



Farm Connex Business Manager

POSITION SUMMARY

The Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), based in Hardwick, VT, seeks a **Business Manager** for Farm Connex: CAE's logistics and distribution program that provides cold-chain freight service for farmers and food producers who may be "too small" or "too rural" to access other distribution channels. Farm Connex headquarters is physically based in Hardwick, where its operation spans 6 days per week, and up to 20 hours each day. More specifically, the program coordinates around 22 routes weekly, aggregating and delivering local products in 13 of 14 counties within the state and in some adjoining areas of western New Hampshire. In 2022 alone, our program handled an estimated \$12 million worth of local food, and we anticipate that trend to continue upward as we respond to ever-narrowing supply chains. In pursuit of this anticipated growth, the **Business Manager** will foremost be tasked with the co-leadership of the program, in collaboration with our seasoned Operations Management team and in service of our multitude of producers and other statewide organizational partners. If you consider yourself an enthusiastic, customer-service oriented and data-driven individual who is interested in supporting an unsung yet critical aspect of our food system and the hard-working people who make it possible every day, we encourage you to apply.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position: Farm Connex Business Manager

Reports to: Deputy Director

Schedule: 40-45 hours/week (primarily on-site)

Compensation: Salary range is \$55,000-\$65,000 (exempt) depending on experience

Benefits: Generous paid time off, SIMPLE IRA, Qualified Small Employer HRA, Employer-paid short-term disability and life insurance, professional development compensation

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS: this position could be a great fit for someone with:

- Superior interpersonal/relationship management skills
- Proficiency and comfort with standard office equipment and software systems (i.e. Microsoft Office and Google Suite)
- Ability to interpret basic enterprise financial statements
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team in a non-standard, fast-paced and sometimes distracting industrial environment
- Ability to prioritize and manage complex & developing systems & competing demands
- A proactive approach to problem solving
- Ability to perform (mostly) sedentary work for extended periods of time, with reasonable accommodation
- Interest in local food systems and food access initiatives, and desire to bring thoughtful organization and structure to this vital aspect of our local food economy

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Experience working in a dynamic labor environment
- Familiarity with distribution best practices and compliance
- Experience managing a revenue-generating enterprise
- Proficiency in developing data analytical tools & processes
- Experience in enterprise marketing & basic website administration (Wordpress a plus)
- Understanding of basic food safety standards

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties and responsibilities include:

- Provide direct support and supervision of Farm Connex program personnel
- Support customer relationships, program outreach and communications
- With Operations Management, update and implement producer agreements, and provide compliance support and feedback
- Support the development and operationalization of annual program budget, business plan, marketing plan, etc.
- Co-develop and monitor annual revenue targets and other program benchmarks to evaluate program effectiveness
- Manage program purchase ordering, as well as weekly and monthly invoicing processes
- Co-manage and support program compliance requirements and deadlines
- Assist with the development, implementation and management of program processes, tracking tools and other resources
- Provide analytical support and feedback to program leadership on financial, operational and social impacts
- Participate in regular organizational meetings and initiatives
- Identify strategic networking opportunities and represent program at area events, as needed
- Provide other administrative support to staff and co-management, as needed

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF TIME:

- **35%** Producer support which includes maintaining existing relationships with our cohort of producers and onboarding new producers with support from the Operations team. Customer service management and engagement for producers and their customers.
- **30%** Administration responsibilities and financial management including invoicing, billing and grants management.
- **15%** Personnel management and support for Farm Connex drivers to ensure they have the means to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

- **10%** Strategic planning, analytics, data capturing and assessment with Operations team and Deputy Director.
- **5%** Compliance operations around department of transportation, food safety, standard operating procedure design and maintenance
- **5%** External communications with partners and producers.

EOE STATEMENT

Building community leadership, investing in relationships, and listening to the needs of the community are core principles CAE applies to all our work. We strive to foster an inclusive and supportive staff culture where learning and growth are supported. CAE is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified applicants are considered for employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetics, disability, or veteran status.

BACKGROUND ON CAE

CAE is a food systems hub in Hardwick, VT whose reach extends statewide and beyond. Our work touches all aspects of the food system in support of rural food businesses, farms, and communities. We work alongside our neighbors and partners to cultivate interdependence, take risks, and initiate change. CAE operates a full-service food hub at the Vermont Food Venture Center, and business advising and technical assistance to farm and food businesses. Our enterprises include Just Cut, a farm to institution program; Farm Connex, a local food delivery service; and Vermont Farm Fund, a revolving farm fund. Our community programs are focused in the greater Hardwick area and include a community greenspace and gardens at Atkins Field; Grow Your Own, a food independence collaboration with the Hardwick Area Food Pantry and others; Place-Based Education partnerships with our local schools; and community organizing for food sovereignty. We invite you to participate in our work to create a rural food system in which everyone has agency, support, & access to local food.

HIRING PROCESS

A hiring team of CAE staff will lead the process. Selected candidates will have an initial phone interview, which may be followed by an interview and tour of CAE spaces. Interview questions will be shared ahead of time. CAE is committed to the full inclusion of all qualified individuals and will provide support in any way to assure everyone's best experience in the hiring process. CAE will take the steps necessary to assure that people with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations during the interview process and, if hired, subsequent employment. For accommodation inquiries, please contact our Admin Operations Coordinator at jobs@hardwickagriculture.org.

TO APPLY

Email jobs@hardwickagriculture.org with your resume, letter of interest, and include **Business Manager** in your email subject line. We're interested to hear your thoughts on any life or work experience as it relates to this position. Applicants who go on to interview with us will also be asked to provide references. Our application deadline is February 6, 2023. Initial interviews will begin by February 13, 2023. Let us know if you have any questions!