



The Kids Are Alright

Lessons From a Youth Employment Program

Sundog Farm: diversified CSA & livestock farm



Challenges to Youth Employment

- Transportation
- Learning a new management style:
 - Supervision
 - Additional support (ex: required water breaks, reminders to eat food)
 - Initial training
- Admin
 - State dependent: child labor permits
 - More part-time employees = more paperwork
- Communication with employees and with parents



Benefits of Youth Employment

For a Farm:

- High energy, excited to learn
- Trainable
- Good retention
- Most available during peak season with occasional interest/availability in part-time winter hours

For the Youth (from the youth):

- *'I get to see cute baby animals and get free veggies'*
- *'Mental health matters most to everyone'*
- *'Flexible work environment- can get time off'*
- *'Builds skills'*
- *'Many diverse jobs and tasks'*



Components of Sundog Farm's Youth Employment Program → Creating a positive youth work culture

1. Onboarding/ training
2. Goal Setting & Individual Mentorship
3. Weekly food system workshops
4. Weekly employment skills class
5. Tour another farm
6. Host a youth tour
7. Network/learn from other types of farmers
8. Fun!



Resources

- [Becoming the Employer of Choice \(BTEC\) for Vegetable Farmers](#) by Fairshare CSA Coalition
- [Ag Apprenticeship Toolkit: A Guide to Developing or Improving an Ag Apprenticeship Training Program on Your Farm or Ranch](#) Developed by the Ag Apprenticeship Learning Network, 2018
- [When is an employee manual important and how do I create one?](#) From Farm Commons



Food System Curriculum



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