



Farm Aid Job Posting:  
**Hotline Program Manager**

**Date:** Summer 2021

**Job Classification / Employment Category:** Exempt / Full-time employee

**Position Location:** Cambridge, Massachusetts

**Reports to:** Operations Director

**Supervises:** Farmer Hotline Operators

**Overview and Organizational Summary**

Farm Aid is a national, not for profit organization that works year-round to promote a vibrant, just and resilient family farm-centered system of agriculture in America. With music as our inspiration and farmers as our heroes, we envision a transformed America in which family farmers and citizens are active partners in a thriving food system that ensures farmers a fair living, justly nourishes people and communities, protects and sustains natural resources, and secures a prosperous future for all.

Artists and Board members Willie Nelson, Neil Young and John Mellencamp organized the first Farm Aid concert in 1985 to raise awareness about the loss of family farms and to raise funds to keep farm families on the land. Dave Matthews joined the Farm Aid Board of Directors in 2001. Our annual music festival celebrates farmers, eaters and music coming together for change. Since 1985, Farm Aid has raised over \$60 million to support programs that help farmers thrive, expand the reach of the good food movement, take action to change the dominant system of industrial agriculture, and promote food from family farms.

Through direct service, grant making, community building, communications, and offering opportunities to engage meaningfully, Farm Aid works to:

- **Amplify** the voice of family farmers to bring attention to the challenges they face and the benefits they bring
- **Connect** farmers to resources and opportunity, connect farmers to eaters, and in general connect people so that they may cultivate community and power
- **Celebrate** family farmers, good food and the culture of agriculture, in which we all can participate
- **Empower** farmers and eaters to participate in a democratic, just and sustainable farm and food system
- **Invest** talent, time and money in efforts that effect positive change in the farm and food system

Farm Aid is seeking a full-time Hotline Program Manager to support its mission and goals to help farmers thrive by advancing the capacity and coordination of farm advocates and farm service providers nationwide.

Farm Aid recognizes that people gain skills through a variety of professional, personal, educational, and volunteer experiences. We encourage candidates to review the key responsibilities and qualifications below. If you believe you have not only the transferable skills necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of this role, but also a unique and valuable perspective to offer, we encourage you to apply.

### **Job Summary and Purpose**

The Hotline Program Manager advances Farm Aid’s goals of helping farmers thrive by stewarding Farm Aid’s national farmer hotline programming, including the 1-800-FARM-AID hotline and farmhelp@farmaid.org email service, Farmer Resource Network (FRN). Farm Aid’s hotline program goals include meeting the unique resource needs of farmers by providing quality referrals, advice, content and emotional support. The hotline also provides important insight and information about the needs of farmers nationwide and the availability of services, programs and policies to meet those needs, which informs Farm Aid’s communications and advocacy campaigns in support of our mission to cultivate a vibrant and just agricultural system. The Hotline Program Manager is responsible for managing and improving Farm Aid’s hotline programming in support of these goals, including the development and management of the hotline operator team. The Hotline Manager also provides programmatic support to other farmer services work to ensure the implementation and effectiveness of related projects and initiatives. Key areas of responsibility are to:

- Guide the development, improvement, reporting and evaluation of Farm Aid’s national farmer referral service, including synthesizing what we learn to inform Farm Aid’s communications and advocacy campaigns.
- Supervise, guide, mentor and support Farm Aid hotline staff, ensuring effective training, resources and professional development.
- In collaboration with the Farmer Services Network Manager, continue to develop the Farmer Resource Network (FRN) in general and for the implementation of the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN), a national, USDA program to establish a network that connects individuals who are engaged in farming, ranching, and other agriculture-related occupations to stress assistance programs.
- Contribute expertise to Farm Aid’s organizational development, and participate in ongoing activities, planning and implementation, including the annual grant program and festival.

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### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:**

#### **Hotline Program Management** (Estimated to comprise 50% of effort)

1. Guide the development and implementation of hotline programming, including the increase in quality and quantity of referrals, and the maintenance and updating of hotline service guidelines, protocols and policies, informed by changes in practices, as appropriate.

2. Ensure the ongoing, effective delivery of hotline programming, including consistent schedule of coverage spanning Eastern to Pacific time, and professional and timely responses. Provide regular operation of the hotline and email service, and additional backup as needed, providing farmers with relevant information and referrals, advice and emotional support, and response to inquiries within 48 hours of initial outreach.
3. Coordinate and participate in NE-FRSAN working groups, cohorts, and as a member of the advisory team, in keeping with Hotline, FRN and resource library development goals, and grant obligations as appropriate. Collaborate with the Western Region-FRSAN team on hotline operation and clearinghouse program.
4. Steward the Salesforce platform used for hotline call tracking, FRN and resource library systems, working with hotline and farmer services staff to ensure effective recordkeeping and timely tracking of all hotline contacts. Ensure the expansion of relevant resources, maintenance of database records, and meaningful reporting on data.
5. Oversee the recommendation and coordination of issuing emergency grants by hotline and farmer services staff to farm families in crisis. Coordinate with grant program and other Farm Aid staff to inform guidelines and ensure adherence to grant program guidelines, budget and operations/accounting record keeping.
6. Monitor literature and listservs for emerging resources for farmers, with a focus on beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers, crisis and disaster assistance, financial counseling, legal support and mental health offerings. Translate emerging resources for farmers into relevant content, including Farmer Resource Guides, collaborating with farmer services, communications, and marketing staff to ensure timely content is made available through FA communication channels.
7. Collaborate with Farmer Services team on the ongoing development of Farm Aid's farm advocate and disaster programming.
8. Regularly review progress towards implementing program goals and objectives, ensuring hotline program is evaluated and leveraged for optimal impact.

