



Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Position Announcement: Urban Agriculture Specialist (UAS) Position

Overview: The Urban Agriculture Specialist (UAS) Position is currently a limited-term, part-time position without benefits that supports urban agricultural practices for communities and individuals in need of technical assistance and resources, such as land, water, and tools to grow fresh, healthy food. Increased food availability will serve the purpose of growing produce directly for community use, contributing to local food banks, or launching and sustaining commercial operations that support local workforce development and economic growth.

The UAS helps to maintain and expand community inroads established via two NVSWCD programs:

- The “Nourish the Land, Cultivate Community” project, funded through a 2021 grant program by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). The scope of work supported the development of education, training, and mentoring programs for community gardens that led to the establishment of an ongoing partnership with five county community garden sites.
- The “Urban Agriculture Roadmap” project, partially funded by the 2024 award of a Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) matching grant. The scope of work primarily supported staff and intern time to lead the Urban Ag Roadmap Work Group, which collaborated with stakeholders to identify barriers to and opportunities for expanding local food production.

This position works in partnership with the Agricultural Water Quality Specialist and reports to the Executive Director.

Duties and Responsibilities

Technical expertise (50%):

- Designs, supports, and oversees the continuation or establishment of community gardens and small-scale urban agricultural operations
- Provides layout plans for the orientation of garden beds for residents and communities
- Connects property owners with available and suitable land with people who want to grow food
- Advises on the location of community gardens and accessory garden structures, including avoiding Resource Protection Areas (RPAs)
- Provides recommendations regarding regulatory restrictions and compliance
- Makes recommendations for practical irrigation or watering systems
- Introduces conservation practices that address soil health, nutrient and pest management, and growing-season extenders
- Works with Urban Conservation Specialist II (TRAPA) in the planning and execution of NVSWCD’s annual seedling sale program and vegetable giveaway initiative

Education and Outreach Programs (35%):

- Writes and secures grants to support local urban agricultural programs such as community gardens and small-scale agricultural operations
- Provides needs-driven educational materials and training, including developing a how-to guide for new food producers and compiling existing resources
- Provides basic tools for the establishment, care, and maintenance of community garden/small-scale agricultural operation partners
- Monitors program outcomes and plans for the upcoming growing season

- Establishes a network with other government and non-government groups with similar expertise to support and strengthen the local food value chain, food safety, and marketing
- Researches existing local and state financial support opportunities for food growers; works with local economic development teams to expand and create additional financial incentives

Reporting and Other Responsibilities (15%):

- Maintains a database of coordination and spending with partner gardens
- Prepares monthly activity reports and other reports as requested
- Participates in other district programs and events as appropriate, including NVSWCD's annual native seedling sale, youth Envirothon competition, and other outreach and engagement events
- Performs other duties as assigned

Required Education or Related Experience:

- A four-year bachelor's degree in urban agriculture or related field and/or the equivalent of four years of directly-related work experience
- Ability to work independently
- Skilled in effective oral and written communication
- Displayed creativity and initiative to grow the urban agricultural programs
- Possession of a valid driver's license

Preferred Education or Related Experience:

- Ability to communicate in Spanish
- Experience in establishing, coordinating, and managing community gardens
- Experience with and knowledge of regional urban agricultural development

Physical Conditions and Nature of Work

- Work will be roughly 50% computer-based, 50% in-field for events and programs, and varies by season
- This position is eligible for hybrid work after the initial training period. Remote work locations must include access to a phone, computer, internet, and printer. Compensation for the use of a personal phone and internet service is not provided.
- This role requires extended periods of standing, walking, and traversing rough and uneven terrain (including hilly and/or wooded sites). Must be able to work in varying weather conditions.
- This role requires some evening or weekend schedules
- Must be able to lift up to 40 pounds
- Use of a personal vehicle may be necessary; mileage is reimbursed at the federal rate; must hold a valid driver's license
- Must be qualified to work in the United States of America, and pass a criminal background check to the satisfaction of the employer

Terms & Compensation

This position pays \$25 per hour for a maximum of 936 hours per year, averaging 18 hours per week. During agricultural growing seasons (i.e., peak seasons), the individual may work more hours than during non-growing, off-peak seasons.

The individual will be paid every other week based on hours worked during the previous pay period. Taxes will be withheld based on the hours worked. This is a limited-term position that does not include benefits.

How to Apply

Interested applicants should email their resume, accompanied by a cover letter and contact information for two references, to conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov by midnight on Sunday, January 25, 2026.

If you believe you would be a good fit for this position but do not meet all our criteria, we highly encourage you to apply for the position. NVSWCD is committed to hiring a candidate with the right mix of experience (traditional and nontraditional), passion and commitment for our work, and the ability to grow with us. Persons of color, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ persons, and other members of historically underserved and underrepresented communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

About NVSWCD

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its boundaries are the same as those of Fairfax County, home to nearly one million people. Founded in 1945 by citizens concerned about conserving natural resources, NVSWCD is now one of 47 conservation districts in Virginia and approximately 3,000 nationwide. The agency is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who employ sixteen staff to carry out the organization's technical and educational programs.

The agency's goal is to promote clean streams and protect natural resources. We achieve this through effective leadership, technical assistance, and outreach programs in collaboration with government, industry, and the public. NVSWCD is not a regulatory agency. Instead, the agency provides conservation information, technical services, educational programs, and volunteer opportunities to residents on many aspects of water quality, nonpoint source pollution, and stream health.

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Its programs, activities, and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, sex, age, military status, pregnancy/childbirth or related medical conditions, national origin, political affiliation, gender identity and expression, and disability.

Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District
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