

**Appalachia – Science in the Public Interest
Food Systems Internship 2015**

Organization Information

Appalachia – Science in the Public Interest (ASPI) has been working for healthy land and sustainable communities in Kentucky and Central Appalachia for 35 years. ASPI is a non-profit resource center advocating for sustainable development, responsible resource management, and informed personal. We use science and technology to benefit current and future generation as well as the environment by promoting innovative ideas and appropriate technologies. We accomplish this through education, research, consulting and demonstration projects.

Our focus areas are: **Sustainable Energy, Education and Demonstration, Food Systems, People and Culture, and Ecosystems**. We operate out of our **Small Town Demonstration Center** at our main offices in Mount Vernon, KY. Our other educational facilities include the **Mary E Fritsch Nature Center, Michael Francis Zalla Trails**, and close to 200 acres of old growth forest at our **Rockcastle River Demonstration Center** in Livingston, KY. Both of our demonstration centers have maintained produce gardens for over three decades; we were one of the first gardens in Kentucky to be certified organic. Since our inception in 1977 in ASPI has been dedicated to education and awareness of our region's environmental issues and we remain just as dedicated to that ongoing cause 35 years later.

Program Description

In 2014, we helped 47 families grow close to 20,000 pounds of food, conducted 10 workshops on food growing, harvesting, and preservation and partnered with 3 local schools and 10 local and regional organizations to develop programmatic resources and capacity.

We have three goals for our Grow Appalachia program in 2015:

- 1. Increase the number of families able to grow their own food in Rockcastle County.**
- 2. Create a sustainable and economically viable means for participants to improve their quality of life through marketing and selling garden and garden related products.**
- 3. Create Jobs that ensure the availability and sustainability of healthy food systems in Rockcastle County**

In 2015, we will assist 30 local families with home and community garden plots, expand our community garden capacity to accommodate new participants, begin planning for raised beds and additional community garden on-site in assisted living and other such multiple unit facilities in the County, conduct 12 education workshops and expand the second year of our successful pilot market training program for 8 local youth. We hope to have three interns working with the Executive Director and the Grow Appalachia Coordinators to help us expand our pilot programs and build a foundation for the next several years.

How to Apply:

Deadline: April 25th 2015

Our Food Systems Intern positions are filled by April for the summer program. You are welcome to visit, learn more about the center, and submit materials year-round. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter describing career goals and interest in this program along with a resume, including applicable experiences and coursework to:

Suzi Van Etten
Executive Director, Appalachia- Science in the Public Interest
50 Lair Street, Mt Vernon, KY 40456
suzi@a-spi.org

Home Gardeners Education Intern:

- Assist with the preparation and coordination of the Grow Appalachia program and program materials
- Assist participants with the principles of organic gardening including planning, preparation, maintenance, harvesting and preservation
- Assist with planning and executing educational workshops and classes
- Confirm appropriate pest intervention and soil-building activities

Local Foods Program Educator:

- Manage the intergenerational learning program, whereby the youth workers learn the basics of gardening from existing participants as part of the volunteer hours and graduation component.
- Help manage the farmer's market training program. This includes facilitating market days: preparing the booth and products, attending market training programs, and
- Help create and implement a model for gardening- related job development programs for high school students, such as the producing and marketing of rain barrels, raised beds, garden guides and composters.
- Identify specific production activities with good economic potential in the local market (such as honey, composters or mushroom production).
- Help with classes in Certified Kitchen

Community Garden Education Intern:

- Help manage the community garden, including outreach, garden maintenance and educational workshops.
- Care for common areas – mulch, mowing
- Design and implement example plantings for common plots
- Provide support for participant plots – tilling, answering questions
- Maintain contact with participants
- Create a long-term plan for common area perennial plantings
- Maintain ASPI's two Organic Demonstration Gardens: Planting, weeding, etc according to garden plan; Manage weekly donations of food to the CAP Grateful Breadz food pantry; Create and maintain an unmanned food stand for donations only on ASPI lot
- Maintain Hoop House and Greenhouse plantings and seed-starting: Follow planting and maintenance schedules; Maintain composting system
- Assist with gardening workshops and activities through ASPI
- With all tasks, the intern is required to keep records, answer questions for participants and the public, look for potential and current issues, and work with staff to solve garden problems (example: pests, blight, work schedule)

Requirements

This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain firsthand experience in garden-managing, community food production, and local food distribution. Interns must be physically able to complete the requirements and work independently. Prioritizing tasks is an important part of this internship.

- Strong writing skills and interpersonal skills
- Comfort working with Excel, Word and PowerPoint
- Confidence in working under pressure with short timelines
- Comfort working with a wide variety of constituents
- Broad understanding and interest in many facets of sustainability
- Ability to formulate new ideas based on current programs
- Prior experience strongly suggested, but not required

Provided Resources:

- Wi-fi at the office and access to the Sustainability library for research
- ASPI website (will receive instruction, if necessary, on its use)
- Tools, machinery, plants, seeds, compost, and other necessary items to complete the expectations

Housing Is Available.