



Now Recruiting: Organic Grower

Start Date: From February 2024

Duration: Permanent role pending 6 month probationary period

Responsible for: Assisting with all aspects of growing across our Left Field and Bellahouston market gardens.

Hours: Seasonal variation between 15 -37.5h a week (flexible to the applicant). Monthly take home pay would be balanced through a Stable Income Arrangement. Weekend work will be required during summer months on a rota basis. For example: working 4 days per week April-Sep and 2 days per week October-March with pay based on 3 days a week year round.

Rate of Pay: £10.42/h (rising to at least £11.44 in April 2024), 30% staff discount at a number of locations; bike to work scheme and an employer contribution pension.

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



About Us:

We are a social enterprise which exists to build more sustainable food systems which are better for people and the planet. Our mission is to use food to build a better future and to create viable alternatives to conventional supermarkets which dominate our food systems and contribute to many big social and environmental problems that we face as a society.

We're the opposite of this and want to use food as a vehicle for social good, environmental regeneration and community wealth building. Our models have local, organic and zero waste food at the core of what we do while placing huge importance on fairness in the supply chain and our wider social and environmental impact.

We established in 2011 with a tiny shop on the south-side of Glasgow and since then have expanded and diversified into a business employing around 100 people. Our activities include:

- Running our 4 shops: Govanhill, Partick, Kirkintilloch and Edinburgh.
- Delivering local organic veg boxes to around 1200 customers from Ayr to Edinburgh with our fleet of electric vans.
- Supplying other progressive retailers, caterers and processors through our organic wholesale business Locavore Trading.
- Growing local organic vegetables and flowers at a number of market gardens 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 shop cafes.
- Running projects and initiatives that forward our mission of building a sustainable food system. This includes our Good Food Fund and Community Plots.

Find out more:

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



About this role:

We're looking for two new growers to join our team which is led by our Organic growing Manager. 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 bare field in 2014 and since then have worked to transform it into a productive and profitable market garden. Now fully organic, the site totals 1 ha.

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.

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. It's likely that this year we will grow tomatoes and cucumbers here through the summer with leafy green in the shoulder seasons and winter. This urban site also hosts our veg shed where packing and distribution takes place.

There is huge potential for further cover cropping at this site in the future with a 1 acre glasshouse available and additional tunnels which could be brought into production. These do need investment and time to prepare and this is unlikely to happen over the next 12 months.



Our Markets:

Markets for our produce are primarily internal within Locavore and the vast majority of this currently goes to our veg box scheme which has 1800 customers. 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 wholesale customers.

About this role:

Organic Growers will assist the Organic Growing Manager to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of Locavore's organic horticulture operations.

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 our small farm which includes composting beds, weeding, sowing, basic maintenance and construction and lots of harvesting, transplanting, pruning; and more weeding.

The post holders will work closely with the Organic Growing Manager and will hold specialist responsibilities, agreed with the manager, which might include leading on harvests, field crops or delivering a particular project or activity. These will be decided in discussion with the Organic Growing Manager.

Our production model closely mirrors principles outlined by Jean-Martin Fortier in his book *The Market Gardener*. We are 'low-dig' and currently only operate with hand tools and a BSC two wheel tractor with power harrow. This model is very successful for us by most metrics but has been proving increasingly difficult to make financially viable.

This year we will be implementing further measures to improve efficiency such as more direct sowing and wider spacings. Actions which will may reduce overall yield but mean we can do more with a smaller team. We are pushing the limits of the Jean-Martin style system and would like to recruit growers who understand this system but aren't wedded to it and may also have experience of working with compact tractors and in intensive covered cropping.



Key Duties and Responsibilities:

- Being involved with all practical aspects of the growing operations. This is a largely hands-on role.
- Assisting the Organic Growing Manager as required with crop planning across multiple sites.
- Supervising and guiding volunteers and any seasonal assistants. This will include prioritisation and delegation of tasks and responsibilities across multiple sites and time frames as required to assist the Organic Growing Manager.
- Ensuring compliance with regulations including health and safety.
- Taking a proactive approach to work with the Organic Growing Manager to maintain, 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 candidates' input.

Key Skills Sought:

Essential:

- Extensive knowledge of organic growing and experience of working in a comparable environment.
- Very well organised, but adaptable to change as required.
- A collaborative team player.
- 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.



- Fit and healthy and able to meet the physical demands of the role
- Happy to work outside throughout the year in all weathers.
- Maintenance, construction and DIY skills.
- Driving license and ability to drive a van.

Desirable:

- Experience using BSC two wheel tractor with harrow, rotary plough and flail mower.
- Experience of driving a tractor with various implements.
- Other relevant experience such as polytunnel construction or set up of irrigation.

How to apply:

The closing date is 9am on Monday the 15th of January. 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!

