

Ag Lands Program Director

Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT)

Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT) seeks an experienced, passionate Ag Lands Program Director to help establish OAT's farm and ranch land conservation program and our technical assistance program.

Position duties include conserving ag land in priority areas of the Willamette Valley, working with the Executive Director to identify and build community partnerships in new priority regions, stewarding and monitoring conserved farms and ranches, providing technical assistance on working land preservation to other organizations, and leading OAT's new Ag Lands Committee of the Board.

About Us

Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT) is a new, statewide land trust that partners with Oregon farmers and ranchers to protect and pass on their land for future generations. OAT launched in January of 2020 after several years of gathering community feedback on how to provide comprehensive agricultural land protection services throughout the state. Columbia Land Trust is our fiscal sponsor while our 501(c)(3) status is pending.

OAT works collaboratively with regional and statewide partners to hold agricultural easements and ag land in fee title in priority geographies within Oregon. We also partner with regional leaders to:

- educate farmers, ranchers, service providers, and the public about preserving and passing on agricultural land;
- increase the capacity of partner organizations to preserve agricultural land for production; and
- advocate for programs and incentives that support agricultural land preservation.

Position Description

Status: Full-time (exempt). Employee of OAT, not our fiscal sponsor.

Compensation: Starting salary \$60,000 – 65,000 plus benefits, DOE.

Reports to: Oregon Agricultural Trust's Executive Director

Direct reports: None currently, anticipating 1-2 future reports within 3 years.

The Ag Lands Program Director is the first member of OAT's Ag Lands team. Responsibilities include:

Land Protection

- Identifying, developing, and completing ag land protection projects, primarily in priority areas of the Willamette Valley. This includes: landowner outreach, project assessment, negotiation and closing, meeting state/federal tax requirements, and preparing baseline documentation;
- Identifying and pursuing grants and other funding for: land and conservation easement acquisitions, outreach and prospecting, and (in some cases) general operating support;
- Developing and sustaining partner and landowner relationships; and
- Leading and coordinating the Ag Lands Committee, which reports to OAT's Board.

Program Development

- Participating in strategic planning, conservation planning, and communications planning; and
- Preparing maps and data to inform planning, outreach, land protection projects, and stewardship efforts.

Stewardship and Enforcement

- Conducting monitoring and stewardship activities until OAT has sufficient acquisitions to justify stewardship staff; and
- Leading the resolution of easement violations and interpretation disagreements.

Generally

- Working cooperatively with colleagues, Directors, and Committee members;
- Staying current on local, regional, and national land trust topics and issues; and
- Ensuring compliance with land protection and stewardship policies and procedures.

Qualifications

- 5-8 years land conservation experience;
- Bachelor's degree;
- Understanding of the methods and best practices for ag land conservation and stewardship;
- Passion for agricultural land, its preservation, and agricultural communities;
- Excitement for developing a new program at a new land trust, and openness to making program adjustments based on new experience and information;
- Interested in participating in all aspects of ag land preservation and access by the next generation. Willing to assist other staff when needed;
- Experienced user of Microsoft office suite, ArcGIS and GPS technology;
- Valid driver's license and a vehicle that can be used for nearby business travel; and
- Must be able to walk over rough terrain and to lift up to 50 lbs, as needed.

Required Experience and Skills

- Track record of successful project management;
- Track record of identifying, developing, and closing agricultural conservation easements and/or fee acquisitions. Able to manage multiple projects and competing priorities;
- Track record of resolving conservation easement violations or similar conflict resolution;
- Experience building and sustaining partnerships with other organizations;
- Strong strategic thinking abilities;
- Experience developing and implementing conservation, strategic, or other organizational plans and policies;
- Strong spoken and written communications skills;
- Ability to communicate well with and gain the trust of agricultural landowners;
- Willingness to work with people from diverse backgrounds;
- Flexible, creative, self-starter; and
- Highly organized, detail-oriented, and adept at prioritizing tasks.

Working Conditions

- OAT's office is in Salem, OR. Remote work and flexible working arrangements can be negotiated.
- As necessary, must be able to work before/after normal business hours and some weekends.
- Frequent automobile travel throughout Oregon's Willamette Valley, and approximately monthly travel to other regions of the state; some overnight travel.
- While most position responsibilities are conducted by computer, outdoor walking will be required for site visits and stewardship and monitoring activities.

Application

Applications due by 5:00pm Pacific Time on Monday, March 9, 2020.

Submit résumé and cover letter in one pdf to Nellie McAdams, Executive Director, via email to jobs@oregonagtrust.org. Please refer any questions to this email address as well.

No phone calls, please.