

Agricultural Soilless System Intern (Firebird Farm)

NUMBER OF INTERNS DESIRED: 2

DATES NEEDED: Continuous (work continues through Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall seasons). This hire is for Summer season (~May 1st – August 31st)

STIPENDS: The stipend amount for undergraduates is \$5,000 over the summer season; The stipend amount for graduates is \$6,000 over the summer season.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERNSHIP:

The Agricultural Fieldwork Intern of the University of the District of Columbia's Firebird Farm is an integral part of a visionary team of Landgrant professionals dedicated to Urban Agriculture and a comprehensive Urban Food System that improves the quality of life and economic opportunity of urban populations. The Fieldwork Intern reports directly to the Assistant Manager for Production within the Center for Urban Agriculture and Gardening Education (CUAGE), which is one of the Landgrant Centers of the University's College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability, and Environmental Science (CAUSES). Firebird Farm is a state-of-the-art agricultural research facility dedicated to advancing food security and urban sustainability through research, training, and economic capacity building in Urban Agriculture. Firebird Farm serves as a demonstration and research crucible where skills and techniques are developed prior to their extension throughout the city. The fields, hoopouses, and garden boxes provide the city with a production, demonstration, and training site committed to Food Production, Food Preparation, Food Distribution, and "closing the loop" through water recovery and the generation of renewable energy.

The incumbent works closely with the Assistant Manager for Production and any other CUAGE project assistants and with UDC students and volunteers to support the research, community education, and food production goals of the farm. S/he has a passion for sustainable agriculture, small scale farming, innovative farming methods, and performs all duties with a high degree of reliability, independence, and initiative. Work is performed in accordance with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the university, the college, and sponsoring agencies.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES ("DELIVERABLES"):

Daily visits to **Firebird Farm** (12001 Old Baltimore Pike, Beltsville, MD, 20705) in order to complete the following tasks:

1. Collects research data and records it for CUAGE research team;
1. Conducts brief visual inspection of the facility and notifies supervisors of improperly functioning system/facility components and anything else in need of repair;
2. Makes recommendations for streamlining operations and automating systems;
3. Mowing and weeding;
4. Seedling preparation, transplanting, and crop maintenance;
5. Keeping sites and growth systems clean (fields, aquaponics, and hydroponics);
6. Soil, plant, and water sampling;
7. Crop harvesting, yield measurements, and sampling for testing;

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8. Food safety and proper washing of products;
9. Maintaining water quality in soilless systems;
10. Must be willing to lead small volunteer groups working at the farm (when available);
11. General cleaning and straightening up of facilities (mainly leaving a clean workspace after incumbent's completion of work at the farm);
12. Notifies Assistant Manager for Production of any supplies that need replacing before we run out.

OTHER DUTIES:

1. Keeps a journal of completed "deliverables" to be submitted upon completion of internship;
2. Meets with Assistant Manager for Production on a bi-weekly basis to check-in. Schedule to be worked out by Assistant Manager and Intern candidate.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Though this site can be accessed by employing a few different modes of public transit, the candidate will occasionally be required to transport **(1)** soil, **(2)** plant tissue, and **(3)** system water samples between the Firebird Farm Demonstration Food Hub and the Water Quality Testing Lab located on UDC's Main Campus. For this reason, the candidate's daily access to reliable automobile transportation is **required**;
2. On-site availability can vary, but weekend hours are **required**. Although bulk of work will be conducted during business hours Monday-through-Friday, there needs to be system checks over the weekends.

REQUIRED COMPETANCIES:

1. Experience with gardening, agriculture, and/or natural sciences;
2. Ability to follow standard operating procedures;
3. Comfortable working outdoors in various weather conditions and temperature extremes;
4. Valid driver's license;
5. Basic knowledge concerning research data collection (i.e. scale reading, numeric decimal precision, etc.);
6. Detail-oriented;
7. Organizational skills;
8. Personable & outgoing;
9. Basic safety skills (i.e. use of goggles and gloves when mixing even innocuous chemicals/solvents);
10. Microsoft Word, Outlook, & Excel.
11. **Must enjoy getting their hands dirty!!!**

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Open until filled. Priority given to applicants that submit a brief cover letter and a resume by May 15th, 2021.

CONTACT:

To apply or for questions, please contact Ms. Victoria Mirowski, victoria.mirowski@udc.edu