

Job Title: Lead Grower- Sims Hill Shared Harvest
Location: Bristol

Hours: 4 days a week (March - October); 3.5 days a week (November - February). 8 hours per day.

Status: Employed **Pay rate:** £22,360/annum pro rata per above hours

Closing date for applications: 11th January 2022

Interviews week commencing: 24th January 2022

Start date of post: 15th March 2022

Sims Hill Shared Harvest is a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) cooperative based in Frenchay on the edge of Bristol. We are seeking applicants for the post of Lead Grower to collaboratively manage the CSA. The candidate will work with our current Lead Grower; sharing equal responsibility to manage the farm.

Sims Hill Shared Harvest grows mixed vegetables for its 140+ members (95 full veg share equivalents) using organic standards (although not certified) and has 4 acres of growing land including 6 tunnels for protected cropping. The growing area is split across our field on the Sims Hill site and our market garden on the Grow Wilder site which is run by Avon Wildlife Trust.

We supply our members with a share of veg 12 months of the year, buying in sparingly from organic wholesalers on demand to cover shortfalls. We also sell surplus to local restaurants and outlets to generate extra income.

We are looking for an experienced commercial organic grower with an understanding of and commitment to CSA values and the ability to lead a team of volunteers and other employees. The role will be responsible for the planning, production and delivery of CSA and wholesale vegetables, as well as developing relationships with partners and wholesale outlets, and developing other income streams as part of a team. Both Lead Growers will report to the Sims Hill Board.

In addition to both Lead Growers, the growing team consists of a seasonal trainee, volunteers and a team of work share members. Each year, we run a traineeship for a new entrant grower - part of the role will include the delivery of the traineeship in collaboration with the Landworkers' Alliance (LWA) trainee programme. The Lead Growers are required to line manage the trainees and be actively involved in the planning and delivery of the projects.

This year, we set up and delivered a mentoring project for asylum seekers and refugees - including a paid role and training placements in agroecological farming practices. As a CSA, we are always seeking to integrate more people into the benefits of our work and want to create greater access to land and healthy food in the city. This project is led by our current Grower; the applicant will be required to support and occasionally host this project when necessary.

Responsibilities and Person Specification

Tasks will be divided and each grower will take a lead role on certain management aspects; they will also be responsible for delivering and collaborating on the other areas. The exact balance of responsibilities within the job share will be determined based on the skill set and experience of the successful candidate, and to some extent will be dynamic to cater for changing needs within the organisation as well as giving day-to-day operational flexibility.

Lead role on:

- Managing and delivering on the growing cycle, including planning, crop production and delivery on our field site.
- Managing and delivering the field cultivation, including crop rotation and fertility building on our field site.
- Managing the field workshare programme, recruiting for new workshares to fill roles each year.
- Coordinating shares - monitoring and recording share contents and value. Ordering/making connections with other suppliers to buy in supplementary veg. Coordinating with the Sims Hill admin person on orders, invoicing etc. Ensuring delivery round is covered and line managing driver.
- Developing farm infrastructure - applying for funding, investing in new equipment and maintaining existing equipment/tractor.
- Ordering farm supplies - seed orders, fuel, sundries, new equipment - in accordance with the farm budget.
- Ensuring Health and Safety practices are in place and being followed.
- Developing relationships with existing and new key partners - UWE (University of the West of England), LWA, CSA Network, Grow Wilder, Bristol Food Producers.
- Attend board meetings (monthly Thursday evenings).
- Reporting to Members' Meetings (4 times a year).

Responsible for collaboratively delivering on:

- Traineeship program
- Communication with our members (e.g. newsletters/share notes/social media) and provision of involvement opportunities for our members (e.g. volunteer day)
- Running Sunday volunteer sessions on a rota with other grower/board members
- Weekly harvesting
- Watering - Includes weekend watering on a rota with other land partners at Grow Wilder
- Reviewing finances and identifying areas for investment and budgeting

Essential requirements:

- 3 years commercial growing experience
- Experience in tractor driving and field cultivation
- Understanding of organic and agroecological farming principles and practices
- Experience working with volunteers - compassionate and professional communication skills
- Ability to lead tasks with a mixed team
- Very good organisational skills, including good time management and ability to prioritise
- Ability to work on own initiative and collaboratively as part of team/job share
- Experience with budgeting, finance and farm admin
- Proficiency in using Excel
- Comprehensive knowledge of health and safety practices on a farm
- Full UK driving license

Desirable:

- Experience of leading training and workshops
- Experience of working cooperatively or in a CSA structure
- Broader land management skills - hedgerow management, woodland management, track and drainage management
- Experience fixing machinery
- Experience using Quickbooks

Commitments:

- Commitment to CSA principles and working within a CSA cooperative structure
- Motivation and enthusiasm for working collectively with another grower
- Commitment to creating a more diverse, inclusive and accessible food system

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Our commitments as a CSA.

Sims Hill recognises the lack of diversity in the UK agricultural sector. We have always aspired to be a participatory organisation, supporting the voices of our members and community. However, we recognise the learning and work we need to do to become a more inclusive CSA. We are committed to working to disrupt some of the structural barriers to food justice and strive to make the food we produce and land we farm accessible to all. We welcome all applications for our job roles and actively encourage BAME and LGBTQI+ to apply.

Please apply in writing including a cover letter and CV to simshillgrowers@mail.com and simshillsharedharvest@gmail.com

More about Sims Hill Shared Harvest: <http://simshill.co.uk/membership-information/>