



Your Guide to the 2011 EarthDance Organic Farming Apprenticeship Program

We at EarthDance are excited to have you on board for the 3rd season of our Organic Farming Apprenticeship program. With this apprenticeship program, we have created a cooperative learning and working environment for individuals who want to gain practical organic farming skills on a part-time basis. This apprenticeship is intended to serve as an introduction to the principles and practices of sustainable agriculture while also engaging you in your local food community. As an apprentice, you have committed to a total of 10 hours (minimum) per week to this program, which entails enrichment sessions, field work, and selling at market. Monday evening enrichment sessions will include classes and presentations from guest farmers and educators, field trips to local farms and gardens, field walks, on-farm demonstrations, and crop presentations. Finally, as an apprentice you will enjoy the benefit of being one of our shareholders in our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, receiving a share of the harvest for 24 weeks of the year!

Quick Reference:

EarthDance office address: office phone #:
302 Thoroughman Ave 314-521-1006
Ferguson, MO 63135

Please note: The office is closed on weekends and Monday mornings.

Mueller Farm address:
233 S. Dade Ave
Ferguson, MO 63135

Please note: The farm is private property. We ask that you only visit the farm during field work, CSA pick-up hours, or by appointment.

I. Important 2011 Dates:

Sun Feb 13th, 3 – 7:00pm
Wed Feb 16th, 9am – 12pm
Thurs Feb 17th, 9am – 12pm
Mon Mar 7th, 5:30 – 7:30pm
Mon Mar 14th, 5:30 – 7:30pm
Tues Mar 15th, All Day
Sat Apr 30th, 8am – 12noon
Wed May 4th, 4 – 7pm
Tues May 17th, 4 – 7pm
Fri July 15th
Sat July 16th, 8am – 12noon
Sat Nov 5th
Sun Nov 13th, 4 – 7pm

Apprenticeship Orientation & Plant Family Potluck *at St. Stephen's*
Optional Greenhouse Work *at North County Tech* Sign-up required
Optional Greenhouse Work *at North County Tech* Sign-up required
Week 1: Farmy 101 - 1st Enrichment session *at North County Tech*
Week 2: Welcome to the farm! - 1st Field Walk *at the Mueller Farm*
Field work begins on the Mueller Farm. See field work schedule.
1st Ferguson Farmers Market of the season*
1st Maplewood Farmers Market we'll be selling at this season*
1st CSA Pick-up day!*
The EarthDance Mission Awards - *Location TBA*
Pesto Festo - *at the Ferguson Farmers Market*
Fall Feast: Our Annual Farmraiser - *Location TBA*
Graduation - *at St. Stephen's*

**pending Mother Nature's approval*



II. Field work: 8 hours/week

- The weekly field work schedule runs from Monday - Sunday. There are 13 shifts each week. Based on the availability noted in your application, you have been assigned field work shifts totaling 8 hours/week. [See Field Work Schedule.](#)
- Each time you complete a work shift at the farm, you will record your hours in the field work time log. You should track your hours as you accumulate them, tallying them on your last shift of each week. This should total 256 hours for the 34 weeks of field work, including the two weeks off. ($34 \text{ wks} \times 8 \text{ hrs/wk} = 272 \text{ hours}$. $2 \text{ wks} \times 8 \text{ hrs/wk} = 16 \text{ hours}$. $280 - 16 = 256$.)
- Rachel will check everyone's timesheets in the log bi-monthly, and inform you if you are behind on your hours. If you are more than 2 weeks behind on your field/market work hours, you will not be eligible to receive a CSA share until you are current on your hours.
- Missing a shift: Please call or email your shift leader as soon as possible if you will miss a shift. You are expected to make up missed shifts, or count them towards your time off.
- When you work a farmers market, those hours will go towards your 8 hours/week of field work. On the weeks you work market, be sure to let your shift leader know you'll be missing the shift in exchange for the farmers market hours.
- Try to check your email/Freshman Farmy Google Group for messages prior to going to your work shift.
- Show up to your shift on time, with tools, and ready to take instruction.
- Field work includes and is not limited to: planting, weeding, harvesting, building beds, building trellises, tilling. These tasks require bending, lifting, and other strenuous activity. Be aware of your limitations and take care of your body.

