



Senior Associate: Land Access & Farm Business Education (Central California)

Status: Full Time, Exempt

Reports To: Program Manager

Supervisory: Not Applicable

Primary Office: Aptos, CA (with flexibility to work remotely due to COVID-19 workplace policies)

Salary: 50,000 - \$70,000, commensurate with experience

California Farmlink invests in the prosperity of farmers and ranchers through lending, education, and access to land. Farmlink envisions a healthy food system where farmers and ranchers have equitable opportunities to build wealth and conserve natural resources. We value equitable access to opportunity, resilient working landscapes, fairness and accountability, and learning from diverse farmers and ranchers. As a non-profit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), Farmlink has established one of the nation's most robust economic engines to grow sustainable, small farm businesses heralding from low-income rural communities throughout California.

Farmlink is a growing, fast-paced organization made up of energetic professionals dedicated to making change in their community, and the world. We strive to foster a collaborative, team-oriented workplace that supports innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to small farm business development. The ideal candidate for this position will be a self-starter, with a track record of working independently and creatively to confront complex social and economic challenges. They will be personable and team-oriented, and demonstrate experience working with a diverse array of individuals and institutions to solve problems. Farmlink seeks inspired people with a passion for delving into issues of sustainability and social equity as related to California agriculture, and a drive to tackle society's "wicked problems" that require collaborative solutions.

JOB SUMMARY:

The Senior Associate is a critical member of Farmlink's **Land Access and Farm Business Education Program** team, consisting of land tenure experts, farm business educators and technical assistance providers. This position will primarily help develop and execute Farmlink's "**Wealth Building**" **Strategic Initiative**, an approach that integrates land and capital access with business training to support success among Latina and Latino entrepreneurs in Central Coast communities. The Senior Associate will assist with developing and conducting both Spanish- and English-language adult education programs for small business owners and emerging farm entrepreneurs, and work one-on-one with farmers to approach business challenges related to land tenure and capital management. Serving as an initial "point of contact" for farmers and landholders in the Central Coast and Central Valley, the Senior Associate will manage relationships with farmers by assessing their business goals and priorities, and facilitating technical assistance tailored to farmer needs, from Farmlink's land and capital access teams.

Priority business development areas and educational themes within the "Wealth Building" Strategic Initiative include: credit management and loan readiness, financial capability and credit counseling, land access and tenure facilitation, and planning for land purchase or business transition. The Senior Associate will also assist with an ongoing Land Access Campaign to attract appropriate land options for small farm business owners seeking to rent or purchase property, and utilize Farmlink's "land portal" to link farmers to land opportunities.

The Senior Associate will assist other staff as needed in program design and management, communications, and evaluation of programs.

FarmLink is seeking qualified professionals to serve farm businesses throughout priority Central Coast counties (Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito and San Mateo), as well as adjacent areas in the Central Valley. This position may be located in any county in the Central Coast or Central Valley with frequent expected trips to the Salinas Valley and headquarters in Aptos, CA once COVID-19 workplace policies are lifted.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Land Access and Land Linking

- Provide farmers and ranchers with information on land leasing, land purchasing/sales and alternative land tenure options;
- Assist farmers with negotiating secure, fair leases and finding land for lease or sale; facilitate support to resolve tenure-related issues that may arise between farmers and landowners;
- Assist in maintaining and updating an online hub of land for lease or sale and in connecting landowners and farmers;
- Outreach to and educate landholders about what it means to lease land to a farmer and help both parties to set and manage expectations;
- Create and update resources that will support farmers and landholders in the process of seeking and leasing land, farm purchase/sale, and succession planning; and
- Maintain records of client interactions using Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software, including Salesforce and Outcome Tracker.

Education and Outreach

- In coordination with farm business experts, assist with adult education program and content development, including curriculum design, lesson planning, and program evaluation;
- Organize and present group education offerings at workshops, seminars, and conferences--in person and remotely;
- Maintain and cultivate a network of experienced farm service professionals, including attorneys, CPAs, family communications specialists, realtors, insurance providers, and business consultants; who can act as referral partners for clients and assist in educational programs;
- Provide farmers with information on farm financing options including FarmLink's loan program, preparing for financing, and credit education;
- Outreach to agricultural landholders and landholding institutions (i.e. regional land trusts) to increase FarmLink's capacity to offer quality land opportunities;
- Outreach to beginning and underserved farmers to increase awareness of FarmLink programs;
- Collaborate with existing partner organizations and staff to provide holistic support for producers across California.
- Contribute to communications that highlight program accomplishments and client narratives.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to communicate the spoken and written word in **both Spanish and English**, with excellent presentation skills in **both Spanish and English**.
- Ability to provide excellent customer service to clients, via phone, email and in-person.
- Good organizational skills, exceptional attention to detail, well disciplined, meets deadlines, and a self-starter.
- Ability to handle multiple tasks and frequent interruptions.
- Ability to handle stressful situations with calmness and courtesy, while meeting deadlines.
- Demonstrated experience in project management, including "solutions-oriented" problem solving to execute project activities toward timely and successful completion.
- Knowledge and experience using MS Word, Excel and Google Suite tools, as well as basic accounting procedures. Knowledge and experience using CRM software (i.e. Salesforce) a plus.
- 2-4 years of experience **handling personal/business financial information with the appropriate discretion**, ideally in a farm business setting.

- Minimum Associate Degree (B.S. a plus) in business administration, agriculture, community development, environmental studies or other related field, or the equivalent combination of education and work experience.
- Familiarity with agriculture, real estate, agricultural/small business lending, US Department of Agriculture programs, and/or community development finance experience a plus.

California FarmLink offers a generous benefits plan, including health insurance after 60 days, employer contribution to 403b retirement plan after 1 year, paid vacation starting at 10 days per year, paid professional development opportunities, and a family-friendly, flexible work environment. California FarmLink maintains a drug-free workplace and is an equal opportunity employer. We seek candidates that represent the diversity of the communities we serve, and strongly encourage you to apply.

How To Apply

Please email a thoughtful cover letter explaining your interest in the position and organization, accompanied with resume to: info@cafarmlink.org. No phone calls please. FarmLink will receive applications until the position is filled. Applications accepted on a rolling basis; position open until filled; priority screening date is October 8, 2020.

Who We Are

California FarmLink is a statewide nonprofit whose mission is to invest in the prosperity of farmers and ranchers through lending, education, and access to land. For more info, please visit: www.cafarmlink.org