

Quality Farm Internships

OSU Extension Small Farms
November 5th, 2007

Why have interns?

- **Inexpensive labor pool**
- **Train farm workers**
 - **Help build the movement**
- **Farming in remote areas**



Where to Find Interns

- **ATTRA** www.attrainternships.ncat.org
- **WWOOFF** www.woolf.org
- **Organic Volunteers** www.organicvolunteers.com
 - **Word of Mouth**
 - **Local Universities**
 - **Local Activist Community**

Hiring Interns

- **Detailed Job Description**
 - **Interview and Visit**
 - **Application**
 - **Contract**

Key Interview Questions

- **Physical Labor Experience**
- **Future Farming Intentions**
 - **References**
 - **Lifestyle Preferences**
 - **Working style**

5 Benchmarks of a Successful Internship

- *Communication*
 - *Diversity*
 - *Context*
- *Infrastructure*
 - *Intangibles*

1. Communication

- **Clear expectations about work**
- **Regular check-ins**
- **Providing a realistic picture of farming**
- **Communicating in a timely manner**



2. Diversity

- **Responsibilities**
- **Bodily stresses**
- **Farm Experiences**
 - **Tasks**





Post-harvest /Distribution



Working with Animals

3. Context

- **Social significance**
- **Provide whole farm context**
- **Provide task-specific context**





3. Context continued



- **Work alongside intern**



4. Infrastructure



- **Clear Boundaries**
- **Comfort Threshold**

5. Intangibles

- **Interpersonal Dynamic**
- **Lifestyle**



WEB Internship Cooperative Plan

- **Hire intern coordinator**
- **Work parties at different farms**
- **Intern Classes (SARE curriculum)**
 - **Social Events**
- **Final Presentations for the community**
 - **Accreditation Potential**

Internship Classroom Topics

- **Crop Rotation**
- **Farm Records**
- **Financial Records**
- **CSA**
- **Keyline Design**
- **Greenhouse 101**
- **Poultry Management**
- **Irrigation**
- **Farming with the Wild**
- **Grazing Systems**
- **Animal Husbandry**
- **Hedgerows**
- **Soil Sciences**
- **Entomology**
- **Composting**
- **GMOs**
- **Plant Pathology**
- **Winter Farming**
- **Cover Crops**
- **Seed Saving**

Internship Field Topics

- **Compost building**
- **Greenhouse**
- **Direct seeding**
- **Transplanting**
- **Harvesting**
- **Post-harvest Handling**
- **Weeds/Cultivation**
- **Irrigation**
- **Milking**
- **Soil Test**
- **Tractor 101**
- **Cover Crop**



Cooperative Internship Goals

- *Clearer Communication*
- *Greater Diversity of Farm Experiences*
- *Internship Curriculum enhances Context*
 - *Infrastructure support*
 - *Intangible support- pressure taken off farmer-intern relationship*

Post-season relationship

