

# Mighty Food Farm Personnel Policy 2021

## Introduction

Welcome to Mighty Food Farm! The following pages of this packet are our Personnel Policies. Please read these policies to have an idea of our expectations regarding such things as work ethic and punctuality; sick days and vacation; parking; safety; meetings; farm values; payroll; etc. If after reading this packet you have questions, please ask Lisa. Please keep this packet for your reference.

## Mission Statement

At Mighty Food Farm we grow certified organic produce for our community while feeding our soil and maintaining financial viability.

We believe in the work we do and think of this mission every day. We strive to make improvements to our business every year.

## About

Lisa MacDougall is the owner and general manager of the farm (cell: 781-307-6801). The farm was established in January of 2007. We are located at 280 Rod and Gun Club Road, Shaftsbury, VT 05252.

We grow a lot of different types of vegetables. Everything from watermelons and tomatoes to basil and potatoes. We mostly grow annual veggies. We do grow strawberries, which is our only biennial/perennial crop. Fruit trees are planted but have yet to bear a crop.

We market our produce in several different ways. We have a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), which runs from June through March. Pickups are Tuesdays in Williamstown; Fridays at the farm; and Saturdays at the farm. We have approximately 225 members. We attend the Dorset Farmers market on Sundays (50 weeks a year). We also wholesale to Wild Oats Co-Op and Mezza Bistro in Williamstown, MA; Natures Market in Manchester, VT; and Mach's Market in Pawlet, VT.

## FARM VALUE STATEMENT:

At Mighty Food Farm We have a core set of values that drives our daily decision making and long-term planning.

### Farm Values:

1. Hard Work – Farming by its very nature is demanding work. We try our hardest every day, throughout the seasons to take care of crops and our customer's needs.
2. Follow through – Every job on the farm is significant. Whether it is washing spinach, cultivating carrots, or loading the truck for deliveries; it ALL matters. When a team member says they will complete a task, you can expect it to be done, and be done well.
3. Accountability – The farm team has expectations of all its members to follow through. To maintain our upbeat and positive team morale, we hold each other accountable for tasks and jobs.
4. Honesty – We are honest with our customers, with our team members, and in our business dealings. We speak the truth and walk the walk. *"Reputation Outweighs Profit, every time"*
5. Respect – We are all individuals, and we recognize that. Team members opinions and thoughts are listened to and appreciated. We foster a caring and loving workplace.
6. Environmental Integrity - We are Certified Organic. Farming via its very nature can be hard on the soil. We are working constantly towards a more sustainable operation, be that reducing plastic waste, using less imported fertilizers, or composting our lunch scraps. It all matters, and we have a vision of benefiting our surrounding environment and mitigating farm waste. We try to improve production practices each year to benefit and do no harm to the environment.
7. Focus – The farm season has a flow, from busy times to times where more planning than action is needed. We maintain focus throughout the seasons to better improve our growing practices, customer service, and business plans.
8. Fun – Farming is a lot of work. We try to make the hard days light-hearted and enjoyable. Sharing stories, listening to music, telling jokes, and chatting during the workday is encouraged while focus is maintained on the task at hand.
9. Attention to Detail – It is the extra care and patience of planting, harvesting, washing, packing, pruning, weeding, setting up the CSA or market booth, and all other farm tasks that makes our product great! Focus on your task and motivate to see them small details that make it special and know that it makes a difference!
10. Food for All – We grow amazing vegetables! We want all people to have access to it. We donate to the local food banks, contribute to event, and give back when possible. It is important to reach out to our local community and participate.

## **Employee Information**

**“Seasonal Employee”** = Less than 6 months on farm.

**“Full Time Employee”** = 6 months or more on the farm.

### **Equal Opportunity**

We hire, promote, and make work assignments based on employee qualifications, without regard to race, religion, sex, color, age, nation or origin, or a disability unrelated to the job in question as per requirements of relevant state and federal laws. Discriminatory behavior by anyone in this farm business will not be tolerated.

### **Harassment**

The Farm strongly disapproves of any form of harassment including but not limited to ethnic, racial, gender, or sexual harassment. Actions, overtures, or remarks involving ethnic or religious animosity, or conduct of a sexual nature will not be tolerated. Employees have the responsibility to bring any form of harassment to the supervisor’s attention. In the case that the person alleged of harassment is the supervisor, the complaint should be taken to Lisa. Reporting employees will not be subject to reprisal and all reports will be confidential. We will investigate the report promptly and in as confidential a manner as possible. We will review the results of the investigation with the individual making the report. If we determine that an employee engaged in harassment, disciplinary action will be taken. Harassment may be a legal issue and the processes of this manual are not a substitute for the legal process to which every individual is entitled.

