



## **Program Manager Position Announcement**

California FarmLink seeks a Program Manager to work full-time at the organization's headquarters in Sebastopol. The Program Manager's primary function is to: allocate organizational resources to advance the organization's mission, effectively serve clients and report on activities in a manner that ensures contractual obligations are met.

California FarmLink is a non-profit organization working to promote family farming and preserve farmland by providing a variety of services to farmers designed to help transition farms from one generation to the next. These services include facilitating connections between aspiring farmers and retiring farmers and promoting the use of innovative farm financing strategies. The majority of the organization's activity focuses on helping beginning farmer entrepreneurs secure land and financing to achieve their goals. FarmLink has three regional offices and offers services directly through professional staff and through collaborative partnerships. California FarmLink is funded through a range of sources including government contracts; foundation and corporate grants and program revenue. Key partnerships include organizations in the agricultural, conservation and micro-enterprise communities. FarmLink offers a casual atmosphere and a quick pace of activity.

### **Responsibilities are specifically defined within, but not limited to, the following functions.**

- A. Manage financial operations of California FarmLink by: monitoring and adjusting income and expenditures to assure budget compliance; and coordinating with bookkeeper and accountant to maintain records as defined by standard accounting practice; and working with the Executive Director to prepare the annual budget;
- B. Assist with development of Strategic and Annual plans;
- C. Recruit, screen, hire, train, supervise and evaluate staff who facilitate the implementation of FarmLink programs. In cooperation with regional program coordinators develop and monitor individualized annual and monthly work plans to ensure projects are moving forward based on grant commitments and FarmLink's Strategic Plan and Annual Plans;
- D. Prepare, review and monitor contracts and memorandums of understanding with partner organizations and consultants; and review communications and oversight from regulatory agencies and maintain compliance with state and federal regulations (i.e. annual forms with the Attorney General);
- E. Prepare project specific reports as needed to meet funder requirements and deadlines;
- F. Prepare an annual report;
- G. Maintain compliance with state and federal regulations;
- H. Travel to meetings and conferences as necessary to represent the organization and meet job responsibilities. This may include travel outside the Sonoma County region requiring approximately 10 overnight stays per year; and
- I. Other duties as assigned, these are expected to include: leading evaluation of programs and staff; facilitating staff meetings; monitoring administration of benefits; representing California FarmLink at events and meetings; and monitoring web-site content.

**Strong Candidates Will Have:**

- At least 5 years of experience in multi-grant funded non-profit organizations, including experience supervising professional staff.
- Demonstrated experience in managing and preparing budgets.
- Familiarity with foundation and government reporting requirements.
- Ability to pay careful attention to detail; and
- A solid team attitude, the ability to facilitate interpersonal communication and get along with people; and
- Strong computer skills and aptitude.

In addition experience in the following fields will be valuable for individuals in the position and considered positively in the application process: agriculture, micro-enterprise, real estate, conservation, and serving low-income and diverse populations.

**Terms:**

Employees will be eligible to receive health benefits after 6 months. At that time 50% of health benefits for qualified dependents will be covered by California FarmLink. After one year of employment, employee will be eligible to have 6% of base-salary paid into a Simplified Employee Pension Plan on behalf of the employee. California FarmLink is an equal opportunity employer.

**Salary/Compensation:** The Program Manager shall receive a salary in the range of \$45,000 - \$52,000. The position classification will be "Exempt". Benefits include three weeks of paid vacation time per year that begin accruing upon being hired as a paid employee. Employees will be paid for the following official holidays: New Years Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving (two day), and two days for personal and/or religious purposes. Employee will accrue 4 hours of paid personal time ('sick leave') per month. The Program Manager will report to the Executive Director.

**How to Apply:**

Interested applicants should mail a copy of their resume to the California FarmLink office at: California FarmLink, P.O. Box 2224, Sebastopol, CA 95473. For questions about the application process interested individuals may contact Linda Peterson at the FarmLink office at (707) 829-1691. Interviews are expected to be scheduled beginning the first week of September. Applications received after September 10th will only be considered if no excellent candidates have been found by that date.

## **Background on California FarmLink:**

Approximately 30% of California Farmers are at least 65 years old. This percentage has increased steadily for more than a decade. California farmers 65 years old and older outnumber those under the age of 35 by an 8 to 1 ratio. As the saying goes, there are two ways to get into farming: marry in or inherit. The number of well trained individuals committed to starting their own small farms is high, but land prices and down payment requirements are prohibitive. Considering the role of family farms as the backbone of sustainable rural communities, it is essential that we facilitate the entry of new, skilled and committed individuals into farming. The opportunity to assist California's farmers of tomorrow is far too important to be left to a random process of "marry or inherit".

California FarmLink was established in 1999 as an independent non-profit organization. Until that time there had been no simple way for aspiring farmers to find comprehensive information on strategies to secure land, farm business plans, government loan programs, or sellers willing to assist a buyer (i.e. installment sales or carrying a second mortgage). Similarly, farmers of retirement age have not had a single, accessible source to turn to regarding the interrelationships between conservation easements, estate planning, annuities, and lease-options transactions. Knowledge of these techniques can make the difference between a smooth transition and crisis leading to a "fire-sale".

In addition to providing technical assistance, California FarmLink links beginning farmers to opportunities to access land including connections to unrelated retiring farmers. This program works as follows: landowners and aspiring farmers complete a questionnaire describing their goals, situations and resource needs. Completed questionnaires are entered into a CRM system (a 'Client Relations Management' system, is similar to a database) and matched with potential prospects. California FarmLink staff then screen each initial match for common goals and interests, as well as geographical considerations. Retiring farmers/landowners are provided names of a few potential links. FarmLink then offers to facilitate a face-to-face meeting and helps develop a plan of action. FarmLink works with people involved in all types of crops and livestock, and various cultivation and husbandry techniques.

FarmLink conducts numerous trainings, provides technical assistance directly and through subsidized professional consultants. California FarmLink established the nation's first Individual Development Account for agriculture. The program matches savings of beginning farmers to help them gain land and other capital expenditures. FarmLink operated the Farm Opportunities Loan Program which since 2006 has committed approximately \$400,000 in financing to beginning farmers who would otherwise have difficulty accessing credit. The loan program is implemented in cooperation with California Coastal Rural Development Corporation.

More information on the group can be found at [www.californiafarmlink.org](http://www.californiafarmlink.org).