POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT:

Project Coordinator
Advancing the Business of Farming in Connecticut in Partnership with Agriculture Learning Centers

Location: Based at Tolland County Extension Center in Vernon, with extensive in-state travel from November to March
This is a 50% (20 hours/week) staff time position

Posting Close Date: July 29, 2016

Organization Overview:
The College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR) at University of Connecticut is committed to its status as a land grant institution, serving Connecticut and the global economy through research, education, and public engagement. CAHNR’s vision is to provide for a global sustainable future through scientific discovery, innovation, and community engagement. Our accomplishments will result in safe, sustainable and secure plant and animal production systems, healthier individuals and communities, greater protection and conservation of our environment and natural resources, balanced growth of the economy, and resilient local and global communities.

UConn Extension fulfills the land grant university’s mission of outreach and public engagement. Over 100 UConn Extension specialists work in the 169 local communities across Connecticut as educators, problem solvers, catalysts, collaborators and stewards. Our eight regional Extension Centers, the Sea Grant program at Avery Point, the 4-H Education Center at Auerfarm, the Home and Garden Education Center and the UConn Extension office in Storrs are strategically located throughout the state to meet local needs. UConn Extension enhances small businesses, the economic and physical well-being of families, and offers opportunities to improve the decision-making capacity of community leaders.

Program Overview:
With funding support from USDA, UConn Extension will launch a three-year project targeting new and beginning farmers with less than 10 years of experience. This new project, Advancing the Business of Farming in Connecticut in Partnership with Agriculture Learning Centers, will leverage the expertise of UConn Extension educators
along with the training and networking expertise of eight organizations that have a commitment to supporting new farmers in Connecticut. These project collaborators will host workshops, assist with unique learning events, and support beginning farmer networking.

The project collaborators are:
1. Common Ground (New Haven)
2. Community Farm of Simsbury
3. CT NOFA (CT Northeast Organic Farming Association)
4. Green Village Initiative (Bridgeport)
5. Killingly Agriculture Education Program
6. Knox Parks (Hartford)
7. New Connecticut Farmer Alliance
8. UConn Extension, including the Listo Para Iniciar (Ready-to-Start) urban agriculture training program in Fairfield County
9. Windham Regional Community Council / GROW Windham

Project collaborators will form a network of Agricultural Learning Centers that will deliver training, mentoring, and one-on-one technical assistance customized to meet the needs of new and beginning farmers. Core trainings will be taught by Extension educators, independent contractors, guest trainers, and farmer mentors, and will focus on a wide range of farmer-generated topics, including business and financial management, farmland access, marketing, and fruit/vegetable production. Core trainings will be reinforced by one-on-one technical assistance, available to new and beginning farmers upon completion of a set number of core trainings.

**Position Overview:**
UConn Extension is looking for an experienced and committed individual to join our team to play a lead role in coordinating between 21-25 trainings per year for new and beginning farmers in partnership with a network of Agriculture Learning Centers across the state. A successful candidate will have a proven track record of:

- Event coordination, including everything from scheduling with presenters, announcements, facility needs, refreshments, maintaining rsvp lists, implementing workshop evaluations, and follow-up with attendees
- Managing multiple project tasks simultaneously
- Outstanding networking and collaboration skills

This Project Coordinator will report to the Associate Extension educator in Sustainable Food Systems, Jiff Martin. The position will be filled asap, with potential start date of Sept 1, 2016.

**Responsibilities:**

Coordinate Core Trainings through network of Agriculture Learning Centers (55%).
- Develop strong familiarity with menu of 21 Core Trainings (100 level, and 200
level) that will be delivered at Agriculture Learning Centers each year

- Coordinate up to 25 trainings per year for new and beginning farmers, most of which will be held between November and March, in partnership with Agriculture Learning Centers. *These trainings will often occur on weekends and weekday evenings; the eligible candidate must be willing to travel and attend many of these trainings across the state.*
- Attend and assist with 1-2 trainings at each of the 8 Agriculture Learning Center each year
- Develop unified marketing and outreach strategy for all trainings
- Develop database of new and beginning farmers that participate in trainings
- Distribute and collect evaluation data as required by USDA