### **The “Employment-at-Will” Statement**

Your employment with Mighty Food farm is entered voluntarily and you are free to resign at any time. Similarly, because an “at will” relationship exists, your employment can be terminated at any time for any reason.

### **Working Time and Schedule**

Regular summer hours are normally 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Springtime (march – April) and Fall (October-December) will have shorter days 6 to 7 hours. These hours may and will vary depending on weather and other farm business factors. We take a 15-minute, paid break in the morning. Lunch is 30-minutes and is paid. Break times are not set, but we do try to break right at 12:00 or 12:30 for lunch. Please try to go to the bathroom, fill your water bottle, and change any clothes on break and lunch.

Winter hours are 15 to 30 hours per week. 9:00 am to 3:00/3:30 pm (subject to change with weather).

## **Overtime**

The nature of farming sometimes results in a long day. We will ask you to stay late a few times a year for several of the following reasons: to cover crops to protect them from frost; planting; or other project. We try to let you know at least 24 hours in advance.

## **Attendance and Lateness**

We like punctuality at Mighty Food Farm. Please arrive on time in the morning. We have a “morning” and “afternoon” meeting, which is full of details for harvest instructions, projects for the day, notes for the day, and other valuable information to make the day run smoothly. Frequent lateness or an unreasonable number of absences (to be determined by Lisa, general manager) can and will result in termination of your job at Mighty Food Farm. Arriving at exactly the time the workday begins is not acceptable. Allow time to put your things away, wash your hands, and get ready for the day. We have our morning meeting promptly every day.

## **Reporting Absences**

Protocol: Tell Lisa via text/face to face/phone → write on calendar → tell fellow employees

We have a calendar in the Employee Area where events such as doctors’ appointments, weddings, personal days, and other engagements should be recorded as far in advance as possible. If you are sick or must be absent suddenly call or text Lisa at 781-307-6801 between 5:00 and 7:00 a.m. in the morning or preferably the night before (before 9:00 p.m.). Call or text the evening of your absence to let Lisa know if you will be in the following day. We make plans for the day according to the present crew. Notification of your absence is crucial.

## **Morning/Afternoon Meetings**

Morning meetings are especially important. Game plans, harvest lists, packing lists, and notes are distributed for the day. We will also typically have an afternoon meeting after lunch time to check in and go over the afternoon plan.

## **Weekly Meetings**

We have weekly meetings every Thursday after lunch (1:00 pm). We check in about how the week is going and make the list for the following week. Participation is encouraged. Weekly meetings are a time to make plans, bring up ideas, address conflict, and be together. They are fun!

## **Work Clothing**

We work outside in all weather (except lightening). Please be sure to look at the weather the night before you come into work so you can dress appropriately. We will provide rubber bib overalls, rubber

jacket, and gloves for working in rain. Please keep an extra pair of clothing (socks and shoes too!) in your car so you can change as need-be. We suggest a sturdy pair of hiking boots, sun hat/baseball cap, and pants with good pockets for working on the farm. Sandals are not allowed of any kind. If working near tractors (even transplanting) long hair must be tied back. Hair also must be tied back, and a hat must be worn in the packing shed. We will provide sunscreen. During Covid 19 a mask must be worn, covering your nose, mouth, and snug fitting. We have cloth and disposable masks available in the employee area. If your mask is seen as insufficient, Lisa will ask you to use a different one.

### **Farm Produce for Employees**

We want our employees to have access to produce! You grow eat and should eat it too! Employees will automatically get a small CSA share during the duration of their work (either a main season or full season CSA share for those who work during the winter). Employees who work during the winter (December through March) will also receive a winter CSA share. Employees are responsible for ordering their CSA share. We have a “donation stack” on the left-hand side of cooler #1. The donation stack is most full on Monday mornings after weekend CSA pick-ups and farmers markets. Produce picked for orders, markets, or CSA in the coolers is not for employees to take.

### **Recording Hours**

Each employee is responsible for recording their hours. The “Payroll Notebook” is in the crew area. Each timesheet records two weeks of work. Our pay periods are bi-weekly. **Please write neatly** we need to be able to correctly tally your hours.