**Staff Alignment, Empowerment and Accountability** (Estimated to comprise 25% of effort)

1. Supervise and empower Farm Aid hotline staff, supporting development of individual and collaborative goals and priorities, providing a sounding board and mentorship, and ensuring timely and appropriate training, development and support.
2. Promote culture of continuous improvement that values learning and a commitment to quality.
3. Recruit, hire, and oversee training, onboarding and evaluation of hotline staff; design and facilitate an effective training and professional development program for hotline operators.

**Hotline Program Evaluation & Reporting** (Estimated to comprise 15% of effort)

1. Document and analyze hotline, email and resource directory usage and issue regular reports to inform internal staff and external constituencies of activities, farmer experiences

and trends, synthesizing what we learn from the hotline to inform Farm Aid's communications and advocacy campaigns.

2. Design and implement an evaluation framework to assess the strengths of Farm Aid's hotline program and identify areas for improvement around service delivery, quality and availability of services and impact on farmer livelihoods.

**General and Festival** (Estimated to comprise up to 10% of effort)

1. Engage in planning and implementation of annual festival programming and event functions in general, with emphasis on farmer engagement where applicable.
2. Represent Farm Aid at farm conferences, meetings, trainings and with media as needed, to connect with partners and drive programmatic goals forward.
3. Participate in staff meetings, reviews, planning retreats and other related activities in support of organizational goals.
4. Other duties as assigned.

**Required Qualifications:**

- A minimum of three years' supervisory experience with demonstrated aptitude in team leadership, development, and support.
- A minimum of three years' experience in program development and implementation in the food and agriculture sector or the social services sector.
- Knowledge of farmer programs and services, including federal farm loan programs, federal disaster programs, beginning farmer programs, legal needs, and culturally appropriate mental health practices.
- Demonstrated experience and aptitude for working with individuals in crisis.
- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills, particularly active listening. Demonstrated compassion for people dealing with challenging situations and capacity to problem-solve. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with people from diverse backgrounds, and practice sound judgment in maintaining professional boundaries and confidential information.
- Demonstrated team player, with initiative and ability to work both independently and with others.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; English fluency with speaking, reading and writing required.
- Experience and demonstrated proficiency with data documentation and tracking; technical proficiency with Microsoft Office (Word and Excel); technical proficiency with CRM/database management systems (Salesforce preferred).
- Willingness and flexibility for periodic national travel as needed (less than 5% anticipated).

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Agricultural mediation training or other trainings critical to effective farm advocacy a plus.
- Experience with mental health and crisis training (such as QPR, mental health first aid, etc.).
- Experience developing, facilitating and/or implementing training workshops.
- Experience working directly with farmers and rural communities.
- Spanish or other language skills a plus.
- A sense of humor, integrity, and an optimistic outlook.

**Ongoing Learning includes:**

- Professional development in developing, coaching, and managing a team of staff.
- Continued education around landscape of service providers and resources across the country, with a focus on beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers (specifically BIPOC farmers and ranchers), crisis and disaster assistance, financial resources, legal support, and mental health offerings.
- Professional development to increase awareness of and skill set around hotline operation, farmer services resources, project management, and development and use of appropriate technologies.
- Mental health and crisis training, agricultural mediation training, and/or other trainings that are critical to effective farm advocacy, such as farm financial counseling and legal supports.
- QPR/Mental Health First Aid certification (initial and renewal certification fees will be covered as needed)

**Work Environment:**

This position is based out of Farm Aid's office in Cambridge, MA. This position is responsible for supervising, coaching, and providing support to a remote team of operators on the hotline, requiring regular engagement with people under stress and/or dealing with dire circumstances. It can be unpredictable depending on the volume of hotline calls, natural disasters, and other challenges facing farmers. As such, the Hotline Program Manager is expected to develop resources, training and services that support hotline staff, and be able to shift between intensive referral work and broader program management.

In line with Farm Aid's collaborative culture, this position is expected to bring ideas to other members of Farm Aid staff for discussion and approval and seeks to inform entire staff of related activities and initiatives. Position demands ability to work well under pressure, handle multiple tasks at once and adapt to changing situations on a daily basis.

**Pay & Benefits:**

Salary range for this position is \$56,000 - \$60,000.

Benefits include 100% health insurance premium coverage; four weeks of paid vacation; paid sick time; option to participate in company IRA, FSA and Employee Assistance plans; longevity bonus

program rewarding each year of service; as well as an exciting work environment with smart, passionate people seeking to make change in our food and farm system.

### **How To Apply:**

If you possess many of Farm Aid's required and desired characteristics and qualifications and are excited about this opportunity, we'd love to hear from you!

- Submit your complete application to [hire@farmaid.org](mailto:hire@farmaid.org) with "Hotline Program Manager" in the subject line. Please include in the email your personal pronouns for how you like to be addressed and attach the enclosures listed below. Note that incomplete applications may not be reviewed. Enclosures include:
  - a **cover letter** indicating where you learned of this opportunity and highlighting your experience and skills relevant to the position and listed qualifications
  - a **current resume**, and
  - a **writing sample or example of relevant work**.
- We will accept and consider applications as they are received and on a rolling basis, and seek to complete the hiring process as soon as possible.
- Farm Aid will confirm receipt of your application and will reach out directly *only* if you are being considered a candidate for the position.
- No calls please.

*Farm Aid is an equal opportunity employer and as such, we do not discriminate against any team member or candidate because of race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, or any other basis protected by law. We encourage all to apply because we believe a diversity of voices leads to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone.*

For more information about Farm Aid, please visit [www.farmaid.org](http://www.farmaid.org)