III. Monday Evening Enrichment Sessions: 2 hours/week

Monday Evening Enrichment Sessions bring all of the apprentices together on a weekly basis to put the knowledge and experience of working in the fields and selling at market into context. Enrichment sessions may occur in a classroom-like setting, for presentations from experienced farmers or guest educators, or they may be out in the field, either ours or another farmer's. [See Monday Night Enrichment Schedule & Enrichment Session Descriptions.](#)

- A. **Field Walks** - Every other week enrichment will be held at the Mueller Farm, walking through our own fields with the guidance of Farm Manager April Shelton as we see the collective results of our labor from a different perspective. This is a great opportunity to ask questions about any observations you have, such as planting techniques you notice, or pest problems a crop may be experiencing. You should always bring your farm journal with you on these walks to take notes as you learn. Oftentimes April will demonstrate a skill or technique, such as how to harvest collards, or how to double-dig a bed.

- B. **Focus Crops and Crop Presentations** - The focus crop assignment is a chance to



familiarize yourself more fully with 1 or 2 of the crops that we are growing together. Read up on your crop, pay special attention to its growth, and make sure to find out if your crop (or which one of your two crops) will produce seed during our growing season. Learn the proper method for saving your crops' seeds, and if possible, save some!

- C. **Preparing for your Crop Presentation** - The goal of your crop presentation is twofold: to reinforce your study of your focus crop(s), and to share what you learn with your fellow farmies- information that everyone will be able to use for future years of growing!
- a. With that in mind, you need to prepare 1 - 8.5 x 11 hand-out with information about your focus crop. Make it two-sided if you'd like, and bring 40 copies with you on the date of your presentation.
 - b. Information to include: Scientific name, Varieties that EarthDance is growing this year, Days to maturity, Suggested start date to direct seed or start seeds in greenhouse for our zone, Spacing, Planting depth, Optimal soil temperature for germination, Pests and Diseases this crop is prone to, Harvest method, Storage tips, History or Folklore of crop, A photo or drawing of the plant in any of its growth stages, Information on seed saving, Recipe(s), etc.
 - c. Please plan to limit your presentation to *no more than 10 minutes*.
 - d. At our first Monday evening enrichment session (March 7th), you will receive a list of the dates for everyone's crop presentations.

You are required to participate in no fewer than 80% of the Monday evening enrichment sessions in order to graduate from the program.

Please note: There are **no** Monday evening enrichment sessions on these evenings, and therefore do not count as missed sessions:

- **Mon May 30th** – Memorial Day. No enrichment. Enjoy the holiday!
- **Mon Sept 6th** – Labor Day. No enrichment. Enjoy the holiday!
- **Mon Oct 31st** – Halloween. No enrichment. Enjoy the holiday! (**Note: We will be having a Tuesday evening - November 1st - enrichment session this week instead!**)

IV. Selling at Farmers Market

Selling at two local farmers markets is often a favorite aspect of the apprenticeship program for apprentices. It is a chance to not only see the fruits of your labor being appreciated by market



attendees and shoppers, but also a great way to learn about direct marketing by doing it! As an apprentice, you are able to share with our customers some of the knowledge you've gained about a particular variety, or when a crop will be headed to market.

The two farmers markets we sell at are very different from each other, and therefore you also have the opportunity to see and interact with two different customer bases for local foods.

Everyone will be assigned to work 4-5 farmers markets throughout the season!

- **Ferguson Farmers Markets** are on Saturdays, beginning April 30th.
 - Market is from 8am – 12noon; marketeers work from 7:00am – 1:00pm
- **Maplewood Farmers Markets** are on Wednesdays, beginning May 4th.
 - Market is from 4 – 7pm; marketeers work from 3:00pm – 8:00pm

Schedule coming soon!

V. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

2011 is the inaugural year of our public, 100-member Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. This is an exciting change for EarthDance! CSA allows for farms to reduce their financial risk by pre-selling much of their harvest in the form of CSA shares to individuals or families. Shares include weekly baskets of fresh produce, so CSA provides the benefits to consumers of regular access to fresh, locally-grown produce and the chance to become acquainted with the source of their food – both the farm and the farmer.

As an EarthDance apprentice, you are a member of our CSA; you'll receive a weekly share of the produce that we grow together.