### **Pay Period**

BE SURE ALL HOURS ARE RECORDED DAILY. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT DAY. The pay period is biweekly, beginning Monday and ending the following Sunday evening. Payday is every other Tuesday (sometimes Wednesday). Paychecks will be handed out either after lunch on Tuesday or after the workday on Tuesday. If you are absent for the day your paycheck will be on the employee table. Payroll is done “in house.” The farm bookkeeper calculates payroll. You will be given a W-4 at the beginning of the season to fill out. Be sure to use a permanent address. W-2 will be mailed to that permanent address.

### **Payroll Deductions**

We are required to withhold for federal and state income tax and social security tax.

### **Pay Rate**

New employees are started at [for 2021] \$12.50. Wages are based on experience and are up to the discretion of Lisa, general manager.

**Raises**

At the beginning of the second, third, fourth (etc....) season at the farm, an employee will receive a raise. That raise is \$1.00/hour. More will be given if an employee has shown exceptional motivation, leadership, and overall dedication to the business and knowledge of vegetable production.

**Pay Advances and Loans**

We do not offer pay advances or loans to employees.

**Vacation**

Employees are entitled to take vacation. Employees who have been working at the farm for 2 seasons, full time (through the winter) are entitled to 1-week paid vacation based on their hourly wage for 40 hours. Vacations are to be taken during the "off season" December through April. Employees who have been working on the farm for less than 2 years are not eligible for paid vacations.

**Sick Leave**

Sick leave is to be used in case of personal illness only. Long-term/Full-Time employees can accumulate paid sick days in case of major illness over several years. Seasonal employees' sick days do not carry over from one season to another. Part-Time, Seasonal employees do not get paid sick days.

**Paid Holidays**

We do not provide paid holiday benefits. We work on the holidays during the season, which includes Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Veterans Day, and Labor Day. We might take a half day or the day off if we are able, but please plan on working holidays. We do not schedule work on Thanksgiving or Christmas.

**Funeral Leave**

Full time year-round employees who have worked at least one year are eligible for up to two consecutive paid funerals leave in the event of the death of an immediate family member. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family members include spouses, live-in partners, children, siblings, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law, siblings-in-law, stepparents, stepchildren, step siblings and any of these listed relations of your spouse or live-in partner.

**Jury Duty**

Employees will be given a leave of absence during jury duty. Employees who have been working for three full years at the farm (more than 8 months of work during the year) will be eligible to be paid for

this absence. To be granted leave for jury duty, please bring in your call to jury duty paperwork to Lisa. If you are eligible to be paid, please bring in the record of what you have been paid from the court.

### **Religious Observance**

We respect the wishes of employees to practice their religion as their faith dictates. If you inform Lisa in advance, and we can work together to reasonable accommodate an absence for religious reasons, your request for time off will be granted. Unpaid.

### **Layoffs**

Due to the seasonal nature of our business, we must lay off employees at a certain time of the year. Most people who have been laid off have been told of their duration of employment at the beginning of the season. If you have questions regarding his please ask Lisa. You will be given at least two weeks' notice in the event of being laid off early. Farming is seasonal work and end dates for your work will be established early in the season (June/July)

### **Giving Notice**

Though you may leave your job "at-will", we ask that you give us two weeks' notice before leaving.

### **Workers Compensation**

As required by law we provide Workers' compensation for all employees. Workers' Compensation covers medical expenses related to an on-the-job injury or illness. The insurance coverage is paid by your employer. Please report and on the-job injury or illness immediately to Lisa or another manager. At the time of injury, you should fill out a Worker's Compensation form even if no outside medical treatment is required.

### **Personnel File**

It is important for us to have up-to-date records. Please inform Lisa if any of the following information changes:

Your Name, Address, Telephone Number, Marital Status, Number of Dependents, and your primary Emergency contact.

Your Personnel file is always available upon your request.

### **Smoking**

We are a smoke free farm. NO smoking on the farm is allowed.

**Parking**

Parking on the farm is restricted to around the barns. When CSA pickups are happening, we ask to park your vehicle farther from the CSA room entrance to allow members proximity.

**Phone Calls**

Please make personal phone calls during lunch or after work hours. No personal phone calls or texts are allowed during work hours (exceptions made for medical, veterinarian, car mechanics, and family emergencies etc..). You can text and call on the 15-morning break and at lunch.

**Texting**

No personal text messaging during work hours (exceptions made for medical, veterinarian, car mechanics, and family emergencies). You can text during your breaks and during lunch.

**Walkie Talkies**

Walkie-talkies are for communication between field crew, pack crew, tractor drive, and managers. Please be sure to recharge them at the charging station at the end of the day. Please do not lose them and take care to not damage them.

