



Job Description: Certification Specialist

Vermont Organic Farmers, LLC (VOF)

Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)

VOF Office: 802-434-3821 vof@nofavt.org www.nofavt.org

Job Title: Certification Specialist (Dairy, Livestock & Field)

Employee Status: 40 hrs. /wk., Salaried; Exempt

Salary Range: \$39,520-\$43,680

Summary Description: The Certification Specialist will coordinate the annual process of verifying the organic production practices of our dairy, livestock and field producers. Major duties include reviewing organic system plans and inspection reports, writing compliance letters and assisting farmers with the certification process.

Reports to: Certification Director

Responsibilities include:

- Review certification applications, inspection reports and supporting documentation and determine compliance status for processing and maple applicants assigned by supervisor
- Assign inspections for processing applicants and for maple applicants assigned by supervisor
- Provide information to persons requesting organic certification and respond to producer requests for information regarding their certification
- Serve as primary contact for processing applicants and with maple applicants assigned by supervisor
- Participate in VOF Staff meetings
- Support the development and maintenance of certification forms and documents including information materials to aid producers with NOP compliance
- Assist with Review Committee work and attend meetings
- Maintain an understanding of the USDA National Organic Program regulations, as well as VOF policy and procedures
- Implement certification policies and procedures
- Conduct inspections of operations requesting certification, as needed
- Organize and maintain certification files
- Work as a team to review brand name products for compliance with National List, update product review files and help to substantiate policy
- Track all outstanding adverse actions
- Work with Certification Director to respond to rebuttals and appeals of adverse certification decisions
- Assist with preparation for and attend Inspector Training
- Communicate with inspectors as far as appropriate workload and scheduling inspections
- Assist with preparation for and attend VOF Annual Meeting
- Assist with marketing of certified growers and VOF label in general
- Present certification information to producers and consumers when needed
- Work with technical assistance program to help producers get through certification process smoothly and identify areas of need
- Any other task relevant to these duties or the mission of the organization as assigned by supervisor

Additional NOFA Responsibilities:

- Attend bi-weekly staff meetings
- Assist with preparation for and attend Winter Conference & NOFA Annual Meeting
- Attend Board Meetings when applicable
- Articles for NOFA Notes when needed
- Facilitate a minimum of 2 workshops annually

Qualifications

Knowledge: Knowledge of organic and sustainable agriculture; Knowledge of organic and sustainable farming in Vermont preferred; Knowledge of food science and manufacturing.

Education & Training: Bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience, preferably in Food Science, Agriculture or Environmental Studies; Familiarity with regulatory compliance; Knowledge of organic standards and regulations; Familiarity with certification procedures; Knowledge of food science/food processing.

Skills: Analytical problem solving ability; Ability to manage multiple priorities and perform within deadlines and excellent communication, writing and interpersonal skills; Computer proficiency: word processing, spreadsheets, internet research, databases (Salesforce experience a plus); Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail.

Capabilities: Able to work with minimal supervision while understanding the necessity for communicating and coordinating work efforts with others; Must be able to develop a work plan and perform in a team environment; Must understand and appreciate the importance of extraordinary customer service with a strong interest in and commitment to promoting the goals of NOFA-VT .

Conditions: Minimal physical requirements other than occasional light lifting; Valid driver's license; Moderate statewide and occasional out-of-state travel required.