- CSA pick up will take place on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, from 4-7PM at the farm.
- Shares CANNOT be stored at the farm. If you will not be able to pick up your produce, please arrange for someone else to claim your vegetables.
- Participation in the CSA is contingent on active participation in the program, so make sure to stay on track with your farm/market labor hours. If you fall more than two weeks behind in your farm/market hours, you will not be eligible for the CSA until you are current again.

VI. Harvest Coordinator (HC) Duties

As you will soon discover, operating a productive market farm requires a high degree of efficiency, especially when so many hands are involved. To give everyone the opportunity to experience leadership on the farm, and to ensure that our operations run as smoothly as possible during a critical time – harvest – we have created the role of harvest coordinator (HC) for each work day.

Everyone will also be assigned to be Harvest Coordinator (HC) a few times throughout the season. Duties of the HC are day-dependent.



Tuesday and Friday Duties

- It is the duty of the HC to weigh and record anything that is harvested into the harvest log.
- The HC will also oversee any washing, prep, and loading before market as well as CSA share packing.

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday

- During non-harvest days the HC's role includes various other tasks to ensure harvest days go smoothly.
- One of these tasks include making a "pick list" with April to determine what, how much, and from where produce will be harvested. This pick list will also be used for Julie's Chef email, so that local chefs can place orders for EarthDance produce.
- On days following a harvest or CSA pick up, the HC is responsible to make sure that the harvest containers, tools, coolers, and area are clean and organized as well as the CSA pick-up area.
- On days following a harvest the HC will also assist with deadheading flowers as needed.

VII. TIME OFF!

Everyone is entitled to 2 weeks off from the program's requirements throughout the season – for vacations, home projects, family needs, WHATEVER.

- Please let April and Rachel know in writing (via email, or with a note on a Monday night) when your 2 weeks will be. They need not be consecutive.
- You are still encouraged and welcome to attend the Monday night field walks and enrichment sessions during your time off if you are able to.

Alternatively, you could spread out 16 hours throughout the season if you need to miss a shift for some reason.

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VIII. Communication

We maintain an "open door" policy at EarthDance. We encourage regular feedback, and would like to hear your thoughts, suggestions, and concerns as they arise. Please contact the person (face to face,



or via phone or email) who can most appropriately address your concerns or suggestions directly.

The primary tools we'll be using to keep everyone informed are online:

Google Groups, **Google Calendar**, and the **EarthDance website**. See Technology Tutorial page.

Communication for farm & market operations is vital!

Field Work:

If you are going to be late or absent for a field work shift:

Sun.-Thurs. AM crew: CALL, TEXT OR EMAIL APRIL SHELHON
(970)221-0163 april@earthdancefarms.org

Thurs. 3:30-7:30 PM crew: EMAIL or CALL JOHN FINCH
(314) 727-9535 OR (314) 960-3724 finch.johnd@gmail.com

Fri. AM crew: CALL or TEXT or EMAIL GINNY SPERNOGA
(314)-941-2005 ginnyspernoga@yahoo.com

Fri. 12:00-4:00 PM crew: CALL or TEXT or EMAIL RACHEL LEVI
(773) 398-6515 rachel@earthdancefarms.org until April 1st (4/1) after 4/1
CALL or TEXT or EMAIL MELODY GEYER (314) 374-6780 geyer.mel@gmail.com

Fri. 3:30-7:30 PM crew: CALL or TEXT or EMAIL SUE REID
(314) 605-2726 markrachel2000@yahoo.com

Sat. crew: CALL or EMAIL VALORIE HELT
(314) 498-0319 gloriabugg@yahoo.com

Field Walk or Enrichment:

If you are going to be late or absent for a field walk or enrichment session:

TEXT or EMAIL RACHEL LEVI at (773) 398-6515 rachel@earthdancefarms.org

Farmers Markets:

If you are unable to fulfill your marketeer duty, **you** are responsible for finding your own substitute.
Once you have secured someone to take on your assigned market time, email Rachel AND the appropriate market leader with the new information:

For either market: RACHEL LEVI rachel@earthdancefarms.org

AND

For the Maplewood Farmers Market: JULIE HOLLEY julie@earthdancefarms.org

For the Ferguson Farmers Market: MOLLY ROCKAMANN molly@earthdancefarms.org



It is not acceptable to be late for, leave early, or not show up for a farmers market shift. You are only responsible for 4-5 farmers markets throughout the season! You are welcome to find a substitute if something comes up, but please let us know of ANY changes!

