Yale Sustainable Food Program
Yale Farm Summer Internship
June 1–August 6, 2021

Description

Since 2003, the Yale Sustainable Food Program has awarded Yale College students an opportunity to engage in food and agriculture through direct, hands-on learning at the Yale Farm and in the broader community. Each summer, a select group of Yale Farm Summer Interns:

- Learn how to cultivate our one-acre urban plot at hand-scale, using organic methods including seeding, pest management, crop rotation, and irrigation
- Learn how to harvest and effectively market vegetables to urban consumers
- Become familiar with agricultural economics
- Learn the critical thinking skills necessary to manage complex agricultural systems
- Hone teaching and public speaking skills while hosting groups and volunteers each week
- Gain a unique understanding of food security issues in New Haven
- Improve credibility for careers within and outside the food movement
- Participate in weekly courses to expand their understanding of topics related to food, agriculture, and the environment
- Take a series of field trips to farms and organizations across Connecticut and New England

The Yale Sustainable Food Program is dedicated to educating the next generation of food literate leaders. The Yale Farm Summer Internship can act as a springboard for students who wish to incorporate tenets of sustainable food and agriculture into their course of study at Yale and their subsequent careers.

Responsibilities

- With the Farm Manager and the Yale Farm Senior Intern, Interns are responsible for the day-to-day management of the Farm, including: planting, cultivation, irrigation pest and weed control, soil management, harvesting, and selling our produce at farmers market
- Interns act as ambassadors for the Yale Farm – they are expected to understand our mission, lead informative farm tours, and coordinate farm volunteers
- Interns participate in rotating shifts at the Wooster Square farmers’ market on Saturdays
- Interns plan, complete and present an independent project on a food and agriculture topic of their choosing

Qualifications
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1. Strong academic interest in food and agriculture
2. Ability to work in physically demanding conditions
3. Ability to work well in a small group
4. Have a demonstrated commitment to community-building, equity and inclusion

Mentorship & Training

The Yale Sustainable Food Program’s Farm Manager, Jeremy Oldfield, leads interns in their day-to-day work. The Yale Farm Senior Intern will assist in Intern training, group discussion, and off-farm mentorship. Interns will have the opportunity to be taught and mentored by dedicated members of the YSFP staff.

Yale Farm Summer Internship Award

Yale Farm Summer Interns are paid a total of $4,000; students are required to sign a contract before the first payment is administered.

Weekly Schedule

Interns work Tuesday through Saturday, 9:00am-4:00pm. We start each morning promptly with a crew check-in and a meeting to go over the day’s tasks. We take a one-hour break for lunch each day, with a special meal provided at least one day per week.

We sell our produce at City Seed’s Wooster Square Farmers’ Market each Saturday from 9:00am-1:00pm rain or shine. Pairs of interns rotate market shifts each week; those going to market arrive early Saturday morning (~7:00 am, in time set up) and are free to leave after returning from market (2:00 pm). The rest of the crew will work a regular day on the farm. On Fridays and Saturdays we often host visitors from other schools or organizations; being engaging educators is as important as being a stewards of the space.

A typical week looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Farm walk, farm training, farm work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Culinary Literacy class (pizza making, fermentation, etc.), farm work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Field trip to regional farm or food facility, farm work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Harvest for market, open farm workday</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Open farm workday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two interns at market 7:00 am-2:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Off</td>
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Classes and Trips

We strive to shape courses and trips to fit our students’ interests. These include:

**Thimble Island Oysters**: We head off to Branford for a full day to work on an oyster boat with “your local oysterman” Bren Smith. We also collect invasive Asian shore crabs for our friend Bun Lai at Miya’s Sushi.

**Massaro Community Farm**: Each summer we take several trips to this Community Supported Agriculture in nearby Woodbridge, CT. This mixed vegetable operation cultivates on 6+ acres, and offers an excellent introduction to farming at production scale.

**FreshPoint Produce Terminal**: Located near Hartford, CT, FreshPoint Connecticut sources much of Yale University’s produce. Interns hear about the state of wholesale food distribution from Vice President Dave Yandow and tour the terminal.

**Common Ground High School**: Common Ground is an environmental charter school in New Haven, CT with an urban farm, educational garden, and environmental center. We visit Common Ground to learn about the school’s programming and spend the afternoon doing farm work with Common Ground summer interns.

Classes have included:

- Basics of sustainable agriculture & managing soil fertility
- CitySeed: farmer’s markets & food justice
- Lacto-fermentation workshop
- Leadership, managing a work crew, and giving tours of the farm
- Notes from the field: cheese production with Professor Maria Trumpler
- Baking in a wood-fired hearth oven
- Farm and food lexicon
Independent Project

Early in the summer, each Intern generates a **guiding question** to lead their independent research on a topic related to food and agriculture. The guiding question should: engage critically with approach and methodology, reflect upon the student’s positioning in the research, acknowledge the context-dependency of the place and topic, and prioritize principles over prescriptions for food systems solutions. Interns present their work to the Yale community at the end of the summer, and they present their work as a part of the YSFP’s *knead 2 know* student speaker series during the academic year.

A Note on the COVID-19 Pandemic

The YSFP follows all Yale University health and safety protocols. As the University’s safety guidelines for Summer 2021 come into greater focus, we will update the Yale Farm Summer Internship’s schedule and opportunities. We hope to be outside working on the Yale Farm to the extent that it is safe.