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Kindling Farm Position:
Field Scale Veg Production

Job Description

Hours: Up to 37.5 hours a week (though could potentially be a job share)
You must be able to work occasional weekends and be flexible to possible seasonal changes to start/end times where needed.

Length of Contract: Permanent

Salary: £27,284 per annum (gross) for a 37.5 hour week plus 5% pension contribution - based on Real Living Wage.

Probationary Period: 3 months.

Location: Kindling Farm, Tarbock Green, Merseyside.

Preferred Start Date: As soon as possible.

Application process: please send your CV and a covering letter to farm@kindling.org.uk putting Kindling Farm job application in the subject heading, and we will get back to you asap - this is a rolling application process.

Responsible to:	Kindling Farm Board of Directors.

Background:

2027 will see some exciting changes to the way we grow fresh organic food for our two cities of Gtr Manchester and Gtr Liverpool. Greatly increasing the quantities of food we grow, closely working together across both sites, utilising the strengths of our market garden in Stockport and the 78 acre of land at Kindling Farm to create a truly sustainable community of food producers.

Kindling Farm was set up to create a fairer and more sustainable food and farming system for all. In April 2023 we purchased a 31 hectare (78 acre) farm in Knowsley, to establish an organic fruit and veg based agroforestry system and show that climate and wildlife focused farming is possible.

We have just had our second growing season (following 18 months of fertility building, establishing our agroforestry system, putting infrastructure in place etc.), and - though the drought brought many challenges - it was a big success. We are now getting ready to scale up our production and markets for the coming season and are looking for skilled, hard working and experienced grower(s) to join us.

We are currently in the process of developing our 2027 crop plans (field-scale and polytunnel), working with our buyers and our sister site Kindling Market Garden site (in Stockport).

We will continue ramp up our food production: building up our markets, team and infrastructure, producing a range of fieldscale veg (courgettes, squash, brassicas, celery, beetroot, leafy greens etc.) and polytunnel crops (tomatoes, spring onions, cucumbers) in our two triple span tunnels.

So, there is a lot to do! Kindling Farm is a small team and we have relied heavily on our amazing volunteers and short term seasonal growers during this first season and while this involvement will continue we need to build a team of growers to take us up to the next level. We are looking for the right person/people with the skills, practical experience (including use of machinery) and passion to help us deliver our ambitious plans.

This role will work with and be supported by the Kindling Farm team, with guidance from our farm advisors who are a fountain of knowledge and experience.

We know that this is a challenging role, but we think it will be an extremely rewarding one and if you think it is for you we look forward to hearing from you

Find out more about us at: kindling.org.uk or our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/KindlingFarm

Role: The primary role of the grower will be:

Crop production at a field scale. This will involve a mix of Tractor work for field scale cultivations, planting and weeding and tasks by hand e.g. planting, weeding, harvesting.
The role will also involve irrigation, crop storage and transportation.

Other tasks will include working with the Farm team to carry out:

- **Tree care**
- **Land management (**delivery of our Countryside Stewardship and Sustainable Farm Incentive Agreements).
- **Farm Machinery/infrastructure:** Maintenance, repair and purchase of farm machinery and equipment.

Detailed Job Description:

With the support of and in coordination with the Kindling Farm team the Main Duties will be:

A. Crop Production & Farm Infrastructure:

- Implement the crop plan for our first growing season including:
  - Bed preparation, soil cultivation and weeding
  - Crop care including pest management & irrigation
  - Harvesting, packing, storing
  - Deliveries.

This will involve a mix of tractor work e.g. field scale cultivations, planting and weeding and tasks by hand planting, weeding, harvesting..

- Organic certification: ensure we meet the Soil Association standards (both in production methods and in maintaining records (you will receive guidance/instruction from the farm team).
- Help maintain farming infrastructure including water storage tanks, irrigation, polytunnels, gateways, tracks, etc.
- Help maintain farm vehicles, tractors, implements and other machinery/equipment.
- Work with the Farm Team to implement the farm's agroforestry plan (including fruit tree care and planting new trees).

B. Land Management:

- Implement an annual maintenance programme (mowing, field margins, hedge maintenance etc.).
- Implement an annual programme of pest management.
- Work with the Biodiversity Working Group to accommodate biodiversity improvement work.

C. Health and Safety:

- Liaise with the Farm Team to maintain the security of the site and the safety of all those who use it.

D. General responsibilities of this post:

- Report to Kindling Farm Director.
- Reflect Kindling's vision and principles, strategy and policies at all times.
- Be aware of and comply with all relevant policies and procedures.
- Fulfil such other duties and assignments as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification:	
Competence, Skills and Knowledge:	**Personal:**
At least two years working for a commercial growing operation (the size isn't important but experience in and an understanding of the challenges and opportunities of growing commercially is). Proficiency in operating a tractor and implements and experience of maintaining farm machinery. Practical skills and experience e.g. machinery maintenance and repairs. Proactive, hard working and reliable. Strong organisational skills and the ability to prioritise workload. Good planning, prioritising and organisational skills. UK driving licence. Ability to prioritise tasks and good planning and organisational skills. Good administration and IT skills.	Savours physically challenging work: Physically fit, able to work in all weather conditions & flexibility to work in various work conditions. Awareness and understanding of the challenges within the food and farming sector. Enthusiasm and dedication to ecological justice and social change issues. A love of food and a passion to grow it to exacting standards. Drive and enthusiasm to meet set objectives. A high degree of personal motivation and initiative, the ability to work under pressure, whilst working cooperatively in a team environment. Creative problem solver with attention to detail. Be able to learn on the job with willingness and flexibility to undertake any relevant training required. Excellent verbal and written communication skills, a consistent positive attitude, and a capacity for cooperative team working. Ability to motivate, encourage and get the best out of individuals.