

Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District

Position Description for _____ Urban Agriculture / Education Specialist

Nature and Purpose of Position

This position, which shall be known as Urban Agriculture/Education Specialist of the Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD), located in Zanesville, Ohio, has been created under the authority of Section 940 of Ohio Revised Code (ORC). This position is the direct responsibility of the District Administrator and the Board of Supervisors.

The is a combined position with the purpose of supporting the sustainable growth of urban agriculture in the City of Zanesville and Muskingum County (~75%) and promoting and educating all Muskingum County residents, both youth and adults, on natural resource topics (~25%).

This is a full-time, 40 hour per week position, subject to a 180-day probationary period. Normal work hours will be 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. with one-half (1/2) hour for lunch. The position earns vacation time (eligible to take vacation after one year of employment), sick leave, and paid holidays and Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Medical/health care benefits are available with this position (medical, dental, vision and life).

Attendance at evening meetings and weekend events is required due to the nature and seasonality of the position. This includes garden workdays, educational events, volunteer events, timing of harvest, etc.

Qualifications

Minimum is an associate degree in agriculture, sustainable agriculture, agriculture education, agriculture communication, community leadership or development, or a closely related field of study. An equivalent combination of training and experience will be considered.

Applicant must have outstanding communication and time management skills, be highly organized, be willing to get their hands dirty in the community gardens, have basic knowledge of agriculture/gardening, and be able proficient at presenting educational programming.

General Duties and Functions

The position incumbent shall:

1. Demonstrate regular and predictable attendance.
2. Comply with all MSWCD policies, including Employment (Personnel) Policy, Board Policies, Position Description and Standards of Performance.
3. Be physically capable to make field visits and traverse rough, steep and uneven terrain as necessary. Be able to lift and handle the necessary equipment.
4. Serve as representative of the Board or another employee when requested or assigned.

5. Assist with the development and implementation of the MSWCD's public relations program by planning and conducting tours, field days, educational events, workshops, clinics and other related activities relative to MSWCD programs. Programs relative to conservation will be offered for both adult and youth.
6. Assist with radio and television programs, news releases and *District Newsletter* articles as assigned.
7. Responsible for proper maintenance, use, and storage of MSWCD automotive, office and rental equipment. Assist land users with the scheduling, planning, proper use, and adjustments on all the MSWCD rental equipment.
8. Actively participate in the safety program in the staff meetings, day-to-day activities, training meetings and inspections. May be required to attend evening and weekend events or meetings on occasion, as directed by the Board of Supervisors.
9. Prepare and maintain forms used in providing assistance to land users, landowners, administrative records, progress reporting, and all other field office records necessary for documentation and preparation of reports to MSWCD Board, ODA, OSWCC, ODNR – Division of Forestry, ODNR – Division of Wildlife, Muskingum County Auditor, and USDA-NRCS. Enter required information in Beehive reporting program.
10. Participate in committee assignments and carry out assigned duties to forward the development of the MSWCD's programs.
11. Assist in the security of all electronic data, hard copies, and computer equipment.
12. Must be insurable for vehicle operation and have a valid Ohio driver's license. May be required to use personal vehicle but will be reimbursed for mileage at the SWCD approved rate.
13. As needed, answer the telephone and meet office callers. Furnish requested information or make appointment to render assistance.
14. Assist in developing and maintaining good working relationship within the office and with other offices at the local, state, and federal government levels. Support and participate in EEO and Civil Rights Program Activities. Perform all duties in a manner that consistently demonstrates fairness, cooperation, and respect toward co-workers, office visitors, and all others in the performance of official business. Demonstrate knowledge and support of and performs all duties in a manner consistent with EEO/Civil Rights policy.
15. Occasionally deals with unhappy customers.
16. Perform all other related activities and duties as assigned.

Specific Program Responsibilities – Urban Agriculture (~75% of the position)***Urban Agriculture – Coordination, Support and Planning***

1. We believe in creating food equality through teaching others to grow their own food and by supporting our local food banks. The Urban Ag Technician shall support the growth

of sustainable urban agriculture in the City of Zanesville and Muskingum County by working together with other agencies, organizations, businesses, and local residents. The Urban Ag Technician will continue to make connections and identify local partner organizations and their potential roles in the Urban Greens program, and bring them on-board to assist.

