

Garden Center Manager

Background:

The Woodstock Farmers Market is a bustling year-round fresh market of fantastic food which generates over \$8 million in annual sales. We're a classic "small giant": while our footprint is modest, we have created a dynamic fresh foods market with many facets—from our varied national and regional specialty products and our commitment to local produce and meats to our prepared foods kitchen and catering department to our innovative open book finance system and our customer service focused staff.

"Farmers" (as we are called) is a proud member of the Good Food Merchant Collaborative one of 22 of the most innovative and cutting-edge independent markets in the country. Woodstock, Vermont is an outstanding and friendly town that combines outstanding arts, culture, outdoor sports with ease to NYC and Boston.

Our Garden Center is small but mighty, creating an incredible atmosphere for the market as a whole. Our mission is to sell an array of unusual annual bedding plants, hanging baskets, perennials and garden accompaniments while providing outstanding customer service. We also have a Christmas greens, wreaths and tree operation from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

Specifics of the Job:

The Garden Center Manager is responsible for the financial success of the garden center including the Christmas wreath and tree business in the late fall and winter; he/she is responsible for margin analysis, sales analysis, ordering on a daily basis, and overall sales and marketing strategies. They are also responsible for accurate pricing, accurate PLU recording and accurate credit reporting with wholesalers and are the main contact for growers and wholesalers; he or she is responsible for overall quality control in all purchasing, responsible for motivating and managing department including all scheduling and responsible for participating in senior level meetings and overall strategy of the store. The Leader works with other departments to plan all events and holidays.

He/she must have outstanding planning and organizational skills as well as have a great eye for display. He/she must possess an excellent grasp of finance, costing and pricing. This position requires motivating others and directing people. Other skills required are the following:

- **Ordering:** purchase plants (annuals, perennials, shrubs, houseplants, herbs, vegetables, seasonal materials), mulches and amendments, any pottery, supplies and equipment. Assure efficient receiving of deliveries, consistent quality, proper invoicing and documents for accounting department in a timely manner. Maintain informed and efficient relationships with vendors and related organizations, scout for market trends and new ideas.
- **Merchandising:** Design, monitor and change displays—BIG, BEAUTIFUL, BOUNTIFUL—to enhance sales and WFM grounds, maintain sturdy display structures and customer traffic with good flow and safety in display areas. Determine pricing and sale items, create promotional displays for holidays and other special events. Handle special orders and landscape professionals who pre-order.
- **Care of plants and merchandise:** Assure that plants and merchandise are optimally healthy, clean, and undamaged. Considerations of watering, fertilizer, sun/shade, wind, frost, sunburn, and customer handling are accounted for.

- **Educating/Disseminating Information to Guest:** Service to the customer by being well-informed about the plants and merchandise, creating thoughtful and accurate signage, preparing customer hand-outs if appropriate, making sure store staff are aware of plant area activities, keeping cashiers and staff informed of pricing.
- **Supervising/Scheduling and Motivating Staff:** Schedules staff for the work; guiding staff activities plus motivating all staff. Responsible for hiring, orientating, coaching, and evaluating staff.
- **Maintaining the Grounds:** Responsible for making sure WFM grounds and gardens are neat, clear of trash and debris and, in general looking great.
- **Long range planning:** Plans for short term and long term merchandising resets as well as based on quick in and out weekly orders. Plans with other department managers and coordinates space management for execution.
- **Quality Control:** Is responsible for managing/understanding the best quality at the best prices possible. This requires intimate knowledge of the growers and quality of their products.
- **Costing and Pricing:** Accurately prices based on total going in costs. Must see big picture and understand the art and science of pricing. Responsible for total COG and Sales every year in budget and in real time P and L. Responsible for understating margin and cost analysis.

Our Specific Needs/Qualifications:

- **Outstanding Organization Skills** – He/she must prioritize projects and keep them moving forward while communicating this to a team of people. Must understand how to be an effective scheduler of people.
- **Outstanding computer skills:** Must work with Excel and Word and be fully functional with those programs.
- **Excellent Day Planning and Long Range Planning Skills:** Understanding the daily and weekly prep lists and the prioritization of tasks is paramount. Communicating this to the team is critical.
- **Excellent Leadership, Teaching, Mentoring, Hiring Skills:** Motivating, developing and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job.
- **Being Calm Under Pressure:** Talking to others to convey information effectively and a calm and effective manner.
- **Outstanding Judgment and Decision-Making** – Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions and choosing the most appropriate one.
- **Love of Service** – Actively looking for ways to help people and enjoying it.
- **Strong Physical Attributes:** Must be in outstanding physical condition. This job requires one to be on your feet for as many as 8 hours a day and to be able to lift over 50 lbs often throughout the day. Dexterity is important and lifting hanging baskets with arms and shoulders all day requires strength. Job requires squatting, lifting, bending and walking. Will be required one to be outside in the hot sun or cold snow for hours at a time.
- **Outstanding ordering and financial Skills:** Planning orders with wholesalers and farmers; balancing the incoming produce from various vendors often in regards to cost; understanding the mathematics and semantics of the retail pricing of produce in order to maintain the highest margin possible; understanding the POS system and importance of synergy with cashiering department in terms of PLU codes and new pricing information. He/she is responsible for success of department both spiritually and fiscally. Fiscal

responsibility not only means great sales within budgetary guidelines but net profit in terms of cost of good and pricing.

- **Strong merchandising skills:** Must be able to create and maintain great displays quickly and easily. He/she must be able to plan displays and with the general themes of the market and be able to work with other departments to make such planning and displays effective.
- **Outstanding "sanitation" skills:** Keeping the physical plant outside neat, tidy and organized.
- **Outstanding communication skills:** Must be able to communicate effectively to both customers and staff.
- **Proficient with annual and perennial nomenclature:** Must be very knowledgeable in plant language and understand all about growing and planting plants.

Time Commitment:

This is a full time job from May through October; a brief couple of weeks respite in early November and then full time again from November 15th through Christmas. The months of January through April are negotiable in terms of working somewhere else within the organization or having the salary structure included to account for 3 months off during the winter. We estimate about 40-50 hours/week. At least one weekend day is required. Holidays and summer time are our busiest times and require planning and commitment.

Education:

This job requires a minimum of 4 years in a related work environment.

Compensation:

Hourly or salary, depending on qualifications and experience. \$18-\$20/hour. Simple IRA, Health Insurance, 30% staff discount and more. Discussion of year-round salary possible given the seasonal nature of the job or work elsewhere in downtime months within WFM.