



## Veggielution Farm Internship Positions

Winter 2019

Interns are an integral part of Veggielution, providing essential support to staff throughout the year in almost every area of the farm operation. As a part of our team, you will have the unique opportunity to gain **hands-on farming experience** as well as a **deeper understanding of urban agriculture, community engagement**, and the **non-profit work**. We are looking for candidates with a strong work ethic, sense of self-motivation, and commitment to Veggielution's mission.

*Our mission is to connect people  
from diverse backgrounds through food and farming  
to build community in East San José.*

Farm Interns report directly to the Farm Manager and work closely with the Volunteer Program Manager and other volunteers to complete a wide variety of farm tasks including, but not limited to; bed preparation, seeding and transplanting, weeding, pruning, harvesting, greenhouse propagation, chicken care, composting, and irrigation systems maintenance. You will work in a collaborative, team environment as part of the **farm crew**, working alongside staff and volunteers to strengthen daily farm operations. The areas of focus within the farm operation are; chicken coop, orchard, compost, greenhouse, and packing shed. (Focus area descriptions below)

### **General range of intern duties:**

- Follow Farm Activity Flow (on display) process each work day
- Maintain the Farm Activity Flow and given processes with others in your cohort, working in pairs or teams.
- Work quickly and efficiently on a variety of farm tasks including bed preparation, composting, seeding, transplanting, weeding, fertilizing, pruning, trellising, harvesting, etc.
- Welcome new volunteers to the farm and serve as a leader, role model, and teacher.



### **The ideal candidate for this position has:**

- Strong verbal communication skills
- Comfort working with people from diverse backgrounds (age, race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and ability)
- Enthusiasm and passion for Veggielution's mission
- Some experience and interest in gardening, farming, landscaping, etc. (optional)
- Reliability and a strong sense of self-motivation
- Bilingual ability is a plus (Spanish, Vietnamese, etc.)

### **Schedule:**

- 8 - 20 hours per week (may not exceed 20 hours a week)
- Attend at least 3 work days per week (Tuesday - Friday 9:00am-12:30pm or 1:00pm - 5:00pm, Saturday 8:30am - 1:30pm)
- Additional afternoon hours to complete project-based work in your focus area can be arranged with the Farm Manager (optional)
- 1st Saturday's of the month highly recommended

### **Benefits & Support:**

Veggielution t-shirt

Networking

Fruits and vegetables

Letter of recommendation

College Credits (if needed)

***THIS IS AN UNPAID INTERNSHIP***

## **Areas of Focus**

### **Field**

#### Details

Field work will focus on the soil care planning, transplanting, care of, harvesting, and working with other interns and volunteers to accomplish any given task. The goal is to always have plenty of vegetables in rotation so that we can distribute veggies as payment for volunteers, sell veggies



from the farm stand, offer a wide variety of plants to our cooking programs and of course teach other volunteers about the intricacies of horticulture.

#### Responsibilities

- Work with Farm Planting Schedule
- Work with Greenhouse seeding schedule
- Lead volunteers and/or interns to transplant veggies when they are ready
- Care for and maintain good plant health
- Harvest veggies for various purposes
- Tracking transplanting and harvest data
- Other farm related duties

#### Additional projects may include

- Working with Farm Manager around farm planning and maintenance
- Working with volunteers to accomplish a variety of projects
- Research and implement innovative growing techniques

## Greenhouse

#### Description

Most of the vegetables grown at Veggielution begin their lives in our production greenhouses. Starting vegetables in the greenhouse allows us to get a head start on warm weather plantings in the spring, thereby expanding our growing season. We have our own soil mix and we use a specific method for producing effective and efficient plants.

#### Responsibilities

Greenhouse work will be involved with following vegetable sowing plan for the farm and vegetable sales, as well as helping to develop and expand our native plant propagation program for practical application and educational purposes. They will also be involved in regular maintenance tasks to support transplant health.

#### Specific duties include:

- Propagating vegetables (possibly also flowers and native plants)
- Leading workdays in the greenhouse
- Pest and nutrient management
- Regular maintenance such as watering, thinning, fertilizing, potting up, hardening-off, etc.
- Data Entry



Additional projects will include:

- Researching and selecting vegetable varieties for our upcoming seeding.
- Assist in developing plan to expand our native plant propagation and increase our plant sales.
- Raising seedlings for sale to Emma Prusch Farm Park

## Orchard

### Description

Our Veggielution orchard is an educational platform integrated with regular fruit tree care practices.