2. Support and help further existing urban agriculture programs and projects and build new projects in an effort to fight food insecurity within our communities and food deserts. This will include working with food pantries to grow food that they need, building community support for the gardens, and teaching residents urban agriculture. In supporting our community gardens, the person shall help people create connections to other people and to our environment through growing food for themselves and/or others, and to our communities by helping those who are facing food insecurity.
3. Assist with finding resources and funding for needed materials and labor for site construction and maintenance, as requested and needed. This might include finding sponsorships or grants, locating groups or clubs that are willing to help, etc.
4. Assist with finding a volunteer intern to work in the Urban Greens program for the summer of 2023.
5. Assist with compiling information for any necessary reports as required by the MSWCD and other grant funding sources. This usually consists of tracking the pounds of produce harvested, where it goes, the number of volunteers and their hours, and taking pictures to include with the reports.
6. With guidance from SWCD staff, coordinate work of volunteers and seasonal part-time Garden Coordinators (funds permitting) to stay on top of work required at all garden sites and in getting the harvested produce to the food pantries on their schedules.
7. Meet weekly with each Garden Coordinator to go over any needs at the site, the workload, etc.
8. Fill in for Garden Coordinators when necessary if they are on vacation, etc.
9. Work with local businesses to create corporate sponsorships (either monetary or in-kind with volunteers) for the Urban Greens program.

Urban Agriculture – Technical Assistance

10. Under the guidance of and with the assistance of the MSWCD agriculture resource staff, perform site reviews and selections as needed, design and develop plans, identify site issues to be addressed, and develop feasible solutions. Provide urban agriculture technical assistance to citizens, organizations, agencies and businesses.
11. Prepare sites for community gardens/urban agriculture; this may include, but is not limited to, taking soil samples, implementing fertility recommendations, implementing best management practices, overseeing and assisting with site construction and maintenance, etc.

12. Provide hands-on gardening/urban agriculture help and instruction to those needing/requesting it in the community gardens. This might include one-on-one instruction for someone interested in gardening.
13. Must be willing and able to perform site prep, plant, weed, harvest, and clean up sites, with help from the Garden Coordinators, interns, volunteers, and occasionally the other MSWCD staff members.

Urban Agriculture Education and Outreach

14. Develop and hold public outreach and educational programs for both youth and adults to promote the Urban Greens program and to gain community support, participation and backing.
15. Educate and train citizens, volunteers, organizations and agencies on topics such as urban agriculture, gardening, healthy eating, food storage, food preparation, etc. May work with partner agencies to accomplish this goal.
16. Develop, create, and/or secure educational and training materials and programs, as needed, for the actual “hands in the dirt” activities of site preparation and growing the food and for the preparation and preservation of the food.
17. Promote events and educate about Urban Greens, through the Urban Greens and the District Facebook page, all the of the MSWCD social media outlets, contributing info to the District Newsletter and website, and appearances on local TV and radio shows.
18. Recruit and train community volunteers. Set up a system for volunteers to contribute on a regular basis and stay in touch with all volunteers.

Specific Program Responsibilities – District Educational Programming (~25% of position)

1. Deliver the overall conservation education program of the District to Muskingum County youth and adults. Actively promote the mission of the District and collaborate with the staff to establish a presence in the community through events, materials, displays, social media, and presentations. Give presentations to other groups and organizations as requested; staff displays if needed.
2. Participate in trainings (as they become available) for Project WET, Project WILD, Project Aquatic WILD, Healthy Water Healthy People, Getting Little Feet WET, Project Learning Tree, Growing up Wild, and others so that these programs can then be offered to county and city school teachers.
3. Develop and offer materials and “hands-on” environmental programs, with emphasis on soil and water quality, for schools and classroom use, based on the school’s curriculum and the state standards. Make efficient use of the models available through our office (such as the Enviroscape) to teach water quality and other environmental topics. This might include presentations in classrooms and after-school clubs such as a Nature Club, Environmental Club, etc. Presentations may also be to youth groups such as scouts, 4-H clubs, etc.