**Coordinate one-on-one technical assistance for new and beginning farmers (15%)**

- Develop strong familiarity with four consultants to be hired by the project to deliver one-on-one technical assistance
- Identify new and beginning farmers that have met minimum criteria to receive one-on-one technical assistance. Minimum criteria will include attendance in a predetermined number of core trainings
- Assist with matching and scheduling consultants with eligible clients
- Track consultant time available for one-on-one technical assistance

**Assist with planning and implementing annual Agriculture Resource Fair (10%)**

- Take a leadership role in working with CT NOFA on planning this event
- Reach out to agriculture service providers to schedule their participation
- Assist with all aspects of event, including scheduling, marketing, food, rsvps, logistics

**Serve as a representative of the project for UConn Extension at meetings with USDA, stakeholders, clients, new partners, and agriculture service providers. (20%)**

- Participate on the Project Management Team (meets twice per year)
- Attend the Build Our Network/Grow Our Future networking meetings, organized by New CT Farmer Alliance
- Attend the annual Equipment Demonstration Days, organized by Dr. Jude Boucher
- Attend annual Project Director/Staff meetings (3 days long) held by USDA with national grant recipients in 2017 and 2018. *This is a unique opportunity for the Project Coordinator to travel to a national meeting (usually held in August or September) to represent University of Connecticut.*
- Participate in national network conference calls/webinars as recommended by supervisor, such as the BFLearningNetwork
- Attend Extension educator meetings, as appropriate and recommended by supervisor
- Attend agriculture service provider meetings and possibly make presentations about the project, as appropriate and recommended by supervisor
**Compensation:** We anticipate filling this position by Sept 1, 2016, with the possibility of continuing through July 31, 2019. The position must be renewed every January 1st and July 1st. The compensation will be $12,500 each 6-month period ($25/hour for 500 hours). Due to the nature of the position, the expectation of 20 hours per week is an annual average, but is likely to vary seasonally, with a much greater time commitment required between November and March. Travel costs will be reimbursed at the applicable federal rate.

While there are no paid benefits, your temporary appointment may afford you the opportunity to purchase optional State employee health insurance at group rates.

**Qualifications:**

*Required:*

- B.A. or B.S. in sustainable food systems, agriculture, natural resources, public health, education, or related field
- A minimum of 2-3 years of experience in program coordination in education, agriculture, or related work in a not-for-profit setting
- Excellent organizational skills
- Sincere, honest, consistent communication skills
- Strong work ethic and reliable nature
- Oral speaking skills, including experience as a presenter
- Experience working with diverse teams toward a common goal
- Deep understanding the challenges that new farmers face, with a recognition of how this varies across a wide range of demographic backgrounds, agriculture backgrounds, and production systems
- Comfortable working with individuals and organizations committed to meaningful social change and food justice through sustainable agriculture
- Familiarity with agriculture service providers, including Extension, USDA Farm Services Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, CT Dept. of Agriculture, CT Farm Bureau Association, CT NOFA, and New CT Farmer Alliance
- Excellent competency with computer and communications technologies including Microsoft Office Suite, website management, and major social media platforms
- **Must own a vehicle** and be willing to travel across state for events that will often occur on weekends or weekday evenings. (Travel costs will be reimbursed at applicable federal rate)
- **Must be able to work year-round,** although the time commitment and tasks will vary. Between July to October there will be more planning tasks, and between November to June there will be more events/trainings/meetings to attend.
- Flexibility and optimism a must

*Preferred:*

- Experience farming in the Northeast
- Advanced degree in sustainable food systems, agriculture, natural resources, public health, education, or related field
• Experience managing or serving in a leadership role with a network, coalition, alliance, or other similar collaborative efforts
• Willing to commit up to three years to project

**What’s in it for you?**
• Work in an environment with colleagues that see broad connections between sustainable agriculture, food systems, and food justice
• Develop professional relationships with a new cohort of leaders in farming and food systems in Connecticut and across the nation
• Work alongside a supervisor willing to support your own professional development and networking opportunities
• Develop new contacts and introductions across University of Connecticut and at USDA

To Apply:
To apply for this 50% staff position with UConn Extension, send a cover letter, resume, 3 references, and two writing samples (no more than 5 pages each) to Jiff Martin, Associate Extension educator in Sustainable Food Systems. Send all documents together in ONE email to jiff.martin@uconn.edu. In the subject line please use this description: “Last Name, First Name –Project Coordinator position”. Only competitive candidates will be invited to participate further in the recruitment process. Position closes July 29, 2016.

*University of Connecticut is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and Program Provider.*