

Seven Seeds Farm 2017 Work-study Application

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Thanks for your interest in work-study at [Seven Seeds Farm](#). This is much more than a job; it is a chance to apprentice at a mature 21 year old permaculture farm, to learn from a recognized leader in natural farming, permaculture and seed saving, and to gain the tools and perspective to build a positive future for yourself, agriculture and our society. This is an opportunity to embark on a journey of becoming a person of place and re-skilling yourself in order to be relevant and useful where ever you are. If you are just beginning on your path of earth-based living we will help to open many doors towards self discovery and valuable skills and self mastery.

By working hard and learning together we can make the values that stand behind Seven Seeds a reality and co-create a beautiful community experience while doing it!

We strive to run a productive and efficient farm while giving our work-study apprentices a meaningful agricultural and cultural experience. Jobs here can be repetitive and physically demanding. This is part of the agricultural experience!

Our apprenticeship program is as follows:

You offer:

- 4 days work per week. Your position typically begins April 1st and extends through the arc of the growing and harvest season to the end of October. The rhythm of work varies depending on many factors. Some days we work 10 hours, others 6. Because this is not a traditional job, our pace can sometimes be intense, or it can be a bit more relaxed - we enjoy sharing community practice once a week, and we may stop for swim breaks or frisbee games with the kids without checking the clock. There are occasionally options to stay on over the winter, although our housing is limited.
- A positive attitude and recognition that all life is sacred.
- Honesty & maturity to participate in weekly meetings, maintain consistency and accountability, and self-manage working alone.
- A willingness to work hard as a team.
- Physical and emotional stamina, patience and diligence are required.
- And an understanding that we are attempting to function outside the industrial sphere of society and to model the functions of a farm within a whole-system agrarian village.
- An interest in engaging in your time here as a mentorship relationship.
- Applicants need to be enthusiastic about and dedicated to learning, hard working, solution-oriented, and dedicated to functional communication. It is helpful if applicants have some experience in some aspects of the work on the eco-homestead, but it is not required.
- We will circle once per week for a heart circle to help maintain a good feeling amongst us all. Participants agree to ground rules around compassionate

communication.

- You will help with farm tasks, animal chores, homestead maintenance, and event preparation. Some jobs will be challenging and not very glamorous (welcome to the natural world!). A good attitude, humility and patience go a long way for all of us.
- We will work together to help maintain our common spaces as clean, organized, welcoming places for all. Simple attention to the little details like this are quite helpful at averting challenging situations. We ask that you abstain from any substances that may impair performance during work/learning time. Also, smoking shall not take place in public areas.
- We find that sharing lunch on the days that we work together, so that we ask that you cook lunch 1 day/week for oneself and others with garden food & basic bulk communal.

We provide the following:

- Simple housing. We make available to our interns one of two retrofitted school buses that have electricity, cold running water, kitchens with 4 burner propane stove/ovens, beds, wood stoves, and more. Then there is a special 16x24' tree house with running water and a stove. You have access to a solar shower or an indoors showering facility, laundry/washing machine, phone and high speed Internet
- In season farm fruits, vegetables, eggs, meat, goat milk and herbs
- Access to bulk ordering of staples like oats, rice, beans and olive oil
- Bathing in outdoor solar showers, or our bath house if it's rainy
- Access to our extensive sustainability library
- Informal education in the field. We try as much as possible to all work together to facilitate dialogue while working.
- Classes with other organic farms offered through the Rogue Farm Corps Cooperative Intern Education Program, our regional cooperative program, which includes other vegetable farms, a goat dairy and a bison ranch.
- A weekly heart circle
- Participation in community ceremony and practice of yoga, Qi gong, dance
- Enrollment in the spring and fall 5-day Seed Academy, weekend Permaculture intensives and all farm tours
- One on one mentorship, goal setting, coaching and feedback with Don Tipping
- An opportunity to receive the sublime, immaterial benefits of living in daily communion with seeds, soil, plants and animals, drinking some of the best water in world, breathing some of the cleanest air, and connecting with the old growth ecology that surrounds our farm
- An invitation to participate in field trips to the ocean to harvest seaweed, local ceremonies, wilderness hikes, local conscious micro-festivals and more.

