

Three Rivers Community Farm  
**Apprenticeship Program—Policies & Expectations 2011**

**Three Rivers Community Farm:** is a sole proprietorship owned by Amy Cloud and Segue Lara started in January 2007. The farm is located at 22867 Chautauqua Road and is comprised of 12 acres leased from Principia College. Six acres are in organic vegetable production while the remaining six is in cover and provides pasture for the farm's six pigs and fifty laying hens. Three Rivers Community Farm has a CSA membership of 175 families and we also sell at the Tower Grove & Maplewood farmers markets.

**Amy Cloud & Segue Lara:** are the owners of Three Rivers Community Farm. They are responsible for all aspects of managing the farm. Amy & Segue can be reached at 618-374-9470. We do not have a cell phone, so please leave a message if we are not home.

**Apprenticeship Program:** Our apprenticeship is a hands-on working/learning experience designed to provide general exposure to the day-to-day operations of an organic vegetable farm. We accept students from all backgrounds; from the inexperienced looking to explore agriculture as a career option to the experienced looking for a new approach to agriculture. As such, each apprenticeship will have different challenges and take on a different character. We will tailor each program to the expressed needs of each participant. Possible focuses may be soil health, starting a small business, marketing organic produce, local food system issues, managing weed and insect pressures, or just a general exposure to running a small organic farm. It is essential that participants make their needs clear and well known. In the first week a letter of intent will be drawn up by the participant containing expectations for learning.

**Orientation:** During the first week of the apprenticeship we will conduct an orientation for all the apprentices. At this orientation we will go over safety policies, farm policies, buildings, grounds, and equipment. We will individually review each letter of intent and formulate the apprentices' goals for the internship thereafter. We will also start figuring out how to have a good time together!!

**Written Materials:** All apprentices are given written learning materials. These materials include crop plans, seed orders, planting schedules, budgets, business plans. In addition there is a farm library from which apprentices are welcome to borrow books, magazines, and DVDs.

**Farm Visit Program:** Four visits to nearby farms will be planned during the apprenticeship. These farms will be determined with the interests of the apprentices in mind. They may include other CSA's, specialty farms, orchards, apiaries, and livestock operations.

**Career Development:** Throughout the apprenticeship, participants are encouraged to develop future plans for their own farm projects. It is considered part of your apprenticeship, if you choose, for Amy & Segue to review and critique these plans. In

addition, all possible steps will be taken to help apprentices find future apprenticeships, jobs, letters of recommendation, etc. Future mentoring and consultation for all apprentices is considered part of the apprenticeship.

## **Compensation:**

**Monthly Salary:** A stipend of \$1000 a month is paid to each first-year apprentices. Stipends are paid on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Tax withholdings are taken out of this stipend.

**Housing:** We do not provide housing, however, we are happy to help you find housing in the Elsayh/Grafton area.

**Lunch at the Farmhouse:** Monday through Friday a prepared lunch is provided by Amy & Segue. Apprentices are responsible for cooking one lunch a week. We aim to use as much farm food as possible and the meals are primarily vegetarian.

**Farm Food:** Apprentices have full access to extra produce from the farm for personal use. In addition, apprentices can help themselves to the eggs produced by the laying hens. Finally, apprentices will be given \$35 worth of Three Rivers farm raised pork at the end of the season.

## **Time Off:**

**Vacation:** Apprentices will be allowed one week paid vacation to be taken between June 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>. Vacations must be taken in a continuous one-week period. Vacation days may not be “saved” and used after that time. Vacation time will be established in April.

**Personal Time:** It is expected that there will be some need during the season for every apprentices to take some personal time, whether for weddings, car repairs, dentist appointments, or other personal needs. Each apprentice is allowed up to 2 personal days each season. There is no need to make up work for personal days and they do not need to be taken as “full days.” It is expected that Amy & Segue will be given ample notice about the need for personal time and that opportunities will be taken when possible to make personal time happen at convenient times for the farm schedule. If more days are needed, they will need to be cleared ahead of time with the farm manager.

**Sick Time:** Everyone’s going to get sick. When you’re sick, you don’t work! If you miss more than seven days of work during the season due to illness, there will need to be some discussion with Amy & Segue whether this apprenticeship is the right situation for you. You do not need to make up work for sick days.

## **Responsibilities & Policies:**

**Work Schedule:** We strive to provide an intensive experience in meeting the needs of a working farm, while also providing ample down time. Apprentices are expected to work five days a week or forty-five hours on the farm. Schedules will vary according to weather and farm needs. Typical schedule is Monday through Friday: 7AM-Noon, 1-5 PM. Lunches are one hour, Noon-1PM.

**General Work:** The apprenticeship is, at its core, a working-learning experience. Our primary method for learning how to manage an organic farm is by performing tasks within our farm system. In general, apprentices will work along side the farmers on the farm tasks for the day. Apprentices are given an overall task list each week on Monday and specific projects will be assigned based on the apprentice's interests and expressed needs. Apprentices will gain experience in the greenhouse, with our livestock, planting, weeding, irrigating and harvesting produce.

**Chores:** Apprentices are on a rotating chore schedule for the greenhouse, livestock, and lunch preparation.

- watering the greenhouse during the week (during work time).
- for lunch preparation and clean-up one day a week at the farmhouse.
- making sure the pigs and chickens have water and feed.

**Farmers Markets:** The farmers markets are open at hours that conflict with the regular work schedule. Apprentices will be responsible for attending one market a month, alternating between the Wednesday and Saturday markets starting in May. Comp time will be given the following week to make up for the extra hours.

**Tractor Operation:** Every apprentice will be trained in the safe use and maintenance of our farm tractor, if they choose.

**Visitors:** Working and non-working visitors are welcome at the farm anytime.

**Member interactions:** As Three Rivers Community Farm is a public place and we depend on our farm members (and prospective farm members) for our livelihood, all apprentices must be professional, polite and helpful to all people who come to the farm.

**General Demeanor:** It is expected that all apprentices will be prompt, dressed appropriately, and professional in their attitude. A good sense of humor is always appreciated!

**Tools/Clothes:** The farm provides harvest knives and daily hand tools. Apprentices must provide any other desired tools or clothes (rain boots, rain gear, hats).

**Safety Policies:** We will go over safety policies during the program orientation. All apprentices are required to follow safety policies at all times.

**Farm Vehicles:** Apprentices are trained in the safe use of farm vehicles and are fully covered by insurance for their operation.

**Drugs and Alcohol:** There are no illegal drugs permitted on the farm property at any time. There is no alcohol permitted on the property at any time, except during specific farm functions. It is unacceptable to work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**Grievance Process:** If any grievances arise it is expected that the first course of action for all apprentices will be to speak directly with Amy & Segue. If there is still a problem a third party will be brought in to try and resolve the issue. Finally, if the issue cannot be resolved, dismissal will occur.

**Evaluation:** Apprentices will go through a mid-season evaluation with Amy Cloud sometime between July 1 and August 15. The evaluation will consist of an individual consultation with Amy to see how well we are all meeting the expectations of the apprenticeship program. The evaluation will be multi-directional with apprentice and farm manager evaluating one another.