

HORTICULTURE OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, coordinates, oversees, and participates in the operations, services, and maintenance activities of the District's farm horticulture unit; provides instructional and administrative support services for the Farm Program; assists students and faculty in the use and operation of farm equipment and materials related to the horticulture unit.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Dean, Natural Sciences and receives technical and functional supervision from the Supervisor, Farm. Provides technical and functional oversight to student workers and hourly staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This classification is responsible for participating in daily operations, services, and maintenance activities of the District's farm horticulture unit. Typical duties include collaborating and implementing weekly, monthly, and annual plans for the unit, assisting students and faculty in the use and operation of farm equipment and materials, and providing instructional support services for the farm program. Employees at this level are required to be fully trained in all procedures related to the assigned area(s) of responsibility, working with a high degree of independent judgment, tact, and initiative. Monitor, identify, scout, recommend, and apply chemicals/pesticides to remedy pest or disease problems. Take chemical inventory and relay need to Supervisor, train staff and students on chemical usage. Keep record and provide Monthly reporting to the County Agriculture Commissioner. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. This class is distinguished from the Supervisor, Farm in that the Supervisor, Farm classification is responsible for organizing, assigning, supervising, and reviewing all work of all staff involved in the Farm Program, under the direction of the Dean.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Coordinates, oversees, and participates in the operations, services, and maintenance activities of the horticulture unit; ensures proper safety and security of the horticulture unit and related facilities, equipment, and grounds; monitors, evaluates, and adjusts activities in response to farm needs; ensures horticulture unit activities comply with established standards, policies, and procedures.
- Collaborates in developing and implements weekly, monthly, and annual plans for the horticulture unit; participates in the development and implementation of methods and procedures for the general care of farm crops and nursery stock.
- Trains and provides work direction and guidance to assigned student workers and staff; prepares work schedules, assigns duties and reviews work for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with established standards and procedures; ensures student and staff understanding of safety practices and procedures.
- Provides instructional support services for the Farm Program; assists students with developing horticulture-farming skills; explains related principles, practices, procedures, methods, materials, terminology, tools, and equipment; participates in demonstrations of farm activities.
- Assists students and faculty in the use and operation of farm equipment and materials related to the horticulture unit; sets up, operates, and demonstrates the use of horticulture farming materials, tools, and equipment; performs minor maintenance and repairs on equipment as needed.

- Oversees, develops, and implements monthly production, propagation, and cultural practices of the farm's plants and crops; monitors and ensures smooth and efficient operations and activities related to the farm's horticulture grounds, facilities, and equipment.
- Assists instructors with the preparation of agricultural exhibits and instructional materials used in Agri-Science laboratory assignments; responds to student inquiries and provides assistance concerning horticulture farming coursework, textbooks, and laboratory manual problems.
- Coordinates, oversees, and participates in planting, fertilizing, irrigating, cutting, and storing plants, crops, and other horticulture farm products; applies necessary pesticides in accordance with established laws and regulations as appropriate.
- Oversees the cultural practices of the horticulture unit; identifies cultural problems; develops and implements related solutions in accordance with state and federal regulations.
- Coordinates the sale of the farm's horticulture products; ensures adequate product availability and coordinates related production activities; develops and arranges delivery schedules; processes and accounts for sales revenue.
- Assists in developing budget figures for the unit; monitors and controls expenditures; monitors inventory levels of horticulture farming supplies and equipment; orders, receives, stores, and maintains adequate inventory levels of supplies and equipment as directed.
- Communicates with District staff, students, and various outside agencies to exchange information and resolve issues or concerns.
- Prepares and maintains various records and reports related to students, crops, plants, materials, inventory, and assigned activities.
- Drives a vehicle to transport farm products as needed.
- Operates safely farm equipment, for example skip loader, tractors, tractor attachments, skid-steer multifunction vehicle, back hoe, and fork lift.
- Learns and applies emerging technologies and, as necessary, to perform duties in an efficient, organized, and timely manner.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Terminology, techniques, equipment, materials, principles, theories, practices, and procedures related to horticulture farming.
- Practices, procedures, and techniques involved in planting, fertilizing, irrigating, cutting, and storing plants, crops, and other horticulture farm products.
- General methods and procedures for preparing course materials used in Agri-Science courses.
- Set-up, operation, demonstration, and maintenance of various tools and equipment used in horticulture farming.
- Basic sales and customer service practices and procedures.
- Methods, practices, and techniques of student learning and instruction.
- Basic principles and practices of providing technical and functional direction and training to assigned staff.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work.
- Record keeping principles and procedures.
- English usage, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, students, and District staff, including individuals of various ages, disabilities, socio-economic and ethnic groups.

Skills & Abilities to:

- Coordinate, oversee, and participate in the operations, services, and maintenance activities of a farm horticulture program.
- Plan, schedule, assign, and oversee activities of assigned staff.
- Inspect the work of others and maintain established quality control standards.
- Train others in proper and safe work procedures.
- Assist students and faculty in the use and operation of farm equipment and materials related to the horticulture unit.
- Coordinate, oversee, and participate in planting, fertilizing, irrigating, cutting, and storing plants, crops, and other horticulture farm products.
- Explain principles, practices, procedures, methods, materials, tools, terminology, and equipment related to horticulture farming.
- Coordinate the sale and delivery of farm horticulture products.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, local and district policies, procedures, and regulations.
- Make accurate business arithmetic computations; accurately process cash transactions.
- Estimate and order required supplies and equipment.
- Establish and maintain a filing, record keeping, and tracking systems.
- Organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and software applications programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Review situations accurately and determine appropriate course of action using judgment according to established policies and procedures.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Operates safely farm equipment, for example skip loader, tractors, tractor attachments, skid-steer multifunction vehicle, back hoe, and fork lift.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience which would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Equivalent to an Associate's degree from a regionally accredited college in agricultural science, horticulture, or a related field and two (2) years of experience with horticulture farming operations and activities.

Licenses and Certifications:

- A valid California Class B driver's license with the appropriate endorsements is required.
- Possess and maintain Qualified Applicator Certificate.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in the field; strength, stamina, and mobility to perform medium to heavy physical work, to operate varied farming and horticulture tools and equipment, and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various District sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. The job involves fieldwork requiring frequent walking in operational areas to identify problems or hazards. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate above-mentioned tools and equipment. Positions in this classification bend, stoop, kneel, reach, and climb to perform work

and inspect work sites. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects, typically weighing 50 pounds, and occasionally heavier with the use of proper equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in the field and are exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, dust, fumes, and allergens, chemicals, hazardous physical substances and fumes and mechanical and/or electrical equipment and machinery. Employees may interact with staff, students, and/or the public in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.