About Seven Seeds Farm

Founded in 1996, our home farm on the north slope of Grayback Mountain is 40 acres, with 10 acres in cultivation and 30-forested acres. Of the 15 acres we farm, 4 are in annual row crops, 3 in orchard and perennials like raspberries and 8 in pasture and hay. We collaborate with a few other farms to produce seed on their land as well. 2017 is the eighth year for our own retail seed company, [Siskiyou Seeds](#). In addition to growing seed on commercial contract for other seed companies we sell seed directly to

gardeners. As a result of this, there is a large diversity of tasks, from filling seed packets, to performing germination and vigor tests, variety trials, plant breeding work and generally experiencing a vast diversity of germplasm. We also vend at one farmer's market a week in Ashland and participate in a cooperative CSA that we helped create 14 years ago. Our CSA has about 250+ members whom we deliver to in Ashland, Grants Pass, and Medford and in between. This CSA has 10 member farms many of which also offer internships, so we will be sharing in a series of night time classes taught by these farmers on a variety of topics. We produce a wide variety of things on the farm including but not limited to: seeds, eggs, lamb, wool, vegetables, berries, tree fruits, nuts, acorns, medicinal herbs, dried fruit, small grains, firewood, lumber, basketry coppice, fish, poles, wild mushrooms and more!

Why do we do this?

Seven Seeds Farm is a practical response to growing life in a regenerative way that is inspired and quite literally perpetuated by nature. Ultimately we farm to raise healthy humans and weave ourselves into the ecology of the landscape, so we function biocentrically with a goal towards the thriving of the human soul at the center.

What To Expect

Generally, we will work on harvesting fruits and vegetables one day per week for half a day and the other half will be tending to these and seed crops. Two days per week will be tending to or harvesting vegetable seed crops. One or more day (of 4) will be working on building projects and other permaculture land stewardship projects like animal care, ecoforestry, perennial care, water harvesting, and other things. (We are open to suggestion.) We are in the midst of building a timber framed, hand peeled log, bathhouse & sauna addition to our new seed barn. I am very passionate about working in the woods and making things from forest materials. You will be allowed to join with our Life Stream Folk School for **one of the 4 half day classes** per week. Also you can participate in our Spring and Fall Seed Academy 5-day on farm intensives. The dates for the Spring Seed Academy are May 3-7, 2017.

About The Bioregion and Community

Our farm is in the small town of Williams, 7 miles from the California border (but a 90 minute drive due to the mountainous and roadless forest around us). The ocean is a 2-hour drive and we generally go and harvest seaweed for food, fertilizer and fun at least once per summer. Williams is in the Applegate Valley, a tributary of the mighty Rogue River. Our land is surrounded on 3 sides by BLM public land, with lots of mature and old growth forest nearby. We are also adjacent to the Red Buttes Wilderness Area and the Kangaroo Roadless Area with beautiful mountain lakes and hiking opportunities.

The land here is a diverse mosaic of dense coniferous forest (fir, pine, cedar, yew), mixed conifers and hardwoods (oak, madrone, pine), pine oak savannah and brush fields (manzanita, ceanothus, oak). The climate is a summer desert and a winter rainforest. Our rainfall averages 40 inches per year coming from September through May, with very little outside this window. However within 50 miles in either direction rainfall averages from 8" to 150" per year. Microclimates mean everything! It can be quite rainy in April and May and even June, although 90 degrees in May is not unheard of. Summer thunderstorms happen occasionally, maybe once or twice per summer. We can get frost until June 1st and then again about October 1st. June July and August can be as hot as 105 degrees Fahrenheit, although 85 to 90 degrees is more common. We

have multiple ponds, which offer excellent swimming and fishing. Summer nights are cool, often from 55 to 45 degrees. Even when it's really hot we always get afternoon breezes from the mountains. We are located on the north-facing slope of a 7,000-foot mountain, which routinely has snow until July or August.

