

Dear Future Farm Interns,

So, you're thinking about obtaining a farm internship position. I'm sure you are wondering, "Where do I start?" Well not to worry, it's easy to find a farm to work on; farmers can generally always use the help. I would recommend exploring your local farmers markets and talking to the farmers there about your interest. Ask them about what types of produce and/or animals they have, what they might need help with, and where their farm is located. Once you find a farm that is a good fit for your schedule and interest, take a tour of it to ask more questions and find out when you are needed and what you need to bring.

There are a few things that I wish I would've known on my first day at the farm. For instance, I learned almost immediately that I would need to always wear clothes and shoes that could get totally ruined by the elements. Because you will be outside all day, you will need sunscreen and a baseball hat to protect you. A good pair of gloves is definitely another necessity. Your boss will inform you of anything else that may be required.

During your time at the farm, you will encounter many unexpected situations. In my case it was a greenhouse collapsing and frequently escaping sheep. You learn how to deal with problems like these and work under pressure. On a brighter side, you also may find yourself making some new friends with the other people working there. My personal favorite surprise about the internship was being able to try an abundance of fruits and vegetables that I didn't even know existed, or at least did not know they could be grown in this part of the country.

This experience has forced me to look at food in a new way. Walking through supermarkets I realize now how much effort and time goes into growing and harvesting all of the food that we eat. I believe it has made me more appreciative of the things I buy, especially from markets and co-ops. Over these past two summers, I have become more inclined to buy food locally to support the local farmers (mostly because now I sort of am one). I am very grateful to have this new perspective and I guarantee it will happen to you as well.

Not only do you learn a lot about the produce and animals, you acquire real world skills that will help you in your future, even if it doesn't deal with agriculture. One of these skills is customer service. You often get the chance to talk to people about the farm and what you are providing at farmers markets and/or CSA pickups. Working on a farm also teaches you how to work well with others, which is an important skill to learn for any job you may have in the future. You learn problem solving skills and how to make decisions independently. One of my favorite things that I learned was how to take better care of my garden at home.

Although this type of job can be hard work, it is incredibly rewarding. If you have even a small amount of interest, I highly recommend trying it to see if this type of job is a fit for you.

Happy farming!

Signed, A former farm intern

About the Authors

Hi! My name is Vai Triggiano, I am a senior at A.D Johnston High School. I chose to participate in this internship because I wanted to expand my horizons and do something I've never done before. I also wanted a job with a flexible schedule. In my spare time I enjoy running, soccer, and playing piano.

Howdy, I'm Alyssa Lewis. I am a current senior at A. D Johnston. I found this job through at high school class I took. The class was Agriculture and it was a gateway to new experiences and it lead me to this job. This job is nice, as it works around my busy volleyball schedule.