IX. Resources

Farmy Resource guide. www.earthdancefarms.org/farmyresources/

As a supplement to the enrichment sessions, we will regularly make written and multi-media curricula available to you, as part of an apprenticeship online resource guide. This information will be posted on a password-protected page of the EarthDance website. This may include links to articles, other websites, or book lists for further learning. We **strongly encourage you** to study the resource guide, post questions about the material to the Fresh Farmy google group, and to download and print these resources, and to keep your own hard copy of the resource guide in a three ring binder.

[Freshman Farmy Google Calendar](#) – (*linked on Farmy Resource page*) Created especially for the EarthDance Organic Farming Apprenticeship program, this calendar is used to convey important dates and schedules, including:

- Our farmers market schedule (and who is working which markets)
- Our HC (harvest coordinator) schedule
- Enrichment sessions and field trips
- Apprentices' birthdays
- EarthDance events

[Farm & Market Log Calendar](#) – (*linked on Farmy Resource page*) This calendar is utilized for both planning and reporting the activities of the farm, CSA, and farmers markets. For planning purposes, the farm manager will include scheduled dates for greenhouse seeding, direct seeding at the farm, and transplanting. Each week the calendar will be updated with information on what was actually accomplished at the greenhouses and farm, including: planting, cultivating, trellising, harvesting, etc. Information such as what crops are included in each week's CSA share and how much \$ was made at each farmer's market will also be included on this calendar to provide a comprehensive overview of our farm and market operations.

X. Tools

You will be responsible for providing your own personal hand pruners & gloves. You are also asked to bring a long-handled tool of your choice each time you come to the farm to do field work. You may want to purchase or round up other items if you desire, including a 5 gallon bucket, stirrup hoe, spade, shovel, pitchfork, rake, etc. Of these suggested tools you will likely find the bucket and stirrup hoe the most useful. Please mark clearly any tools you bring to the farm with your name and



bring them home with you. Some tools will be provided through EarthDance. Always leave tools cleaner than you found them and NEVER leave tools out in the field!

Online Store. To make it easier for you to shop for and identify any tools you'd like to purchase for your season of growing with EarthDance, we've put together an online store via Amazon.com. We've placed our suggested tools, hats, gloves, books, and other items we recommend into this "aStore." Use this as you would any online store; shop at your own leisure. All payments are processed through and by Amazon.com *not* EarthDance. You can reach this store through the Farmy Resource page, or you can type this URL into the address bar: <http://astore.amazon.com/earth074-20>

XI. Farm Logistics

Safety Extreme safety must be exercised at all times, especially when working with any type of equipment, including tillers, pruners, knives, etc. EarthDance will have a first aid kit available while at the farm.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, please CALL 911! Drink lots of water! BRING A WATER JUG AND SNACKS. We will take breaks and there is a shady area to rest at summer's peak.

Clothing: Clothing choices are important for not only sun safety but also protecting yourself from plant material (thorns, burrs, poison ivy etc).

The following are suggested:

- Dress in layers!
- Wear **long** durable pants like blue jeans or khakis
- Wear a thin **long**-sleeved shirt for sun and scratch protection!
- Shoes should be comfortable but durable and tough, they will get dirty!
- **No open toed shoes allowed.**
- Wear white or lighter colors as they reflect the heat
- Sunscreen or sun protection should be utilized
- A wide brimmed hat that covers the face, ears and neck
- You may want to bring a bandana or cooling cloth to wear around your neck or brow

Bathroom Facilities Currently there are **NO** bathroom facilities or porta-potties on the farm. We may be installing a composting toilet on the farm this year, but it is always a good idea to use the restroom before heading to the farm. There are areas to tinkle in that are inconspicuous.

Parking and Driving at the farm

- Apprentices may not drive their own vehicles onto the farm without permission.
- Please park along Dade Avenue.

XII. Community Outreach

And finally, as part of our EarthDance mission entails community engagement, apprentices are asked to devote 10 hours (typically 2 events) throughout the course of the season to represent EarthDance in the community - such as at an Earth Day festival, featured farmer dinner, classroom presentation, health fair, etc. Rachel will regularly post opportunities to fulfill this community outreach requirement to the apprentices via the freshfarmy google group.