**Safety**

Safety is of paramount importance to us and our goal is to do everything in our power to provide a safe work environment for you and your co-workers. First Aid Kits are in each of the farm trucks, located behind the seats. The First Aid Kits are in the farm shop, the employee area, in each of the farm trucks, and the horse barn. Please notify Lisa if you notice a need for re-stocking. If you are involved in an accident which results in injury to your or another worker or damage to machinery, notify Lisa immediately. If, at any time, you have suggestions for how we can make our farm a safer place to work, please discuss your ideas with us.

**Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

No consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs and/or operating under the influence of these is unacceptable during the workday. No underage consumption of alcohol is permitted on the farm at any time. We ask that your recreational use of alcohol does not interfere with your work performance during work hours. If for some reason it is apparent that you are consistently hung-over when coming into work in the morning your position may be terminated.

## **Vehicles and Equipment**

You may be asked to use farm vehicles in your work on the farm. You must have a valid driver's license to drive a truck or car and you must carry a license with you. Drive slowly (at most 10 mph) around the farmyard and farm fields, watching carefully for other people, vehicles, and animals. Deliberate or negligent abuse of farm equipment will result in disciplinary action. Report any problems immediately. Check gas meter regularly. We have a farm mechanic, but it is your responsibility to notify us when gas is low or of other problems.

When driving with crew members in the back of the bed of the farm trucks, before moving wait for "TWO TAPS" on the side of the truck to know that everybody is secured and ready to go. No faster than 20 mph on the road with crew or employees in the back of the trucks. Roll up vehicle windows during lunch and at the end of the day.

## **General Safety and Guidelines for Farm Etiquette**

- General Safety Report all on-the-job injuries promptly to Lisa.
- Maintain order in your work area.
- Always follow all safety precautions.
- Always bend your knees when you lift objects and get help with heavier loads.
- Wear protective equipment if the job requires it (ear plugs, respiratory masks, goggles)
- Wear sun protection/long sleeves.
- Know where first aid equipment and fire extinguishers are located.
- Training for jobs involving equipment are done by Lisa unless otherwise assigned by Lisa.
- Communicate a problem as soon as you recognize it—preferably while it is only a potential problem. Put tools back in their intended place.

## **Kneel, squat, bend, but please no sitting on your butt in the field**

Though we often work close to the ground, we never actually sit on the ground (or crates or buckets) while working. This rule is to help maintain our standards of efficiency and effectiveness. We kneel, bend at our hips, and squat or other. Knee pads are provided for comfort. Working in the field always involves moving, and it is never efficient or effective to move in or from a seated position. When you need help, please ask. Of course, there are tasks (like cracking garlic, seeding in the greenhouse, etc....) you do not need to move from one place to another and sitting on the ground or a bucket is the most effective position you can be in.

## **Conflict Communication**

We work closely together and the potential for co-worker conflict can arise. Please do not let things build. Let Lisa know if there is a problem, and if I can assist. I am happy to help mediate and help any conflict that may arise. Be kind, be respectful, remain in the present moment, and let your needs be known. We are a close-knit team and show respect for others, always!

## **Discipline**

To operate a safe and successful business we must observe and follow all company rules and regulations. If your behavior interferes with the orderly and efficient operations of our farm, disciplinary action may result. The following is a partial list of actions that are grounds for disciplinary action.

- Reporting to work under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Buying, selling, growing, transporting or possession of illegal drugs on the farms; property or in farm vehicles.
- Taking illegal drugs or abusing prescription drugs on the farm's property or in the farm vehicles.
- Theft.
- Dishonesty or an attempt to defraud the business.
- Falsify timesheets for yourself or another employee.
- Recklessness or gross negligence leading to a serious or potential accident.
- Sleeping on the job.
- Unauthorized possession of firearms or explosives on the farms' property or in farm vehicles.
- Willingly, knowingly, or purposefully damaging farm equipment or vehicles.
- Insubordination or disregard for your managers and/or assignments.
- Discourteous or inconsiderate treatment of customers, fellow employees, and/or employers.
- Fighting or provoking a fight on the farm.
- Excessive or habitual tardiness or absence from work.

The above list is not inclusive; unacceptable conduct not listed above may lead to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may be a written warning, oral warning, suspension from work without pay, or termination of your job. If an employee exhibits any of the above actions termination of your job is imminent without written or oral warning you will be fired.

*Thank you* for taking the time to read these policies. If you have any questions, please ask Lisa.