

SD Specialty Producers(SDSPA) Urban Agriculture Liaison

Description

The SDSPA Urban Ag Liaison serves as a critical bridge between South Dakota's urban producers and technical and financial resources to scale their operations. This role is highly field-oriented, providing direct, on-site technical assistance to producers to improve conservation practices and operational efficiency. The Liaison identifies infrastructure needs, guides producers through the NRCS cost-share application process, and bridges the gap between technical conservation goals and on-the-ground implementation. This position requires regular travel for site visits, workshops, and partner engagements.

About SDSPA

SDSPA is a nonprofit composed of a diverse, geographically dispersed group of specialty producers. Founded in 2001, we represent non-commodity products including fruits, vegetables, specialty meats, honey, and agritourism, providing the education and connections necessary for local food systems to thrive.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

- **On-Site Technical Assistance:** Conduct regular site visits to urban farms to evaluate resource concerns, provide management recommendations, and identify necessary infrastructure improvements (e.g., high tunnels, irrigation, weed control).
- **NRCS Program Navigation:** Actively connect producers to local NRCS field offices. Assist producers in understanding Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and other cost-share opportunities.
- **Technical Education & Outreach:** Deliver on-site training that connects conservation goals to the producer's bottom line, covering everything from sustainable production and pest management to efficient harvesting techniques and identifying profitable market channels
- **Partnership Development:** Build relationships with industry partners to expand the reach of urban conservation programs.

Required Skills & Qualifications

- **Conservation Expertise:** Strong knowledge of soil health, agronomy, and natural resource conservation specifically applied to small-scale or urban environments.
- **Operational Knowledge:** Hands-on experience in diversified vegetable production, controlled environment agriculture, or intensive gardening systems.
- **Communication:** Strong interpersonal skills to build trust with diverse producers and effectively advocate for their needs with government agencies.
- **Logistics:** Must have a valid driver's license, reliable transportation for statewide travel, and a personal computer for administrative tasks.

Compensation & Terms

- **Type:** Independent Contractor (1099).
- **Rate:** \$35.00 – \$42.00 per hour, commensurate with experience.
- **Schedule:** Flexible, project-based hours.
- **Peak Season:** Anticipated workload of approximately 30 hours per week during the primary production season (April 15th – Sept 15th).
- **Travel:** Reimbursable travel expenses (or mileage) provided per SDSPA policy.

Application Requirements: Submit a cover letter and resume, with the subject line "Urban Agriculture Liaison" to sdspacontractor@gmail.com Application accepted until March 1st, 2026