



Now Recruiting: Organic Growing Manager

Duration: Permanent role pending 6 month probationary period

Responsible for: Overall management of our organic growing activities.

Hours: We would consider different options to suit the applicant including Full-Time (37.5h a week) year round or an average of 30h a week with seasonal variation (full-time in winter and part-time in winter) with a Stable Income Arrangement.

Rate of Pay: Rate 4 (£25,135.50 - £32,604 pro-rata) with starting rate dependent on experience.

Location: Left Field Market Garden (Neilston) and Bellahouston Nursery (Glasgow).

About Us:

Locavore CIC Established in 2011 with a tiny shop on the south-side of Glasgow and since then has grown and developed. In early 2024 The Chard Holding Group CIC took over now operate Locavore with the same ethos and mission:

We are a social enterprise which exists to build more sustainable food networks which are better for people and the environment.

Our activities include:

- Running our two Glasgow shops in Govanhill and Partick which serve 16,000 customers a month with local, organic and zero waste foods and goods.
- Delivering local organic veg boxes to around 2000 customers from Ayr to Edinburgh with our fleet of electric vans. We currently make around 1100 box deliveries per week.
- Supplying other business and with local and organic food through our wholesale service which also services a local authority via a procurement contract.
- Growing local organic vegetables at a number of market garden sites which we sell through our shops, veg box scheme and wholesale service.
- Producing prepared foods in our kitchen to supply our shops with foods such as dips, bakes and food to be served within our Govanhill cafe.
- Running projects and initiatives that forward our mission of building a sustainable food system. This includes our Bellahouston allotments and Good Food Fund project.

Find out more:

www.locavore.scot and *locavorecic* on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

About this role:

We're looking for an experienced grower to lead our organic growing activities. We're making quite a few changes going into 2024 with the focus on improving efficiency to ensure financial sustainability while maintaining agroecological growing practices.

About Locavore's growing operation and markets:

Left Field:

We took on Left Field as a 1ha bare field in 2014 and since then have worked to transform it into a productive and profitable market garden.

The site has two polytunnels; one double-span at 550sqm which is used for cropping, and a smaller 100sqm tunnel which is predominately used as a propagation space.

Key crops for the site include leafy greens such as kale, chard and salad crops as well as tomatoes and cucumbers grown under cover.

In 2024 we took on a further 0.6ha which has been put into organic conversion and is not currently cropped.

Google satellite gives a good overview of the site:

<https://goo.gl/maps/jxYJZNAK4zf4uBd37>

Bellahouston Nursery

The site is a 2.2ha former Council plant nursery which you can get a good overview of from Google satellite: <https://goo.gl/maps/7W7TYqjtKJQwCoUF7>

At the moment we use three polytunnels at this site, totaling around 1000sqm and part of the large unheated glasshouse. This year tomatoes, cucumbers, sweetcorn, beans and kale are being grown on site. In the shoulder seasons and through winter we grow leafy greens and salads here. This site also hosts our veg shed where packing and distribution takes place as well as our offices and community plots.

Our Markets:

Markets for our produce are primarily internal with the vast majority of produce going to our veg boxes. This has provided us with a ready market allowing us to produce and sell large quantities of a fairly narrow range of higher-value crops. Produce is also sold through our shops, cafe and to wholesale customers.

About this role:

The Organic Growing Manager will hold overall responsibility for our organic growing activities.

Historically our production model closely mirrored principles outlined by Jean-Martin Fortier in his book *The Market Gardener*. Using 'low-dig' principles we have mostly operated only with hand tools and a BSC two wheel tractor with power harrow. This model is very successful for us by many metrics but has been proving increasingly difficult to make financially viable.

Over the last year our director has begun using a compact tractor with chisel plough and power harrow in some areas with much success. We've also experimented with more direct sowing, and less transplanting of some crops. Our objective of this has been to do more with less work even if that reduces production a little. We now wish to transition nearly all outdoor site management to a compact tractor system, doing more direct sowing and exploring other routes to improve efficiency while maintaining sustainable land management.

This is a hands-on role and you will spend the majority of your time outside and on site at our growing sites. You'll get involved with all aspects of the day to day running of growing activities, site management and infrastructure development.

The post holders work closely with the Director and veg box managers as well as managing a team of two year round growers.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

- Being involved with all practical aspects of the growing operations. This is a largely hands-on role and will include tractor work and working in polytunnels.
- Crop planning across multiple sites.
- Managing a small team and volunteers. This will include prioritisation and delegation of tasks and responsibilities across multiple sites and time frames.
- Ensuring compliance with regulations including health and safety.
- Taking a proactive approach to improve and develop our horticultural business so it is more efficient, more sustainable and more productive.
- Ensuring systems and standards are followed and developed as required.
- This list is not exhaustive and we expect the role will develop over time with the successful candidate's input.

Key Skills Sought:

- Extensive knowledge of organic growing and experience of working in a comparable environment.
- Operating a tractor with various implements. We have a power harrow, flail, chisel plough, front loader and forks will be an essential part of this role. The ideal candidate will have experience or be willing to make learning a priority.
- Very well organised, but adaptable to change as required.
- Ability to see the bigger picture; pragmatic and adaptable.
- An eye for continuous improvement and making jobs easier and more efficient.
- Driven, willing to learn from others, and pursue their own personal development.

- Able to meet the physical demands of the role.
- Maintenance, construction and DIY skills. Relevant experience such as polytunnel construction or set up or irrigation would be useful.

- Driving license and ability to drive a van is essential and experience of towing a trailer would be desirable.

How to apply:

The closing date is 9am on Monday the 10th of June. Please apply via our [website](#), uploading a CV and a covering letter outlining why you want to work with Locavore and what you think you could bring to this role.

Thanks for your interest!