

# An Educational Farm

## Labor Case Study

11.19.14

### Labor Model: Educational Farm

Beech Hill Farm is a sustainable organic vegetable farm, and an educational project of College of the Atlantic, that employs six residential positions and up to ten student workers.

### Management Team

#### One year-round salaried Farm Manager and one seasonal full-time Assistant Manager:

Every Monday Farm Manager Tess and Assistant Manager Anna and the Farm Stand Manager meet and decide what the week will look like. Their decisions are communicated on an ad hoc basis to their work force every day. The following information reflects the perspective of the Beech Hill Management Team about how their system labor system works.

### Employed Staff

#### 7 Summer Crew (3 full and 4 part-time)

**Pros:** returning employees that already know the farm are easier to manage (many were part-time), and are willing to fill in the gaps (weekend animal chores)

**Cons:** part-time was more complicated in terms of cohesion in the crew. In addition sharing the field and farm stand positions proved inefficient.

#### 7 Work Study (Spring/Fall) Positions

**Pros:** free labor, and lot of hands available during time where there are a lot of projects (Spring/Fall)

**Cons:** Not self-guided, and not always reliable.

### Volunteers

**Pros:** can always be plugged into a project

**Cons:** a loss of efficiency and higher time cost for management in resolving interpersonal issues



*Tess Faller, Manager of Beech Hill Farm and Assistant Manager Anna and her dog.*



*Beech Hill Farm's Farm Stand offers organic produce, locally produced goods.*

## Beech Hill Farm

**Phone:** (207) 244-5204

**Address:** 171 Beech Hill Rd,

Mt Desert, ME 04660

[WWW.COA.EDU](http://WWW.COA.EDU)

/BEECH-HILL-FARM-MICROSITE.HTM

## Reflections on Management System 2015

*“We have been experimenting with different labor models and have come up with a plan to not go over 46hrs so we can make sure we are taking care of ourselves. We get one full day off as well.”*

*Anna, Assistant Manager, 2014*

Beech Hill Farm is a project of College of the Atlantic (COA), and is a sustainable farm serving the MDI region. Beech Hill offers a seasonal Farm Stand that brings in locally produced goods, a CSA program and restaurant and food service deliveries.

Beech Hill manages a social project in collaboration with COA, called Share the Harvest. This program is a community-supported voucher system for low-income residents to better access healthy locally produced foods. This year Beech Hill donated a total of 2,680lbs to the Gleaning Program.

Beech Hill Farm's Manager, Tess Faller, runs the farm as an educational model, employing College of the Atlantic workstudy students and returning student employees.

*“I can always fit people into projects and almost everyday we have stuff to do that requires know how and a lot of stuff that just requires a quick briefing on what it should look like.”*

*Tess Faller, Fall 2014*

**ASSISTANT MANAGER WILL BECOME A SEASONAL SALARIED EMPLOYEE RATHER THAN RECEIVING AN HOURLY WAGE.**

**THE FARM STAND WILL BE KEPT AT 40HRS A WEEK, BUT FOR FIELD STAFF IT WILL BE 46HRS FOR INCREASED EFFICIENCY.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE DURING WORK HOURS NOT DURING “EXTRA” OR “FREE” TIME.**

**NEED A MORE CONSISTENT WORK FORCE.**

**MAKING MEETING TIME MORE EFFICIENT. LESS FACE-TO-FACE REPORTING AND MORE ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION.**

**MORE TIME DOING TRAINING, SO CHECK-INS CAN BE REAL, NOT DAMAGE CONTROL.**

**BETTER TRANSFER OF INFORMATION TO AVOID REPETITION AND DEPENDENCE ON MANAGEMENT.**

**BETTER INFORMATION SHARING ON SUCCESSES OF THE FARM TO INCREASE OWNERSHIP OF EMPLOYEES.**

**INTENTIONAL DIVISION OF LABOR BY PERSON AND BY TIME OF DAY TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY OF WORKERS.**