4. Develop and offer resources and materials that teachers may borrow to assist them when teaching environmental science topics. Develop and record school programs to be posted on our website so that teachers can access these programs at any time.
5. Promote the Envirothon Competition and solicit contest participants at all high schools within Muskingum County. Assist with the Tri-County and Area 3 Envirothons, as needed. If a school is hesitant to participate for lack of funding, compile the information needed and request the Board to consider granting funds for transportation, etc.
6. Hold a youth summer activity/event centered around conservation. This might be revising any of the previous camps: Camp in the Garden, Camp WILD, the Green Team group, Conservation School; or it might be developing an entirely new camp program.
7. As needed, identify and apply for grants for additional funding for educational programs and materials.
8. As requested, assist with regular postings to the District's Facebook page and other social media sites. May be required to write/contribute articles for the newsletter and/or blog. Will be expected to attend the Ag Breakfast, appear on WHIZ's Live at Noon segments and interview on WHIZ radio, on a rotating basis with the other staff members.

Storm Water Education for the City of Zanesville

11. As required by the working agreement with the City of Zanesville, and with assistance and training from the Ag Technician:
 - provide NPS educational programs to schools and adults throughout the city,
 - each year, give one to three (1-3) educational demonstrations at community events for the public (adult and/or youth),
 - and track the number of presentations, programs, events and the number of attendees for each.
12. Continue the current stream monitoring program, with assistance from the Agriculture Technician.
13. When requested, assist local businesses, churches, and organizations with meeting storm water credits that will allow them to reduce the storm water fees paid to the City of Zanesville. This might include helping them plan a water quality event or display, giving an educational demonstration, or providing sources for appropriate literature to be made available.

Guidance and Supervision

The position incumbent is responsible for making his/her appointments, for developing his/her schedule and changing the schedule as necessitated by requests for assistance and by weather conditions.

Direction and daily supervision will be provided by the District Administrator. In-field direction may also be provided by the agriculture resource specialist and/or ag technician. However, it is noted that the person in this position is ultimately responsible for the Urban Agriculture program, and other staff is only to assist and advise as needed. Coordination of scheduled activities will occur at regular staff meetings. Work is occasionally spot checked for compliance by USDA-NRCS, and /or ODA – Division of Soil and Water Conservation.

Must communicate, orally or in writing, all work-related problems or concerns with the District Administrator.

Training

Specific technical guides, manuals, and handbooks are available for use. An appropriate training schedule will be developed on an annual basis by the employee and the District Administrator. The training will include on-the-job, modules, one-on-one, classroom methods and outside sources (including webinars and virtual trainings) and may be provided through the MSWCD, ODA – Division of Soil and Water Conservation, ODNR- Division of Forestry, ODNR- Division of Wildlife, USDA- NRCS or outside sources.

Performance Review

Performance will be evaluated by the MSWCD Board of Supervisors or their designee through regularly scheduled performance evaluations. The performance of each duty in this position will be evaluated against the requirements developed within the standard of performance for the position. A formal performance review will be conducted annually with the employee as described in the approved Employment Policy. The performance rating is an overall evaluation of the employee's performance in the judgment of the MSWCD Board of Supervisors.

During the annual review, career opportunities, salary advancement, and items concerning the employee's professional growth and employment will be discussed. The employee agrees that all programs and services of the MSWCD, ODA and USDA- NRCS are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regards to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital or family status, disability, retaliation, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information or handicap.

Employment Agreement

All duties and actions taken by the incumbent of this position while on official duty will be performed in a safe and healthful manner and will be of a nature to reflect favorably on the Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District.

This position description in no matter states or implies that these are the only duties and responsibilities to be performed by the position incumbent, who will be required to follow other instructions and perform duties required by the position's supervisor or designee.

Adopted:

I understand and will perform to the best of my ability the job duties and requirements specified in this position description.

Board Chairperson

Date

Employee

Date