Williams is a small town (pop. 3,000). We have 3 stores (one has lots of organics and bulk foods), a taqueria with some organic food and live music, a "green" Grange hall with music, dances, yoga, zumba and more, a library, a post office, bar and a diner.

That's about it. However, it is also home to the Herb Pharm (largest organic herbal tincture makers in the USA) and numerous other organic farmers & ranchers. Many people come to tour our farm, which has become one of the best examples of a small-scale permaculture farm in the northwest (according to Jude Hobbs, Frank Morton, Tom Ward, Andrew Millison, Pandora Thomas and others). We are fairly social people and have occasional parties, potlucks, dances, and numerous interesting drop in visitors. For a rural community, Williams is fairly happening. For more action, the highly progressive town of Ashland is an hour drive east.

The stewards of the farm currently include:

- Don Tipping, 44 years old, a Michigan native, then California transplant, who has lived in Williams for the past 21 years. He has been farming for the past 24+ years, managing his own farm for the past 23, practicing Biodynamics for as long. He has a passion for growing food own food, and farming has been a vehicle to this ends. Self-taught at a wide variety of homesteading skills such as basketry, butchering, felting, food preservation, carpentry, forestry, music, tanning, etc. www.sevenseedsfarm.com & www.siskiyouseeds.com & www.organicseedcoop.com

- Don's Boys: Wali (14), and Jasper (10) who are a big part of our day-to-day life here having been conceived, born and raised here. Obviously, an interest in being around young children is an asset to us. Jasper especially loves to participate with the farm crew and is highly entertaining. Wali on the other hand, being a teenager, finds his own ways to participate which we celebrate when it happens.

- Mika Conway (26) – in his fourth year here, he brings expertise and passion for the maintainance of the perennial landscape here, the food forests and the new nursery project. He hails from the Adirondaks of New York

- Others that have lived here or live nearby who interact working for the farm and who have become a vital element of the farm organism.

We are a family farm. Our workers are part of an extended family community here, just as our animals are (10 sheep, 23 ducks, 55 chickens, bees, seasonal turkeys and maybe some cattle come spring for milking). A willingness to participate in all aspects of this farm family is key to understanding what makes a family farm work, so support with child care, animal care, household chores (we will all use our house a lot) are always welcome. This opportunity is much more than simply a job farming – you'll do much more than hoeing here. I disdain monotony and I don't expect anyone else to love it either – so our work days are varied and I try and follow the Mediterranean/ Mexican siesta model of start early and take a long lunch depending on the heat (2 hours or so).

We try and eat together a few lunches or nights a week, generally on the days we work together. We eat largely what we grow. This includes animals we raise for meat. We do all butchering ourselves and also eat wild deer, wild turkeys and fish from our

ponds. In my experience permaculture systems and animals are inseparable, whereas grains require much tillage and effort. We do not require you to share our diet, but if any of this makes you uncomfortable, we should talk about it first. We have had many vegetarians and vegans live here who almost always leave as omnivores. It is my observation that vegetarianism or veganism is somewhat of a rite of passage in our industrial culture – a rejection of factory farming and inhumane animal husbandry, but through our own personal quest for sustainability which has included growing soybeans, grains, you name it – we have learned that animals have an intrinsic role in agriculture systems and that there is no life without death.

We will try and have a weekly check in to hear how everyone is doing (physically, emotionally or otherwise – whatever you want to share). This also gives us all a chance to re-evaluate our arrangement and fine-tune it as we go along. We form a sort of intentional community over the season. Being able to communicate your needs and respectfully honoring the needs of others is important to your experience here.

It is difficult for farms to be financially successful. Labor costs are a considerable part of our expenses. If our workers don't "go for it" the farm will, quite literally, not survive. The dominant culture eschews hard work, yet eats food, hence it is important that you have a passion for the agrarian lifestyle. Farm work requires a disciplined focus, a strong body, and lots of energy reserves. We expect a lot from our workers and in return we expect you will get a lot from working here.

