**Job Description: Farmer Education Coordinator**

Date Posted: October 7, 2021

**Background & Mission:** Plant It Forward (PIF) was founded in 2011 with the mission to empower refugees to develop sustainable farm businesses in Houston, Texas. Beginning farmers are trained in sustainable farming methods, then placed on urban plots where they grow produce to sell through weekly farm shares and at local farmers markets.

**Job Overview:** The Farmer Education Coordinator is responsible for implementing the PIF’s Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFR) project through August of 2023. In particular, the Farmer Education Coordinator is responsible for planning and coordinating hands-on agricultural and business training to PIF farmers, and will provide follow-up coaching. The objective of the position is to ensure that farmers in the PIF network are equipped with the resources, knowledge, and skills needed to successfully operate an independent small farm. This person will be flexible, motivated, proactive, organized, hard-working, and patient. You will work with a small group of equally dedicated staff who are committed to empowering farmers and enhancing Houston’s foodways through sustainable agriculture and local food.

**Key Requirements:**

*Implement PIF BFR project*

- Coordinate and/or deliver technical workshops for farmers in various farming topics
- Provide assistance (e.g., coaching, mentoring) and education to the farmers in food safety, weed management, pest control, yield-management, irrigation, weather response, composting, etc.
- Identify gaps and improvements in the current farming practices
- Serve as a technical resource for PIF farmers
- Create PIF Food Safety Plan, in accordance with FSMA and GAP standards
- Assist Program Director to manage project budget; complete monitoring & evaluation activities including completing Year 2 interim report and Year 3 final report
- Conduct outreach activities to identify additional aspiring and beginning farmers eligible to receive training as part of PIF’s BFR project
- Curate and/or create training materials and resources to help beginning farmers identify farmland, start a farm, and implement regionally appropriate and sustainable growing practices
- Conduct other activities to ensure completion of BFR activities and fulfillment of BFR objectives, as needed

*Support Farm Services Programs*

- Enforce PIF standards (e.g., use of organic practices) of operations on the farms of all PIF network farmers and provide assistance to fix and improve any deficient farming practices.
- Supervise farm record-keeping, for harvest estimates, crop rotation, and customer satisfaction in support of a CSA program.
- Monitor yields and variety and proactively identify gaps in the ability to provide a high-quality weekly farm share for 250+ farm share members.
- Ensure that the look and feel (appearance) of the farms are meeting or exceeding the neighborhood expectations so that the farms are a vital part of the neighborhood, to include trash pickup, habitat gardens, and infrastructure management.
- Maintain and troubleshoot the infrastructure, including irrigation, port-a-johns, hand-washing stations, shelter, fencing, composting, plant support and farm stands.
- Provide assistance as needed, to help farmers to acquire the materials needed for their farm operations, including tools, seeds, fertilizer, mulch, soils, etc.
- Participate in creating and implementing farm improvement plans.

**People Management**

- Collaborate with PIF network farmers, as appropriate and within the limitations of each farmer’s interactions with PIF programing
- Manage service contractors as necessary
- Supervise interns and volunteers as needed

**Special Requirements**

- Able to work on the farms and office, including hard repetitive physical work (lift and carry 40 pounds)
- Willingness to work outside in the elements, year-round
- Current driver’s license and a clean driving record
- Comfortable operating mechanized farm equipment

**Qualifications**

- Minimum of 2 years of field experience in sustainable agriculture; in particular, experience with small-scale vegetable farming
- Minimum of 2 years of mentoring and/or teaching experience
- Strong project management and writing skills
- Demonstrated ability to work with a multi-cultural team
- Ability to work independently, with minimal daily supervision

**Hours:** Salaried, approximately 40 hours/week, some weekends and evenings required

**Compensation:** PIF Coordinator I level salary, negotiable based on experience. Benefits include: 401(k) match and a PIF Farm Share Subscription. Position is grant funded through August 31, 2023 (~2 years)

**Reporting Relationships:** Farmer Education Coordinator reports to the Farm Programs Director. BFR Grant Manager is responsible for managing service contractors, and occasional oversight of volunteer groups.
**Application Instructions**: Email your resume and cover letter to rachel@plant-it-forward.org