

Co Head Grower - Stroud Community Agriculture

We are looking for an experienced grower to join our team

Stroud Community Agriculture (SCA) is an organic and biodynamic community-supported agriculture farm (CSA) close to the town of Stroud in the beautiful Cotswolds. We feed 300 households who purchase vegetable shares. SCA has been feeding the local community for more than 20 years, making it one of the longest standing CSAs in the country. SCA is a members' cooperative with a mutually beneficial arrangement between members and the farm: the farm provides growers with a sustainable livelihood and veg to the members.

Community is at the heart of our enterprise. Members are encouraged to engage with the farm in many different ways in addition to paying for their share and collecting their vegetables. They can volunteer on the farm, bring their children, arrange events, have picnics and generally connect with the land. They can also help guide and manage aspects of the farm through an elected core group.

Each site has a lead grower who is responsible for the planning and overseeing the growing and harvest of their area. The team is collaborative and we all work together on harvesting, planting days, weeding etc. The permanent growers share responsibility for running of the farm, with each taking on key responsibilities such as managing subsidies, budget, finance, certifications, insurance, maintenance and infrastructure.

This role would suit someone who is interested in the administration and management of the farm operations and who wants to work in a collaborative team. The benefit of sharing the responsibility for the farm production is that we each get ownership over our areas but not the full responsibility of a head grower role.

We work on around 11 acres of land including 6 polytunnels over 2 sites. We have a partnership with a local livestock farmer with a herd of cows on our land. We are twinned with a social project in Bristol, the Somali Kitchen, which is a great opportunity for the farm to provide a space for a community that does not have direct access to land. This project includes farm visits, events, workshops and educational tours.

Our team is made up of three permanent growers (which includes this role), volunteers and two seasonal growers, supported by a Membership and Engagement Coordinator. Our structure includes a board of directors, the core group, who carry legal responsibilities for the farm.

We are looking for the newest member of our team. An experienced grower who will be leading on the polytunnel production and propagation. You will be working as part of a team growing and harvesting veg all year round for our local members. We hope to find a

dynamic individual who is committed to our values and wants to help make our community farm thrive.

Our growers share weekends on rotation at the farm, so there is an expectation of a weekend shift approximately once a month. The weekend work includes restocking our pack shed for veg collection, watering, and occasional harvesting during high season. The hours can vary throughout the season, and these are recorded by the team and taken off as TOIL.

More information about the team and the farm can be found on our website and on our social media (Instagram):

<https://stroudcommunityagriculture.org/>

[Stroud Community Agriculture \(@stroudcommunityagriculture\) • Instagram](#)

Co Head Grower Role Description

The new grower will be responsible for:

- Managing and overseeing SCA's polytunnel production and propagation. Approx $\frac{2}{3}$ of an acre polytunnel space with a propagation space that raises seedlings for all our production spaces. . Our team is collaborative and growers support each other in all areas of production, but each co-head grower coordinates their own growing area, identifying and managing tasks and priorities.
- Overseeing small machinery including a BCS two wheel tractor, mower and strimmer. This includes booking repairs and services, as well as basic maintenance through the year.
- Leading on crop planning for this area.
- Contributing to shared tasks such as transplanting, weeding and harvesting across our two sites.
- Some key administrative tasks, by agreement with existing staff, for example, managing vehicle tax, MOT and insurance, subsidies, certification paperwork, funding bids for infrastructure, working with finance admin on budgets and accounting etc.
- Some attendance at monthly core group meetings is expected.

Essential Skills

Growing

- Commercial organic veg growing experience including having responsibility for delivering aspects of a crop plan, minimum of 1 year.

- Some relevant experience using and maintaining small farm machinery such as mowers, two wheel tractors, strimmers.
- Understanding of irrigation systems and watering needs and experience setting them up.
- Experience of crop planning.
- Experience of pest and disease identification.
- Experience of organic plant propagation.

Farm management

- Understanding of budgeting and willingness to contribute to developing the annual budget of the farm.
- Some experience of managing budgets and project management
- Efficiency in following admin processes for claiming expenses and dealing with invoices, and excellent organisation skills including managing and responding to emails.
- Commitment to engaging members and volunteers in the life of the farm

Personal

- Commitment to the aims and policies of SCA
- Good communication skills and ability to work well in a team
- Good basic IT, finance and record-keeping skills.
- Committed fully to the principle of Equal Opportunities for all in line with SCA policies
- Full Clean driving licence

Preferred Skills

- Maintenance and Infrastructure skills
- Understanding of biodynamic farming methods
- Managing groups of volunteers with varying needs on tasks.
- Being customer facing and engaging members through the project.
- Interest and/or experience in working with young people on community land based projects, such as supporting school visits on the farm.
- Administrative skills such as fundraising and experience of organising and running community events.

Contractual detail

- Contract: permanent and ideally full time, but with the possibility of part time employment.
- Hours: 8am - 4.30pm

- Salary: Depending on experience, this will be between £26,208.00 and £27,047.56 FTE. The successful applicant can expect an annual increment until they reach the top of our four-point salary scale; matched pension contributions up to 3%.
- Holidays: 20 days plus 8 bank holidays

Next steps and application process

- **Application deadline: Sunday 23rd November**
- We will be offering half day trials on the farm together with an interview on one of the following dates: Thursday 27th or Friday 28th November.
- Start date: as soon as possible, but with flexibility for the right candidate.

SCA is committed to our Equal Opportunities policy. We encourage anyone who feels that they have relevant experience, expertise and knowledge to apply for this role if they have a strong interest in working at SCA. If you feel that your skills and experience meet most of the requirements but not all, please still apply, as there may be the possibility of additional mentoring, training or adjustment of working time. Ultimately, we're looking for the right person for the job. If you think that is you and need to discuss your personal circumstances, please get in touch.

To apply for this position or to find out more please email a CV and covering letter to Molly, one of our core group members: molly@gaianeconomics.org. If you have any questions about the application or the Farm feel free to email Molly. If you have any questions about the role description please contact beni@stroudcommunityagriculture.org.