

Assistant Farm Manager Position at Paicines Ranch

Paicines Ranch is 7500 acres of holistically managed, certified organic rangeland and irrigated cropland located on the central coast of California. Our focus is on how to imagine, design, create and manage agricultural practices that build and support ecosystem health, are economically viable and socially inspiring. The ranch is in the early stages of several innovative design and development projects as well as ongoing management to include:

- A diverse no-till polyculture vineyard that will be managed using planned grazing of sheep throughout the year (25 acres of vines, 350 acres total size)
- Conversion of conventionally managed organic row crops into a polyculture of no-till crops (forage, grain, seed, vegetable and herbs), orchard crops, silvopasture and planned livestock grazing (approximately 520 acres)
- A livestock operation that includes building the resident hair sheep flock to 1000 breeding ewes over the next few years (currently 150), a cattle lease on 6700 acres of rangeland (holistically managed), and a grass finishing cattle and sheep operation on the irrigated cropland
- Conducting baseline and ongoing ecosystem monitoring of the entire ranch including soil health, soil carbon, wildlife and plants
- Landscaping of headquarters to better reflect management principles being used on the cropland and rangeland
- Managing an onsite composting/vermicomposting operation in order to reduce offsite fertility inputs and increase soil health on farmland and rangeland
- Establishment of an onsite plant nursery and propagation area to supply headquarters, cropland and rangeland with a diversity of native and adapted pollinator, browse, landscape and wildlife habitat plants

This new management position is being created to play a key supportive and complimentary role with existing staff in the ongoing design, development and management of agricultural operations at Paicines Ranch. Current key personnel include: the owners, director of education and innovation sharing, controller, wedding and events coordinator, ranch manager, assistant manager (infrastructure), landscape manager and facilities manager.

In particular we seek someone who is creative, passionate, committed and skilled at developing agricultural systems that significantly improve soil health, biodiversity, nutritional quality of foods and quality of life for the people and communities involved in agriculture. The position will involve working collaboratively with owners, staff, lessee's, contractors, etc. in all aspects of management, infrastructure development, planning, design, research, monitoring, education, and day-to-day operations. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of 10 years experience in agriculture.

Primary responsibilities:

- Design, develop and manage annual cropland into restorative practices that integrate livestock into diversified polycultures
- Manage livestock including but not limited to: sheep, chickens and cattle
- Develop and manage forage/fodder based livestock finishing operation for multiple species
- Project management and selection and oversight of contractors
- Supervise, train, and mentor employees, workers and apprentices/interns
- Plan, implement and monitor rangeland improvement projects including no-till seeding, pasture cropping, and erosion control and prevention
- Represent the ranch through educational events and workshops (on and offsite), writing and presentations
- Oversee compliance and record keeping for organic certification and other certifying organizations
- Maintain compliance and record keeping for materials storage, safety and other regulatory entities

Additional responsibilities:

- Vineyard/polyculture management (plants, livestock, pruning, irrigation, harvest, etc.)
- Collaborate with rangeland (cattle) lessee in land use, grazing planning and infrastructure
- Trial farm management to include seeding, grazing, irrigation, monitoring and record keeping
- Participate in design and implementation of headquarters landscape and agricultural design and development

Allocation of time would roughly be divided as follows: 30% office and administrative, 50% supervising and working with others, 10% working alone, 10% other.

Applicant would ideally have experience and skills in many of the following areas:

1. Experience and training in Holistic Management and Holistic Planned Grazing. Additional experience in the following is also helpful: soil health principles (Christine Jones, Elaine Ingham), organic farming, Biodynamics, Permaculture
2. Good organizational and management skills
3. Livestock management experience including, breeding, grazing planning, marketing

4. Competence in operation of standard transmission vehicles, quads, tractors, and skid loader, etc.
5. Experience with organic certification compliance and record keeping
6. Crop, grain or seed farming experience
7. Experience managing employees
8. Ability to work both collaboratively and independently
9. Appreciation of and capacity for doing both physical and office work for extended periods of time
10. Good communication and writing skills and ability to document and explain work to others
11. Experience teaching and sharing principles, knowledge and skills
12. Openness to new ideas and experimentation
13. Computer skills including competency in Excel

Additional skills that would be valuable to this position:

- GIS/mapping
- Spanish
- Mechanical or irrigation skills
- CAD
- Water systems: livestock and water harvesting
- Artistic skills

Salary will be commensurate with experience and ability. Housing is available.

Please send resume and cover letter (or creative alternative) to Kelly Mulville:
Kelly@paicinesranch.com