



Growing Rural Opportunities (GRO) is seeking a full time, self-motivated, highly organized, and passionate Mobile Farmers' Market Manager to create a unique and innovative mobile market & outreach tool to support local farmers and promote local food. This position is part entrepreneur, part do-gooder, and altogether a tough endeavor that will need a true renaissance man or woman.

## About GRO:

GRO is a unique 501(c)(3) nonprofit wholly dedicated to supporting local farmers and promoting local food. Founded in 2015, the organization has quickly risen in programmatic successes and has big visions for the future of agriculture in the Foothills region of NC. Many programs in operation at GRO were started as part of the Mill Spring Agricultural Center, a refurbished 1920s school building lovingly renovated since 2009 to become a center for farming in the lower Blue Ridge Mountains. GRO consistently works to be at the forefront of new ideas and partners with many local & regional organizations to accomplish a well-rounded & complete mission. GRO and mainly serves Polk County, NC – a vibrant rural community located 45 minutes from Asheville, Spartanburg, and Greenville. Other programs of GRO include a tool share cooperative, young farmer support, community volunteer on farms programs, annual music festival - GRO Fest, and much more. We invite applicants to review our websites – [growrural.org](http://growrural.org), [tryonwine.org](http://tryonwine.org), and [grofest.org](http://grofest.org).

## Position Responsibilities:

The Mobile Farmers' Market Manager Position is new to GRO and will be the first mobile farmers' market in Western North Carolina. The position will be strenuous and have much responsibility to accomplish goals related to the start-up of the program. This position is full time and grant funded for the initial two years. The expectation is that the position will establish a successful mobile market with sales sufficient to supplement salary in subsequent years. ***The farmers' market are a flagship program of GRO and as such this position will have the full support of all GRO Board members and Staff to work towards its success.***

**Program Setup & Operations**—Outline and startup a complete mobile sales program including retail setup, organization of route, manage logistics of food sales & delivery, and maintenance of mobile market. Coordinate and manage pop up outdoor markets to coincide with mobile market schedule.

- Develop business strategies to raise customer pool, establish then expand traffic to markets, and optimize profitability for farmers & market. Position will start mobile market from scratch including point of sale systems, market setup, create policies and procedures, and more as needed to operate proficiently.
- Maintain records and monitor metrics for markets. A keen eye towards figures, data, and statistics to use as tools to make the markets more efficient.
- Ensure high levels of customers satisfaction through excellent service
- Complete market administration and ensure compliance with policies and procedures
- Maintain outstanding market condition and modern visual merchandising standards
- Maintain education of buying practices, customer needs, and new & emerging trends
- Propose innovative ideas to increase sales including marketing, loyalty program, coupons, demonstrations, and more.
- Deal with all issues that arise from volunteers or customers
- Be a shining example of high performance, ingenuity, and passion.
- Manage vendors, policies, rules, and etcetera as part of the outdoor pop up markets. Manage outdoor markets to run at peak efficiency & increase customer base.
- Create events, programs, demonstrations, and more to draw customers to markets. Works towards making shopping an experience not just a trip to get some food.
- Maintain fiscal responsibility for budgets, sales, sales tax, sponsorships, grants, and donations specific to the farmers' markets.
- Conduct customer surveys, economic impact analyses, secret shopper surveys, and more to increase marketability.
- Support other GRO programs as requested by the Executive Director including support of fundraisers, events, and any other activities as requested.
- Additional management duties as needed

**Outreach**—Shape, manage, and implement an effective outreach and communication campaign to educate consumers about local food & local agriculture. This position will most often be the “face” of GRO to many people so it is important to represent all of the ideals of the organization.

- Develop and implement cost-effective and engaging marketing and outreach strategies to communicate to our constituencies through printed and electronic media.
- Manage outgoing & incoming messages & phone calls in a timely manner
- Further develop brand and social media presence posting and “personality” and post strategically to our channels using GRO’s social media; working with staff to unify and coordinate social media and messaging efforts.
- Create, write, edit and produce press releases, publications, and printed materials.

## Professional Qualifications/Requirements:

- **Strong organizational skills and ability to manage multiple projects and tasks is imperative**
- **Reliability and punctuality are of the upmost importance.**
- **Strong & demonstrated initiative.**
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use communications technology and social media
- Excellent written & verbal communication and storytelling skills
- Strong editing and proofreading skills
- An eye for good design
- Excellent computer skills
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to work weekends, nights, and more – this position will not be a standard 9 to 5 and will include much in and out time. Strong self-motivation and personal scheduling are a must.
- Interest and/or experience in sustainable agriculture; knowledge of farming issues
- Management of retail operations or work in retail conditions/food service a plus.
- Position must be able to lift, move, and be physically apt for position. Lifting & carrying will be consistent requirements of job.
- Good driving record imperative. Experience with operating a large vehicle a plus but not required.

## Compensation:

\$27,000 - \$30,000 base salary plus paid holidays, vacation, sick, and parental leave with opportunity for performance bonuses. Medical, dental, and vision stipend of \$350 per month offered. Flex schedule & compensatory time will be expected as part of this position.

## To Apply:

Please submit cover letter and resume to [patrick@growrural.org](mailto:patrick@growrural.org). Candidates selected for interview will be requested to provide references and a writing sample and/or marketing sample. Application deadline is February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at close of business. We look to fill the position by mid-March of 2018.

*GRO is an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.*