



# Center for an Agricultural Economy

Home of the  
**Vermont Food  
Venture Center**

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## Farm Connex General Manager

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), based in Hardwick, VT, seeks a General Manager for Farm Connex: CAE's logistics and distribution program 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. 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.

The primary goal of the Farm Connex General Manager role is to oversee all aspects of Farm Connex including: increasing the accessibility of local food, expanding markets for producers, sustaining client relationships, generating new business, supervising staff and overall business functions, and operationalizing plans and policies to meet strategic growth objectives.

Building community leadership, investing in relationships, and listening to the needs of the community are core principles CAE applies to all of our work. We encourage anyone interested in this position to reach out with any questions they may have before applying. CAE strives to foster an inclusive and supportive staff culture where ongoing learning and growth are supported. This includes ongoing team learning around antiracism and equity in our personal and professional lives.

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Position: Farm Connex General Manager

Reports to: Deputy Director

Schedule: 40 hrs/week (on-site; Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm with some evenings/weekends)

Compensation: \$60,000 - \$70,000 salary/year at full time 40 hrs/week, exempt

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

### **GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Strong business acumen with an entrepreneurial mindset and background in customer service, process management, and/or logistics.
- Demonstrated management and supervisory experience, with excellent interpersonal communication skills.
- Exceptional problem solving skills and proven ability to multitask.
- Facility with computers, spreadsheets, email, and digital business management tools
- Valid driver's license.

## **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Food safety management experience
- Strategically savvy in developing and implementing new processes and systems that increase efficiency and allocate resources effectively in a fast-moving environment
- Background in the local food system or agriculture, including familiarity with delivery, distribution, and supply chain development and management
- Excellent project and process management, budget, and financial management skills, with demonstrated track record in achieving sales and budget targets
- Experience in customer service outreach or community engagement; demonstrated ability to establish effective and productive working relationships with diverse groups
- Ability to build and maintain relationships and connections to farmers and local food system partners as well as to effectively build and manage a customer base

## **SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Program Administration and Supervision (40% time)**

- Directly supervise the Farm Connex Business Manager, Logistics Manager, and the Warehouse Coordinator.
- Support Managers and Drivers in daily logistics and dispatch functions as necessary
- Support Managers in maintaining and updating routes as needed to establish efficiencies in the enterprise.
- Maintain standards that ensure high quality customer service and employee satisfaction and safety.
- Ensure compliance with state and federal regulations for all aspects of the Farm Connex operations, including food safety protocols.
- Consistent review of Farm Connex financial health (assessment of financial statements, periodic reviews with CAE Deputy Director)
- Coordinate with Business Manager and administrative staff on grant reporting, financial reporting, tax preparation, insurance, billing questions/discrepancies

### **Client Support and Outreach (% 40 time)**

- Build and maintain client relationships & partner relationships (FC, GMFD, IC, Deep Root ect..)
- Explore opportunities to expand current producer services and seek out new producer relationships
- Conduct strategic review of new and existing client services
- Establish, implement and review strategic sales targets
- Develop and implement marketing strategies

### **Business Strategic Planning (% 20 time)**

- Work closely with the Deputy Director to establish and operationalize strategic priorities for Farm Connex
- Review and evaluate strategic opportunities to move the business forward; assess challenges and proactively address short, intermediate, and long-term goals, opportunities, and concerns
- Set short- and long-term sales goals and net income targets; create and implement sales plans to achieve revenue targets
- Identify and implement strategic partnership opportunities with other food hub organizations across Vermont

## **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, and 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](mailto:jobs@hardwickagriculture.org).

## **TO APPLY**

Email [jobs@hardwickagriculture.org](mailto:jobs@hardwickagriculture.org) with your resume, cover letter or letter of interest, and include 'Farm Connex General 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 May 29th, 2023. Initial interviews will begin on or near June 5th. Let us know if you have any questions!