



Southwest Farm Fresh Cooperative — Manager Job Description

Southwest Farm Fresh is seeking a Manager to oversee sales and operations of a farmer-owned cooperative food hub located in southwestern Colorado. Leadership and participation in all aspects of food aggregation, distribution, and marketing are required. The position is available immediately.

Mission

The mission of the Southwest Farm Fresh Cooperative 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. www.southwestfarmfresh.com

Entrepreneurial Spirit

The Coop's Manager must treat the business as his/her own. The employee who demonstrates the same level of care as an owner is rare, but that's what we're looking for. From finances to customer service, attention to detail and ownership of the position is essential, as is the ability to thrive with little oversight. Solving problems as they arise, the ability to improvise as needed, and accountability to the Board and membership, are all skills that require an independent yet collaborative spirit.

Operations

Beneath the warm-and-fuzzy image of a family farm cooperative is a serious food distribution system. The member producers of the coop rely on the income derived from coop sales. The Manager will attend to the needs of the customers, producers, finances, and infrastructure promptly, courteously, and effectively. The Manager maintains producer protocols, maintains and tracks inventory, manages equipment and infrastructure, monitors adherence to the budget, works closely with the coop's bookkeeper, and reports to the Board of Directors. The Manager will hire and manage a small staff and is responsible for ensuring a safe, productive, efficient, and supportive environment. Staff duties may include driver, warehouse assistant, and office manager.

The ability to sell locally grown food effectively and happily is just as important as the ability to work with farmers and customers in production planning, policy and protocol, and volunteering. This job revolves around supply and demand, and the Manager's challenge is to bring the two as close to balance as possible. Creativity in process is expected to produce increased supply and increased sales.

Leadership

Working with a diverse group of farmers and ranchers can be like herding cats. But it's rewarding. Our members are what the business is built on, and it's important to build relationships and trust with everyone in order to understand the product. Regarding staff, the Manager empowers his/her staff by providing the tools they need to excel, and provides leadership through regular communication, transparency, and fairness.

Critical Thinking

After eight years in business, Southwest Farm Fresh Cooperative is entering its third year of utilizing an online sales platform. Objectivity and a critical eye are required in analyzing and improving efficiencies in the operation of this cutting-edge sales model, and for this reason familiarity with online sales technology and order fulfillment is preferred. The realities of running a farmer-owned cooperative in such a remote area are challenging, requiring out-of-the-box thinking and creativity.

Compensation and how to apply

The Southwest Farm Fresh Manager is a full-time job. Due to the seasonal fluctuations in workload, this is an hourly, rather than salaried, position, and hours are capped at 40/week. Winter hours are reduced. The coop closes for Thanksgiving week and up to three weeks in December and early January. Vacation days are accrued based on hours worked. Compensation ranges from \$20-\$22/hour based upon experience. To apply, please submit your resume and a one-page cover letter describing why you are interested in this position and how your background qualifies you for this work to: buylocal@southwestfarmfresh.com . **Applications due by March 15, 2022 and they will be reviewed as they are received.**