

Now Recruiting: Organic Growing Supervisor

Start Date: April 2021

Duration: April-October 2021 initially

Responsible for: Day to day management of Locavore's organic horticulture at Locavore's growing sites.

Hours: 4 days per week(30h) with potential for reduced hours in low season.

Rate of Pay: £10.10p/h - staff discount at a number of locations and an employer contribution pension.

Locations: Locavore Bellahouston &/or Left Field

About Us:

We're a not-for-private-profit social enterprise food business which helps build more sustainable food systems which are better for society and our environment.

We currently run two shops in Glasgow, grow vegetables and flowers across four sites in and around Glasgow and provide veg boxes to around 1800 households per week across central Scotland. We are also an organic distributor and brand wholesaling to other progressive retailers around the UK.

We're a high growth business with projected turnover of £5m in 2020-21, up from £3.5m in 2019-20, £2.6m in 2018-19 and £850k in 2017-18. We expect a similar level of growth will go on for many years which creates many opportunities for the right people but does mean working at Locavore is not a static and stable environment which definitely doesn't suit everyone.

Find out more:

www.glasgowlocavore.org,

www.facebook.com/GlasgowLocavore

About this role:

Organic Growing Supervisors 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, on site at Bellahouston or Left field where you will lead a team of Growers.

You will prioritise tasks on a day-to-day, week-to-week basis and ensure that workload is completed through appropriate delegation.

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 propagation or delivering a particular project or activity. These will be decided in discussion with the Organic Growing Manager.

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 and is set out following the principles outlined by Jean-Martin Fortier in his book The Market Gardener.

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 2020 we grew in the region of £90k of produce on the site and importantly kept our costs below this for the first time. For 2021 we aim to deliver the planned crop plan for Left Field successfully and produce a similar or increased turnover here.

Google satellite gives a good overview of the site:

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

During peak harvest season the team is expanded with seasonal workers to help with the harvest. We currently run two workshare volunteer sessions a week which have been essential to delivering the crop plan. During the peak season (when harvest can spread to 6 days a week) the team is expanded with seasonal workers to help with the harvest. It is a key part of the role of the supervisors to oversee the harvest team.

We rent the site on a rolling 5 year lease from a neighbouring farmer who occasionally assist us with jobs such as moving compost or improving tracks.

Bellahouston Nursery

Although we have been using this site for over a year as a location for packing vegboxes and some of our offices, it has not been used for horticulture beyond the growing of potted herbs. This is because we have not had a secure lease. A time of writing we are expecting a 20 year lease on the site to be signed shortly.

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>

As you can see the site is largely covered with glass and polytunnels. The glasshouse is in excess of an acre and although it will be of value to our organic horticulture team for propagation it will not fully form part of the organic operation due to the concrete floor throughout. It's likely it will be kitted out for sustainable hydroponic growing in the not too distant future and be within another staff member's remit.

Polytunnel frames also cover a large part of the site in various states of neglect. Similarly many of them have been situated on top of concrete or on 4ft deep gravel... One tunnel has had a thin layer of gravel removed to make it suitable for organic production and there is an area of soil on the site that a tunnel could be relocated to. In total two tunnels could provide 1800sqm of growing space and there is further room for outdoor permanent raised beds to be created and possibly a third 900sqm tunnel.

Our minimum expectations for Bellahouston in 2021 are to get one tunnel fully set up with the required infrastructure and in production for a late start.

The whole site is in conversion to organic and will become fully organic at the end of May 2021.

Our Markets:

Markets for our produce are primarily internal within Locavore and the vast majority of this currently goes to our vegbox scheme which currently 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 crops. Sales through our shops, cafe and wholesale customers have been an afterthought to date, particularly in recent years.

Locavore's current phase of growth is focused on opening new retail locations and we want a priority of the Organic Horticultural Manager to adapt our growing to better meet the needs of our shops with a wider variety of produce which is more consistently available, over a longer season, at a higher quality standard. Reviewing how we do this will be part of the role, working closely with the Managing Director, Vegbox & Wholesale Manager and shop General Managers.

We also sell a very small proportion of our produce to other retailers and hospitality customers and there is potential that this could increase in the future.

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 Growers and Seasonal Growers. This will include prioritisation and delegation of tasks and responsibilities across multiple sites and time frames as required to assist the Organic Growing Manager.
- Assisting the Organic Growing Manager in developing the team over time including assistance with recruitment and training.
- 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 as this is a new position we expect the role will develop over time with the successful candidates' input.

Key Working relationships:

- The Organic Growing Manager - The post holders line manager who has overall responsibility for Locavore's organic growing. You will be in contact with them on a near daily basis to discuss current objectives.
- Other Organic Growing Supervisors - You will be in regular contact with other Organic Growing Supervisors to communicate what is going on in the team as required.
- Growers - You will be in daily contact with our Growers who you will provide direction and instruction to.
- Vegbox Team - You will be in regular contact with the Vegbox admin team to discuss harvests, deliveries and availability.

Key Skills Sought:

Essential:

- Extensive knowledge of organic growing and experience of working in a comparable environment.
- Experience of supervising staff or volunteers.
- Ability to delegate and prioritise and bring out the best in others in a team.
- 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.
- Basic construction and DIY skills.
- Driving licence.

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.
- Basic knowledge of health and safety practices and first aid.

How to apply:

To apply please send a one page cover letter outlining why you wish to be considered for this role and how you meet the person specification along with a CV to recruitment@glasgowlocavore.org. Please use the subject 'Organic Growing Supervisor Application'.

The deadline for applications is 9am on Monday the 15th of March.