Expanding food sovereignty and supporting food access

The Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) is seeking a team member to manage and expand our food sovereignty initiatives. This person will work with staff and community partners to enhance food security and food sovereignty in the Hardwick area and Northeast Kingdom. With the goal of strengthening community resilience, CAE is committed to addressing the persistent inequities in our food system, including the emergency created by the pandemic. CAE is in a unique position to continue advancing local food access and food sovereignty efforts through our grassroots community approach, our partnerships, and our substantial organizational, human, land, and facility resources. We are seeking an energetic and highly collaborative candidate to help us create a vision for how to best deploy these resources to address the emergent needs in our community.

A working definition of food sovereignty for CAE is everyone’s right to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food. This includes the ability to grow one’s own food and define one’s own food systems.

Summary of Position

Position: Food Sovereignty Organizer

Directly supported by the Community Programs Team, and Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO’s) Food Justice Team

Full-time, 32-40 hours per week

Compensation: Starting salary range: $45,000-$50,000 for 40 hours/week depending on experience, plus CAE’s benefits package

Work site flexibility (remote and in person)
Candidate with community organizing experience preferred but not required

CAE’s food access and organizing work is evolving through partnerships with multiple local organizations, collaboration among CAE staff and programs, and deep engagement with members of the community. The Food Sovereignty Organizer will focus on expanding the impact of initiatives already underway and exploring long-term solutions related to food justice. Building community leadership, investing in relationships and listening to the needs of the community are core principles that CAE applies to this work. As such, we encourage individuals with lived experience dealing with food insecurity to apply. We also seek a team member to help us look inward as a part of this effort. CAE is committed to building organizational humility and understanding through an ever-more nuanced and equity-based lens. CAE is a founding member of Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) which uses community organizing tools to enhance food justice in our region.

This position will work directly with:

- CAE’s Community Programs Team
- CAE’s Food Hub Enterprise Managers
- Financial Manager
- Northeast Kingdom Organizing

**Responsibilities:** The Food Sovereignty Organizer will work with NEKO’s food justice team roughly half of each week and work on CAE food access projects half each week. The specific tasks will evolve as our area emerges from the pandemic to allow for more in-person work.

- Manage and coordinate CAE’s Everyone Eats meals program
- Support NEKO’s food justice team and other organizing work
- Support CAE’s ongoing collaboration with Hardwick Area Food Pantry, including the Produce to Pantries program
- Explore partnerships with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-led organizations that address racial inequities in our food system
● Support CAE’s ongoing efforts to develop Atkins Field as a "Food Sovereignty Hub." This vision includes expanded community food access and place-based education activities at the Atkins Field property.

● Explore gaps in the Northeast Kingdom and within CAE related to food access and sovereignty. Coordinate with partner organizations to build collective capacity and impact, i.e community meals, school break kids meals, grocery vouchers

● Serve with other CAE staff on a Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) team to support new leadership and work on issue campaigns. CAE is a sponsoring member of NEKO and uses community organizing methods to identify issues, find and support new leaders. We work with the community to find solutions and create pathways for everyone to have a voice in decisions.

EOE statement

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, and we invite anyone who has experienced food insecurity to apply. CAE strives to foster an inclusive and supportive staff culture where learning and growth are supported. CAE believes an equitable food system is one with empowered communities that are socially and economically thriving with shared mutual goals.

Background on CAE

CAE was founded in 2004 to build a regenerative, just, and healthy local food system that creates socially thriving and economically vital rural communities. We do this through a range of programs which provide the infrastructure, education, and connectivity to forward our goals. Our approach is rooted in understanding specific community needs, and collaborating with local, regional, and statewide partners across sectors for long-term transformation and resilience.

CAE operates a full-service food hub at the Vermont Food Venture Center. Our supports for farm and food businesses include business advising and technical assistance, as well as a farm-to-institution program and local food delivery service. Our community programs are focused in the greater Hardwick area and include the 8-year Grow Your Own food independence collaboration with the Hardwick Area Food Pantry and others, and Place-Based Education collaboration with our local schools.
To apply:

Please submit your resume and cover letter by May 30 to bethany@hardwickagriculture.org with the keywords “Food Sovereignty Organizer” in the subject line. We invite anyone interested in this position to reach out with any questions before applying.