Living here on this land entails a commitment to a vision and ideals that are much larger than any individual. Seven Seeds Farm has come to represent a possible future reality in action - the possibility of sustainable human settlement. This means that we use our imagination a lot here and use techniques (often having to invent them) that are unconventional and experimental. This is about having a conversation with the land and the unseen realms that inhabit it, living in day to day integration with subtle earth forces and her inhabitants. As Rudolf Steiner explained repeatedly, we are incapable of understanding the complexity of nature through use of our sense perception alone, we must involve and cultivate our super-sensible perception. The most profound answers to the challenge of living harmoniously with the land are not to be found in a book. Rather, they are suggested to us through dreams, animal behavior, pattern recognition, spiritual inquiry and an artistic vantage point. I feel that, increasingly, this is our greatest offering to a prospective participant in the Seven Seeds Farm organism.

Tell Us About You

Many of these questions have no right answers. They help inform us how you would best fit into the farm.

- Name: _____
- Phone: _____
- Address: _____

- Email: _____
- Birthdate: _____

If you can attach a photo, we appreciate it.

- **How did you hear about Seven Seeds Farm and why do you want to work here?**
- **What sort of education +/- or occupational training do you have (both agricultural and not)?**
- **What previous agricultural or horticultural experience have you had?**
- **What do you plan to be doing in five years? One year? (hint – this is probably the most important one!)**
- **Please describe any physical limitations that might affect your ability to perform certain tasks?**
- **Do you have a clean driving record? If not please explain.**
- **Do you practice any regular physical training, exercise, or sport? (Tai Chi, running, yoga, swimming, etc.)**
- **Do you smoke? If yes, how much?**
- **Do you drink? If yes, how much?**
- **Do you use recreational drugs? If yes how often?**
- **What power tools or machinery are you proficient using?**
- **What are other relevant skills or gifts, which you have?**
- **Do you enjoy spending time with children? What's your idea of a good time with an 10 year old? An 14 year old?**
- **What are your challenges in a work environment? Or in community?**
- **Have you ever had a job that was physically demanding? If so, what did you do? How would you rank your endurance when performing physically demanding jobs? 1 – 5 (1 = low, 5 = very high)**

- **Have you ever had a job that requires manual dexterity? If so, what? How would you rank your speed on work that requires manual dexterity? 1 – 5 (1 = slow, 5 = very fast) have you ever done jobs that require doing the same thing for hours at a time? If so, what was the job? How would you rate your efficiency when doing repetitive work (1 – 5 (1 = low, 5 = high))?**

- **Which best describes how you approach quality standards on the job?**

- **Do you prefer working alone, with others, or both? Explain. Do you prefer to take charge and direct others, receive direction, or a mix of both? Explain.**

- **Have you ever been self-employed? If yes, what was the business?**

- **Please list social or community activities that you are or have been involved in.**

- **Swimming in ponds and river trips is usually clothing optional, are you comfortable with nudity in those contexts?**

- **What are you most excited about learning? Least Excited?**

- **We like to share meals periodically, what describes your diet? Do you have any dietary restrictions or allergies?**

- **When are you available to start work?**

- **Do you need to finish working here by a certain date? Or, can you commit to staying through the end of October?**

- **Are there dates (beyond weekends) that you know you will need to have off work?**

- **Is there anything else you want us to know about you?**

Please list 3 references:

1) Employer:

Phone:

Job Title:

Dates of Employment:

Wage
Reason For Termination:.

2) Employer:
Phone:
Job Title:
Dates of Employment:
Wage:
Reason For Termination:

3) Personal References:
Name:
Relationship:
Phone:

Signature of
Applicant: _____ **Date:** _____

If we reach an agreement that your involvement with Seven Seeds Farm is the best thing for us all, then we will ask you to sign a Work Study Contract to clarify expectations & agreements. Thank you.