The orchard is home to more than 150 fruit trees, including apples, apricots, peaches, nectarines, plums, pluots, pears, figs, persimmons, pomegranates, and mulberries. We have two main sections of orchard: one in the back of the farm and one alongside the road. Most of our fruit trees were planted between 2012 and 2013, and 2016 was our first year of significant harvest.

The varieties in our orchard were selected with the help of Nancy Garrison, a master arborist and long-time supporter of Veggielution, who continues to come out to the farm regularly to assist with ongoing maintenance.

### Responsibilities and suggested activities:

- Learn and apply fruit tree care practices on Veggielution fruit trees
  - Irrigation, mulching, pruning, etc.
- Admin
  - Data tracking, scan donor agreements, prep documents, salesforce data management
  - Put together monthly reports and contribute numbers to Veggielution's dashboard
- Equipment Maintenance
  - Clean equipment and buy new or repair when necessary
- Help to organize workshops for community members
- Attend meetings with community organizers alongside staff to strengthen partnerships.
- Proactively solve any misunderstandings, disagreements and/or challenges that the team faces to move the work forward.

Additional projects will also include:

- Completion of an orchard map
- Leading small groups of volunteers to complete weeding/mulching
- Any other great ideas you have!



## Chicken Care

### Description

Veggielution has an educational flock of chickens. Eggs are sold at the Farm Stand every Saturday and we provide the opportunity for volunteers and Youth Garden families to meet the chickens and learn about how they are raised. Our chickens eat a diet of certified organic mixed grain feed and vegetables from the farm, as well as oyster shell as a calcium supplement and the occasional mouse (chickens are omnivores!).

### Responsibilities

Chicken coop tasks will focus on the chickens care, adult hens and be responsible for the daily and weekly maintenance tasks in the chicken coop.

These tasks will include, but not limited to:

- Feeding and watering
- Collecting & cleaning eggs
- Cleaning out nesting boxes
- Data Entry

Additional projects will also include, but not be limited to:

- Coop upgrades and improvements based on independent research
- Cultivation of supplementary crops inside the coop
- Any other great ideas you might have!

## Compost

### Description

Compost plays a huge role in our organic soil management strategies, as a source of organic matter and nutrients. Currently we mostly rely on donated municipal compost for field application. The municipal compost (produced by Zanker recycling) is a great source of organic matter, but does not have the worms or microbial life that our homemade compost has. At earlier points in Veggielution's history, we produced our own compost more regularly and in larger amounts than we do now, but have not had the capacity in recent years to dedicate time to that process. Today we are on our way to establishing a static aerated compost pile, which will aggregate browns and



greens from our neighboring Emma Prusch Park and PAL stadium to create compost of our own that we can share with the community.

## Responsibilities

Compost work will play a key role in further developing the system for the on-site production of compost for field, greenhouse, and community pick up application. Independent research as well as training from Farm Crew staff and Master Composters will inform the system design, and specific responsibilities will include:

- Emptying packing shed, dish station, and general compost bins
- Creating schedule for compost evaluation and watering
- Leading groups of volunteers to help with compost maintenance
- Recordkeeping for inputs and outputs of the compost pile

## Distribution Center

### Description

The distribution center is the vegetable processing power house and egg storage center. Every Friday we harvest what is available, trim, wash, dry, take weights, and portion out our produce in the Distribution Center. In addition to harvests, we also dry fresh herbs, store our vegetables, and educate the public on the inner workings of our farm.

### Responsibilities

Distribution center work will manage weekly harvest activities, lead volunteers in packing shed activities and explore other possibilities to make the packing shed more robust and efficient.

#### Tasks Include:

- Washing all yellow harvesting bins
- Cleaning the eggs
- Evaluating the wash station (working with Farm Program Manager to plan improvements)
- Pest management
- Regular maintenance such as sweeping, organizing, sorting, drying herbs, etc.
- Data Entry

#### Additional projects will include:

- Reporting out on harvest numbers
- Collaborating with program leads to distribute produce



- Working with volunteers to make produce bags for volunteers to take home
- Researching and implementing efficient packing shed procedures.