



Canalside Community Food

a community supported agriculture scheme

Assistant Grower Job Description

Canalside Community Food (CCF) grows fruit and vegetables for over 150 members, providing a share of the harvest all year round. We are a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) scheme: our members pay a regular subscription to the scheme and receive a share of the harvest, creating a close, mutually supportive relationship between the farm and the people it feeds. Most members pick up their share from the farm on specified collection days.

We're looking for an assistant grower to be employed from 1st March 2025, for one year initially, with scope to develop into a permanent position. The role is suitable for an assistant grower who is keen to learn and interested to develop more responsibility after an initial season of learning the ropes.

We grow approximately seven acres for field vegetables, a two acre orchard for top and soft fruit, and seven polytunnels (totalling around a quarter of an acre). CCF is certified organic by the Soil Association. The field-scale production uses a Massey Ferguson 230 tractor operating a 1.2 metre, 3-row bed system allowing for the use of steerage hoes, and ploughing and power harrowing that are contracted out, though a lot of field work is done manually as well. The CSA owns about a dozen implements for use with the tractor including all the appropriate kit for doing all of our own topping, muck-spreading, bed prep, and planting. Our tunnels and some of our outdoor beds use/are transitioning to a permanent bed system and are mulched with a combination of municipal waste and our own compost. The orchard is now fourteen years old and is home to a wide range of top and soft fruit.

As CCF has a mission statement to provide its community of members with a weekly share of seasonal vegetables throughout the whole year, the growers have developed an intricate sowing and cropping schedule with the aim of ensuring as much as possible that the quantity of vegetables given each week is balanced throughout the year. Occasionally organically produced vegetables are bought in to supplement the produce we grow.

We hold a weekly mid-week volunteer morning, attended by members who participate in the growing activities regularly or on an ad hoc/occasional basis. We also hold regular Saturday volunteer events, members' socials, and various other events as well as open days for members and the public.

CCF employs two other part-time growers, a part-time administrator and a part-time finance worker. The scheme is overseen by the Steering Group, comprised of these employees and members of Canalside.

The Assistant Grower will:

- Work with the lead grower and other assistant grower to attend to all aspects of care for the land and the production of crops, including soil preparation, sowing, planting, weeding, harvesting and other activities that support crop production such as pest and disease management, compost production and mechanisation;
- Support the other growers to carry out other work such as infrastructural work and general maintenance;
- Work regular days which may include Saturdays, and also need to be flexible in occasionally helping cover routine duties for example on Sundays. These will be prearranged with the other growers according to need and availability;
- Work flexible hours throughout the year due to the seasonal nature of the work;
- Help to oversee casual workers who may be drafted in at busy times of the year;
- Arrange the activities for the weekly work morning with the other growers , and manage volunteers appropriately;
- Uphold the principles and aims of CCF.

Experience and Skills

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working on a farm or smallholding • Able to do physical work outdoors in all weather conditions • Work as part of a team • Highly motivated • Keen to learn • Good timekeeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of organic growing, polytunnel growing and fruit production • Experience with farm machinery • Experience working alongside and managing volunteers

A confident, friendly and welcoming manner when dealing with people is very important at Canalside, as the farm team frequently interacts with the members on collection days, socials and work mornings.

We are seeking a suitable candidate to start at the beginning of March, working 3-4 days a week from March to October (22.5-30 hours per week, at 7½ hours per day) and 2 days a week from November to February (15 hours per week). The pay rate is currently set at £13.48 per hour to give a maximum annual salary of £17,591 per year (£1466 per month). The post-holder will be employed and is entitled to statutory holiday pay, as well as any other applicable statutory entitlements, and will be auto-enrolled in the company pension scheme (NEST) if eligible.

Please email your CV and cover letter or any queries to mail@canalsidecommunityfood.org.uk or post to Canalside Community Food, Southam Road, Radford Semele, CV31 1TY; the application deadline is 8pm on Wednesday 15th January 2025. Interviews will be held at the farm in the latter part of January.