



## **Millstone Farm: University Internship Program**

### **About Millstone Farm**

Millstone Farm is a 75-acre property in Wilton, CT. We are a working farm whose mission is to achieve a sustainable and economic farm model. The farm also serves as a hub for education and outreach, where we host workshops and action-learning activities, and partner with farmers, community organizations, school groups, restaurateurs, and others interested in learning about diverse, chemical-free farming. Our practices are geared towards achieving a closed loop system where the farm's varied parts contribute to the whole working body. Our activities include; organic pasture management, rare breed animal husbandry for eggs, meat, wool, and breeding, bio-intensive vegetable and fruit production, maple syrup harvest, and more. We produce for local restaurants, Wilton's only family-owned supermarket, and a small CSA. We strive to use best farm practices, encourage their implementation, and promote awareness about their positive impact on local economies, the community and quality of life.

### **Overview**

The university-based internship program was inspired by Millstone Farm's current partnership with the Wilton High School internship program, where a limited number of high school students have the opportunity to intern on the farm for the last five weeks of their senior year, and often roll-over to become our summer employees. However, with a limited time frame, these students' do not have the chance to learn about the seasonal stages of bio-intensive farming.

In 2010, Millstone Farm will partner with educational institutions in the region to launch its first full-season internship program. The program is centered on immersion, where interns will experience a farming lifestyle by living on-site and contributing to the diverse workload. Interns will have initial training and thereafter be expected to complete certain tasks and chores with minimal supervision. However, by nature of farming, the internship will be a continuous learning experience, where new lessons are added to the 'curriculum' as the season unfolds. Our goal is to create a social space for learning, where university students can interact with our growing family of farmers, consumers, restaurateurs, teachers, students and community members. Interns will also play a key role in the farm's function and success, and have field trip opportunities which will improve their understanding of local food systems and the reciprocal relationships and dynamic partnerships that sustain the local food network. Students can develop their interests around good food, farming, and food education while honing their skills and personal knowledge.

The overarching goal of Millstone Farm is to rebuild more self-sustaining communities. This includes a community-based focus in food systems, to train future farmers in small farm management, create conscious consumers and chefs, and provide insight into a diversified, small-scale market and how to grow, purchase, preserve, and serve homegrown food.

## The Internship

### Expectations

At Millstone Farm, interns are involved in all aspects of the farm, and work side by side with our experienced farmers. As on-site interns, you will be an important part of the immediate and surrounding communities; in order to ensure that the Millstone community thrives, it is important that *everyone* who comes to the farm arrives with a positive attitude, plenty of energy, and exercises good communication. *Most importantly*, interns must be kind and respectful of their peers; interns will share communal spaces during their stay, which requires flexibility, polite behavior, and appreciation for others. Interns should be aware of other's needs and willing to collaborate with various staff and farm members when necessary.

We also expect our interns to be prepared for a demanding work environment. Farm work is highly varied, quick-paced, and requires people who are willing to be flexible and perform labor-intensive work. Interns must be honest about their physical capabilities before applying for this position. An average work week is 50 hours, with approximately 9-10 hour work days, and two days off. Interns will be expected to rotate chores, which include watering, animal night check, and other routine duties. After being fully trained, interns will be expected to take on more important responsibilities, help supervise volunteers, and partially manage different aspects of the farm. Interns must also be receptive and willing to switch tasks for new priorities or unexpected tasks that arise. The one quality of farming that is certain, is that nothing is ever certain! We hope that by becoming fully immersed and responsible for the quality of their work, interns will feel personally invested in the farm and its success.

### Internship Session

*Full-Season* (April to October): 2 positions available - *Application Deadline*: March 15

*Half-Season* (June to August): 1 position available – *Application Deadline*: April 15

### Experience-based Education and Responsibilities

- Planting and harvesting
- Understanding of growing cycles for various crops (planting, care, harvest)
- Identification, use, and maintenance of tools and equipment
- Plant identification skills
- Plant maintenance
- Weed and pest management and control
- A basic knowledge of various cropping systems
- Irrigation system maintenance and use
- Seeding, transplanting and harvesting
- Direct marketing skills
- Clean and pack produce
- Supervise volunteers and help facilitate on-farm workshops and events
- Greenhouse operation and maintenance
- Use of garden amendments and plant support systems (home-made pesticides, mulches, row covering)
- Compost tea production and use
- Handling small machinery (roto-tiller)
- Bed renovation and soil preparation
- Livestock care and chores
- Pasture management
- Tool and equipment repair
- Diligent record-keeping

## Requirements

- Previous farming and/or gardening experience
- Knowledge of Excel and basic computer skills
- Must be able to commit to the full internship period
- Able to work outside in all weather conditions
- Physically capable
- A background interest in food and farming
- Reliable and responsible
- Able to follow directions and communicate well with others
- Excellent social skills
- Valid driver's license (you must be able to provide your own transportation to and from the farm)
- Must be single on the farm: no partners or pets
- Proof of health insurance

## Compensation

### *Housing*

Interns will have free boarding in the main farmhouse, where they will share a bedroom and communal bathrooms and kitchen. Interns are expected to follow house rules to maintain a clean and safe environment.

### *Stipend*

Interns will receive a monthly stipend of \$400.00 for food, necessities, and personal spending.

### *Food*

Interns will communally receive and share 1 CSA share and 1 dozen eggs per week, which they can supplement with their own supplies. Farm staff will be responsible for stocking basic supplies and staple products in the kitchen and farmhouse.

### *Medical*

While we care about your health and well-being, we will not be held responsible for any pre-existing medical conditions or medical needs. We require that our interns have individual health care, and sign a waiver releasing us from any responsibility for injuries or illness.

## **Application**

The application includes a paper-based application and a personal interview. Please send a one-page letter explaining why you are interested in the internship, your resume, and 3 references (relationship, phone number and email) with contact information to [interns@millstonefarm.org](mailto:interns@millstonefarm.org). We will respond 2 to 4 weeks after we receive your application to let you know if we would like to schedule a personal interview at the farm (or if we did not accept your application). Accepted interns will have a 2 week trial period, during which both interns and farm staff will assess whether they have found a good match. During this period, either party can end the employment, or commit to the full season.