8-30-17 Apprenticeship, Agroecology Program, University of California Santa Cruz, 9-30-17 deadline

Job Title

Apprentice

Agency

Agroecology Program, University of California Santa Cruz

Location

Santa Cruz, CA

Pay Rate

$0, with opportunity to enter into Advanced Apprenticeship at the end of six months (which comes with pay)

Overview

* The Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture is accepting applications for the 2018 Apprenticeship program. This apprenticeship provides training in the concepts and practices of organic gardening and small-scale farming. This full-time program is held at the UCSC Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (UCSC/CASFS) Center's 30-acre Farm and 3-acre Alan Chadwick Garden on the UCSC campus. The Apprenticeship training program offers 300 hours of classroom instruction and 700 hours of in-field training and hands-on experience in the greenhouses, gardens, orchards, and fields. The UCSC/CASFS offers a Certificate in Ecological Horticulture upon successful completion of the program.
* The six-month Apprenticeship offers instruction and daily work experience in organic gardening and farming, focusing on ecological interactions amongst plants, soils, climate, insects, and pathogens. It also fosters an analysis of the political, economic, and cultural roots of our current food system and provides space to explore how we might shift into a future that supports both people and planet. In a hands-on education approach, apprentices work alongside staff in the greenhouse, gardens, fields, and orchards, as well as attend lectures, demonstrations, and field trips. Apprentices are exposed to the different aspects of growing plants organically on both a hand-dug garden scale and a tractor-cultivated field scale.
* The apprentices selected to attend the course each year are interested in practical training that will prepare them to teach others and/or to run their own operations.
* Apprentices live in community on the Farm at UCSC.
* Apprentices work Monday through Friday from mid-April to mid-October, learning, working, and living together.

Instructional Techniques

This is a full-time course with approximately 300 hours of formal instruction and 700 hours of in-field training and work experience. There are four permanent instructor/managers and eight assistant instructors who teach and coordinate apprentices as well as manage the gardens and fields. The instructors and the Apprenticeship Coordinators work together to create the curriculum and to deliver the course through a variety of instructional techniques, as outlined below:

1. Garden- and Field-based (4 days per week on average)

Much of the learning in this program happens through the doing. Garden and field work provide time for ongoing instruction, practical demonstrations of horticultural methods, structured work sessions, informal walks and talks, questions and answers, and observations before, during, and after work hours.

1. Lectures and Workshops (2 three-hour sessions per week)

Whole group classes, lectures, and workshops provide the opportunity to disseminate core information to the entire group and to provide the theoretical background for the skills being taught in the gardens and fields. Visiting speakers, brought in to increase the range of topics covered, are drawn from the richharvest instruction pool of agricultural scientists, extensionists, farmers, and gardeners in our area.

1. Practical Skill Classes (once per week)

The field and garden staff lead classes on site-specific topics such as irrigation, equipment, and plant groups. Staff also lead field/garden walks, discussions, and demonstrations, allowing for students to have a more interactive learning experience.

1. Field Trips (three to six per six-month program)

During the six-month program, apprentices take field trips to different farm and garden operations. Opportunities abound for apprentices to organize their own informal field trips to interesting horticultural and agricultural sites in and around the Santa Cruz area.

Living Scenario/Community

* One critical element of the Apprenticeship has been the immersion learning made possible by a full-time residential program. Apprentices are given the option of living at the Farm (free of charge) in one of nine four-room tent cabins.
* Apprentices share the Farm Center kitchen and dining room, library, bathrooms and solar showers. Group food supplies are purchased in bulk at a cost of about $110/month per person. The weekday group meals are vegetarian, but apprentices can prepare their own meat in the kitchen. Participation in group meals is optional.
* The Apprenticeship community that forms each year shapes a big part of people's experience. For this reason, apprentices should understand that a fair amount of their time and energy will be invested into community life. Though the Apprenticeship is not an intentional community in the formal sense, maintaining it is a communal effort. With up to 48 people living on the Farm, cooperation and communication are extremely vital to the daily coordination of work and domestic tasks. All apprentices take part in cooking, cleaning, and other domestic responsibilities. Outside of these basic community responsibilities and community meetings, apprentices can choose whether or not they wish to participate in social aspects of the community.
* Due to organizational and space constraints, children, spouses, and significant others may not live on the Farm. Pets are not allowed on campus. Since the Farm & Garden are first and foremost public facilities, courtesy toward the visiting public by residents is essential.

Required Skills

Criteria for Selection

* Applicants must be at least 21 years old.
* Each year we have 35-40 apprentice positions and typically we receive three times that many applications. To ensure your chance of full consideration, please be sure to read the section below carefully and follow the guidelines listed in the "How to Apply" section found at https://casfs.ucsc.edu/apprenticeship/index.html.
* The goal of our program is to train future organic farmers, gardeners, teachers, and community leaders. Therefore, in our selection process we strive to choose the individuals who seem most prepared to maximize their training and to then use it for their work, to start their own operations, and/or to teach others.
* In choosing individuals who will live and work together for 6 months, we are in effect creating a community. Out of the pool of applicants, we attempt to achieve a balance of interests, geographical and cultural origins, ages, and gender. Consequently, there is no one "preferred" type of applicant. We carefully consider each application in relationship to the entire pool of applicants. While the people selected share a strong interest in organic farming/gardening and social justice, they come from diverse backgrounds.
* That said, the selection committee looks highly upon applicants who demonstrate thoughtful consideration of what this program offers and the degree to which it fits their long-term learning/professional objectives. Again, we encourage applicants to attend the Apprenticeship Orientation Tour and volunteer alongside us. We feel this gives applicants a better understanding of the hands-on, rigorous nature of the program along with the reality of the living scenario here.

Application Mode

* Please visit <https://casfs.ucsc.edu/apprenticeship/index.html> to learn more about the program and how to apply.
* The program carries a course fee of $6,000.
* Opportunities for course fee waivers can be found here: https://casfs.ucsc.edu/apprenticeship/apprenticeship-information/index.html#Fees.

Application Deadline

September 30, 2017

Contact for further information

casfs@ucsc.edu