



Northern Roots - Grower Job Description

Position: Grower

Salary: £23,500 - £25,000 FTE, pro rata for part time working

Contract: 10 month fixed term with potential for extension, subject to funding.

Place of Work: Northern Roots, Kings Road, Oldham, OL8 2BJ

Hours: 8am to 4pm, 5 days/wk in summer and 3 days/wk in winter. Days can be discussed and hours adjusted slightly.

Summary:

This is an exciting opportunity to be part of the Northern Roots project. Northern Roots is transforming 160 acres of urban greenspace into a destination for learning, leisure and growing. The project aims to benefit the environment, and to improve the health, well-being and livelihoods of local communities.

The Northern Roots Farm is being established at the beginning of this year with two 18m polytunnels and no-dig beds on our Apiary Meadow. Funding permitting, the farm will expand a further 4 acres from the summer of this year, and in the coming years another 6-acre area has been outlined for expansion. The farm will be run on ecological principles and, initially, will be a horticultural farm. As it expands, we will likely continue to use no-dig methods due to the nature of the land and explore establishing agroforestry alley cropping. In the next few years, we will explore mixed farming as an option, integrating livestock on our less productive areas. We work under nutrient cycling methods but understand the limitations of our land.

The Northern Roots Farm sits in the wider 160-acre site, which runs from Alexandra Park near Oldham town centre to Tameside. This landscape creates a varied wildlife corridor and includes a Site of Biological Importance. Alongside the farm we are developing facilities including a Visitor Centre, Learning Centre, Bike Hub, solar array and swimming pond.

As a Grower, you will work with the rest of our land team including our rangers and social prescribing staff. Much of your day-to-day work will be with the Urban Farm and Landscape Manager.

Your initial focus will be on developing our Apiary Meadow site, which presently includes a cabin with electricity, water, wifi and heating; tool containers; bee hives; composting toilet; two 18m x 5m polytunnels and outdoor growing beds. This area will expand to include an outdoor workshop, drainage and irrigation systems; community seating area and orchard. Over the summer we will begin expanding into our Phase 2 area, a field of 4 acres, which is located in front of what will be our Visitor Centre. The Centre will include spaces such as a farm shop and café; performance space, staff areas and community meeting areas.

Job purpose:

You will work closely with the Urban Farm and Manager to develop the newly established Northern Roots Farm. This is an opportunity to be involved in the early stages of what will be the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park, with potential for contract extension.

Your role will be to implement and feed-into the cropping plan, carrying out growing tasks such as sowing and transplanting crops; irrigation and soil fertility improvement; pest and disease management; and harvesting and packing. You will work with the Urban Farm and Landscape

Manager on these tasks, with additional support by our trainee rangers and volunteers. The work will be varied and you will have the opportunity to provide ideas on the Farm's development. Ideally able to start work as soon as possible.

There will be no line management duties in this role, but you will be asked to supervise volunteers and trainees.

KEY TASKS

1. To work with the Urban Farm and Landscape Manager to develop the newly established Northern Roots Farm.
2. To carry out growing activities such as but not limited to ground preparation, seed propagation, planting out, irrigation, pruning, grafting and harvesting.
3. To carry out processing activities of crops harvested such as weighing and packing. The applicant should be willing to be involved in the delivery of produce, which may be carried out by a Northern Roots bike and trailer or van,
4. Infrastructure build such as putting up polytunnels, fencing and raised beds.
5. To contribute ideas and experience to the Northern Roots Farm project. We are in the first phases of the setting up the Farm and welcome ideas.
6. Recording crop yields and updating recording systems.
7. Help supervise volunteers during weekly sessions.
8. To join in staff meetings and work with the Northern Roots team to collaborate on projects that take place across the charity.
9. Adhere to Northern Root's policies, for example, Health and Safety and safeguarding.
10. Carry out other tasks reasonably requested by Northern Roots.

Holiday entitlement: 25 days' holiday a year (excluding public holidays) pro rata for part time working

Employer Pension Contribution: 3%