growth and development to ensure they have the support and resources they need to thrive.

- Oversee supervision structures and team culture of healthy communication, reciprocal support, and professional growth.
- Manage systems where information is shared regularly and clearly, comradery is built, collaboration is fostered, and feedback is normalized.
- Support Farm Program and Administrative Staff in welcoming AmeriCorps Members, VYCC crews, and volunteers who contribute to the success of the Food & Farm Program
- Lead the season reflection, program planning and budgeting processes that collect feedback from all team members and achieve programmatic financial and impact goals.
- Align program design, implementation, and outcomes with AmeriCorps compliance.
- Collaborate with VYCC's engagement department to generate marketing materials.

Partnerships and Revenue

- Be an inspiring representative of the VYCC to the general public.
- Identify, secure, manage, and report on a suite of diverse revenue streams; collaborate with Food & Farm Team members to grow program revenue.
- Lead the annual program budgeting process and manage the program budget throughout the year.
- Steward relationships with current partners, local farmers, businesses, and organizations; pursue new partnerships that align with evolving goals of the Food & Farm Program.
- Support staff in communications with partner organizations for the Farm at VYCC, including medical centers and hospitals, the Vermont Foodbank, local food shelves, area schools, NOFA-VT, and others.
- Support Farm Production Managers in developing VYCC's farm stand and other sales.

Required Knowledge, Skills, & Abilities

- Proven commitment to working with young adults to help them learn, grow, and succeed.
- Expertise in sustainable agriculture and food systems.
- Experience in one or more of the following areas: food security, education, youth development, and/or workforce development.
- Passion for VYCC's mission and an ability to communicate this energy to others.
- Demonstrated commitment to the values of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Demonstrated experience managing a high-performing team.
- Several years' leadership experience in education or non-profit organizations.
- Strong working knowledge of program planning, organizational structure, budgeting, administrative operations, and fundraising.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral, with the ability to represent the organization externally across a wide range of stakeholders and constituencies.
- Strong relationship builder with the ability to find common ground, build consensus, and strengthen collaboration among diverse stakeholders.
- Ability to handle multiple, often competing, priorities.

- Flexible, motivated, responsible and willing to both take direction and work independently.

Our Mission: Take action and build community by working and learning together with the land.

About Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

The VYCC is a 501c3 nonprofit focused on engaging young people in service, work, conservation, and agriculture. Since 1985, VYCC staff have provided valuable work and learning opportunities to youth and young adults from across the country and from nearly every town in Vermont. Our model is strong and simple: young people, working together, guided by highly trained leaders, completing priority projects in conservation and agriculture.

Excellence and Equal Opportunity at VYCC

VYCC is committed to being an organization that is inclusive and welcoming for all employees, volunteers, and community members.

Our Workplace

This position is based out of the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps Headquarters Office at the historic West Monitor Barn, in Richmond, VT. Our office is a collegial, bustling, and fun open office atmosphere, which offers staff opportunities to interact and collaborate. Staff members can balance working remotely and on-campus in collaboration with their team schedule, tasks and all-staff gatherings. Successful staff are able maintain focus and productivity, balance personal initiative and independence, and plug into our team in ways that help us do our best work as an organization. Staff enjoy the perks of the Farm at VYCC and forest campus year-round, as well as the happenings of nearby downtown Richmond.

Compensation & Benefits:

- Starting salary for this position is \$75,000, commensurate with experience. Exempt from overtime.
- Medical and dental insurance; Health Savings Account (HSA) with matching contribution; disability and group life insurance.
- Simple IRA with matching contribution (once eligibility criteria are met)
- Annual paid time off (PTO), paid sick time.
- One-week paid closure in November for all staff (in addition to PTO)
- Ongoing professional development.
- Annual gift card to the VYCC farmstand (organic produce and eggs).

How to Apply

Please complete our VYCC General Application (<http://bit.ly/VYCCapp>), to which you'll upload a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three professional references. Questions regarding this position can be directed to Leah Mital at leah.mital@vycc.org. No calls, please. Position is open until filled.

Updated 11.15.23

***Note:** The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. All of the listed functions are important and are in no particular order. This is not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required. All employees may be required to perform duties outside of their normal responsibilities from time to time, as needed.*