



## **Job Description: Organic Inspector**

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:** Organic Inspector

**Status:** Consultant

**Contract Rate:** \$25-\$35 an hour based on experience

**Summary Description:** The inspector is responsible for all tasks involved with the certification inspection site visit. An on-site inspection will be assigned by VOF and must be held when an authorized representative of the operation who is knowledgeable about the operation is present and when the land, facilities, and activities that demonstrate compliance or capacity to comply can be observed, except in the case of the assignment of an unannounced inspection

**Reports to:** Certification Director

### **Responsibilities include:**

#### **General**

- Understand the guidelines and policies of Vermont Organic Farmers, LLC and the standards of the National Organic Program and inspect to these standards and guidelines
- Assess the organic system plan and supporting documents provided to the inspector for completeness and accuracy
- Verify during the on-site inspection that the information, including the organic system plan, accurately reflects the practices of the applicant for certification or by the certified operation;
- Verify that prohibited substances have not been and are not being applied to the operation through means which, at the discretion of the certifying agent, may include the collection and testing of soil; water; waste; seeds; plant tissue; and plant, animal, and processed products samples.
- Act as an observer and verifier of the documentation completed by the organic producers
- Evaluate the products raised, harvested, or manufactured for consistency with those requested for certification and all inputs or ingredients used or proposed to be used
- Assess buffer areas and potential sources of contamination
- Evaluate condition of crops, fertility management, and pest management
- Determine producers' understanding of standards and commitment to organic management
- Review operator records and conduct a sample audit to determine compliance with organic standards
- Investigate complaints and violations to protect consumers and support the organic industry by ensuring the integrity of the organic label
- Maintain confidentiality of information gathered on farm visits or through discussions with the Review Committee or Certification Director, this applies to information supplied by the farmer directly and information gathered by visual examination at the farm

### Record keeping

- Complete and submit an inspection report on the forms and in the format provided by VOF. Inspection reports should include observations and verification methods for each control point and fully describe any potential/suspected non-compliances.
- Maintain accurate records for time spent on administration (pre-inspection review, report writing, scheduling), driving time and time on farm
- Communicate with VOF prior to, during, and/or after the inspection to answer questions and resolve unanticipated issues

### Training

- Participate in trainings on VOF policies and forms
- Complete International Organic Inspectors Association training within a year of hire
- Complete 12 hours of annual professional development

### Qualifications

*Knowledge:* Knowledge of diverse organic and sustainable agriculture; Knowledge of organic and sustainable farming in Vermont preferred; Background in national organic certification program a plus

*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 procedure; Knowledge of food science/food processing

*Skills:* Strong interviewing and investigative skills; Excellent communication and writing skills; Strong interpersonal skills, with a pleasant and non-combative personality; Computer proficiency: word processing, spreadsheets, internet research, databases; Excellent organizational skills; Attention to detail

*Capabilities:* Ability to maintain accurate records and file systems documenting inspection visits and reports; Able to work with minimal supervision while understanding the necessity for communicating and coordinating work efforts with others; Understands and appreciates importance of extraordinary customer service; Strong interest in and commitment to promoting the goals of NOFA-VT

*Conditions:* Physical requirements include ability to walk long distances over rough terrain; Occasional light lifting; A valid driver's license and reliable means of transportation throughout the state