

ABOUT THE 2012 EARTHDANCE ORGANIC FARMING APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM...

We are excited to offer this opportunity – to learn how to grow food (and flowers!) organically on a real working farm – in the 4th season of EarthDance. EarthDance has created a cooperative learning and working environment well-suited for individuals who want to gain practical organic farming skills on a part-time basis. While it is ideal to immerse oneself in farm work completely (full-time) to thoroughly understand what it takes to farm organically, this apprenticeship is intended to serve as an introduction to the principles of sustainable agriculture without requiring a complete lifestyle change. Apprentices are required to commit a total of 10 hours (minimum) per week to field walks, farm and market labor. In addition, the apprenticeship program includes on and off-farm enrichment sessions/workshops, field trips to local farms, and being a member of our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)!



As an EarthDance apprentice, you will be introduced to many aspects of organic agriculture. Skills and concepts covered include: techniques of plant propagation; enhancing soil fertility; natural strategies for pest, disease, and weed control; as well as harvest and market experiences. Our vision for each class of Freshman Farmies is a community of people who will learn from one another as much as they will learn from the land. To this end, we are seeking a group of apprentices diverse in age, ethnicity, and gender who will each bring high levels of passion, enthusiasm, dedication, and creativity to the program. We are also interested in bringing together individuals with a wide variety of skills, experience, and goals to further enrich our program (i.e. farming and gardening experience is not a prerequisite to participating in the apprenticeship program).



Since 2010, EarthDance apprentices have been members of the farm's Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)¹ program. CSA is an innovative marketing model for small farms; the farmer sells 'shares' of the farm's harvest to members who pay up front for a season-long share. Therefore, in addition to receiving top-notch training alongside our farm manager April Shelton, as an EarthDance apprentice you'll receive a weekly share

¹ See www.localharvest.org/csa for more information on CSAs

of the produce that we'll grow together. CSA shares will be available for pick-up at the Ferguson and Maplewood Farmers Markets. Visiting and shopping at the markets are an enjoyable way to educate yourself about the local food scene.

We wish to emphasize that the EarthDance apprenticeship program is a serious commitment to undertake. While we have created it as a part-time program, the 10 hour time commitment must be met *each week*² to fulfill the apprenticeship requirements. In late March you will receive a schedule of the farmers markets that EarthDance will be selling at in 2012, and each apprentice will sell at 4-6 markets throughout the harvest season (April – Oct). Attendance at field walks and enrichment sessions is critical to gaining the full benefits of the experience, and as such, you will be expected to attend no less than 80% of these.



Apprentices often cite the field trips as being one of their favorite aspects of the program; learning from other farmers and seeing their operations firsthand is an exciting part of the program.

Finally, as part of our mission entails community engagement, apprentices are asked to represent EarthDance by working at one public event in the community - such as at the St. Louis Earth Day festival, public farm tours, featured farmer dinners, health fairs, etc.



In your application, we want to learn about YOU. We want to hear about how you have come to be interested in organic farming and gardening and sustainable food systems. We also want you to consider this program as much as we are considering you. The program spans from mid February 2012 to mid November 2012, and consists of practical farm-based training including bi-weekly field walks led by the farm manager; enrichment learning (from farm-scale composting to greenhouse management); operating a 50 member Community Supported Agriculture program; selling at farmers markets; and field trips to local farms.



² With exception: apprentices are each allotted two weeks off throughout the growing season for vacations, down time, whatever. We ask that you let us know as early on as possible when your break weeks will be, so that we can plan accordingly.

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| WHO Perhaps you? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-35 Farm Apprentices, the 2012 Class of Freshman Farmies • 5+ Sophomore Farmies (returning apprentices from the 2010/2011 season) • Program designed and led by Molly Rockamann, Founding Director of EarthDance; April Shelhon, EarthDance Farm Manager; Julie Holley, EarthDance Market Manager; and Rachel Levi, Farm & Community Education Coordinator. • Curriculum collaborators and guest instructors to include Vicki Lander, John Wilkerson, Kris Larson, Mimo Davis, Paul Krautman, Amy Cloud and several others. |
| WHAT Field work, CSA, field trips, farmers markets, enrichment sessions. | An opportunity to learn how to grow food organically on a real working farm – not far from home! Freshman Farmies commit a minimum of 10 hours per week to the program – which includes field walks and farm and market labor. Additionally, on-farm enrichment sessions and field trips to local farms are held monthly. Plus, beyond receiving education and training in sustainable agriculture, you'll also receive a weekly share of the harvest as part of our CSA! |
| WHEN Program runs mid-February through mid-November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I. Basic Information - Submit online – Due Dec. 1st, 12pm 2011 • Part II. Online - Due at 12pm on December 1st, 2011 • Part III. Mail in - Due December 1st, 2011 • Admitted Freshman Farmies Class of 2012 announced December 15th, 2011! • Program begins mid February and continues through mid November • Weekly field walks take place on Mondays from 5:30 – 7:30pm • Field work takes place 6 days/week (Sunday – Friday). You will have several shifts to choose from to participate in field work; CSA pick-up days are on Wednesday & Saturday. |
| WHERE Mueller Farm, Ferguson, MO 63135 | The EarthDance Organic Farming Apprenticeship will take place on 2 acres of rented ground of the Mueller Farm, on South Dade Avenue in Ferguson, Missouri. The Mueller Farm has been in organic production since 1883, making it the oldest organic farm in Missouri. The farm was named a Ferguson Historical Landmark in 2003. |
| WHY To grow food <i>and</i> farmers for the region | This program was developed because the need for small-scale organic growers is increasing every day. There is also a great demand to learn the skills of organic farming. The EarthDance Organic Farming Apprenticeship is designed to meet both of these needs – grow more affordable, healthy food for the region and train more individuals in organic farming techniques. |
| HOW MUCH \$750 | The application fee is \$25, nonrefundable. Thanks to the generosity of donors and foundations, enrollment in the apprenticeship program is only \$750 per person for the entire 9 month season, and includes a weekly CSA share during the harvest season. The full tuition can be paid in 5 installments of \$150.00, due by the end of each month, Jan-April. You will be asked to purchase 2 tools for your use during the season, and for you to keep afterwards (approx. \$50 cost total). Food and transportation costs for field trips are not included in this fee. |

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