



## Southwest Farm Fresh Cooperative

30 N Beech St, Unit B, Cortez, CO 81321

buylocal@swffcoop.com

[www.SouthwestFarmFresh.com](http://www.SouthwestFarmFresh.com)

### **POSITION TITLE:** General Manager

- Up to 40 hrs/wk, year-round
- \$20/hr
- Start Date: ASAP

### **COMPANY DESCRIPTION:**

We are a dozen small family farms from three counties in southwestern Colorado that came together in 2014 to form the Southwest Farm Fresh Cooperative, a farmer-owned and -controlled business. Our markets have been primarily wholesale, but we also sell direct to consumers through CSA and online marketing programs. Our mission is “to aggregate, store, market and distribute locally produced agricultural products from farms and food businesses of southwestern Colorado. The cooperative’s successes will be measured by our ability to be economically viable, socially responsible and good stewards of the land and community.”

### **JOB DESCRIPTION:**

The General Manager (GM) directs the operations and growth strategy for SWFF, and although reports directly to the board of directors, is self-motivated to complete tasks with minimal supervision. The GM effectively manages a small staff, a lean budget, and a small infrastructure base to efficiently move best-quality local farm products to market. Participation in all aspects of food aggregation, distribution, and marketing will be required.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Work closely with the board, farms, and other stakeholders to develop and implement multi-year business and operating plans for the co-op, including sales growth strategies within our distribution region.
- Work internally with the Co-op team as well as externally with wholesale customers to ensure that the Co-op story and brand are transmitted effectively, honestly, and transparently to end-user customers.
- Use regular and clear communication with producer-owners and the board of directors regarding the status and direction of the business.
- Continue to grow both wholesale and direct retail business while maintaining the standard of excellent customer service and product quality that the co-op’s reputation is based on.
- Be organized and efficient in generating and processing paperwork, and be detail-oriented in every aspect of the work.
- Work to better the food-safety regulatory compliance of the cooperative based on our classification as a Secondary Activities Farm under the FSMA. Must be familiar with the Produce Safety Rule and its ongoing evolution. Must uphold

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the Co-op's careful attention to cleanliness and safety in all aspects of its operation.

- Ensure a safe, productive, and supportive working environment for Co-op employees.
- Work closely with our bookkeeper to ensure that accounting practices align with our Accounting Procedures and Internal Controls document.
- Maintain annual budget and cash flow projection in conjunction with bookkeeper.
- Coordinate annual production planning with customers and farms in December and January. This document guides production as well as sales strategies for the season.
- Assist with grant applications and manage expenditures and funds tracking.

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- An unshakeable commitment to the cause of enriching local food systems.
- A willingness to listen to diverse stakeholders, and absorb their concerns into the decision-making process.
- Experience in business and employee management.
- Proficiency in online marketing and accounting software.
- Excellent writing skills; must submit a writing sample.
- Bachelor's degree in business, management, or related field, plus 3 years of food systems management experience (or 5 years of closely related experience).
- Good driving record, experience driving box trucks (to fill in for driver in emergency).
- Reside in, or have a willingness to relocate to, beautiful southwestern Colorado.
- Strong commitment to social justice and diversity in all work.

### PREFERRED REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum of 5 years in food systems management experience.
- A personal understanding of community-scale food production.
- Food hub management experience, and a track record of success in business management.
- Experience managing large federal grants.
- Experience with successful business startups.
- Ability to make human-based decisions; to employ both logic *and* love.
- An interest in the cooperative principles and the power of producer-owned marketing systems to reform our food systems.

### MOST CRITICAL PROFICIENCIES:

- Specific and supportive communication in management of staff.

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- Persuasive sales skills, and a willingness to understand and honor the needs of both producers and customers when making sales.
- Thorough integrity in all co-op business; must lead by example, not just by proscription. Your willingness to understand this position and the stakeholders is more important than your theories about local food systems.
- Understanding of produce quality control, ability to spot and address quality problems.

### **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

- Regular and clear communication with producer-owners and board of directors regarding the status and direction of the business.
- Willingness and ability to work occasional weekends, after hours and holidays as required.
- Ability to work under pressure, perform multiple tasks and manage constantly competing priorities, yet being mindful to avoid burnout. Must be able and motivated to invent the solution when no solution presents itself.
- Willingness to travel to meet with customers and producers in a 200 mile radius
- Ability to work in outdoor temperatures and various weather conditions as needed, overcoming whatever adversity may arise.
- Ability to lift and carry 50 lbs.

### **COMPENSATION:**

This position is PAID: salaried, varies DOE up to \$45,000; includes three weeks paid vacation during the off-season.

### **HOW TO APPLY:**

Send resume, cover letter, and a professional writing sample to:

buylocal@swffcoop.com