

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Project Coordinator
The Food Trust

REPORTS TO: R. Duane Perry
Executive Director

LOCATION: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
www.TheFoodTrust.org



THE ORGANIZATION

The Food Trust, founded in 1992, grew out of a desire to bring affordable, nutritious, fresh fruits and vegetables to people in the inner city. Now in its second decade, The Trust's mission has expanded to ensure that everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food. With a 2004 budget of \$3.3 million and 23 employees, The Food Trust is generally regarded as one of the leading organizations nationally with a focus on community food security and nutrition education. This dynamic, forward-thinking agency has grown at an average rate of 50% in each year of its existence.

The Food Trust is committed to increasing access to affordable, nutritious food, improving health through better nutrition, and supporting local farms and sustaining the environment. Those goals are being pursued through three major programs:

- The School Market Program supports student-owned and operated food stands at several schools in the Philadelphia, Norristown and Reading school districts. The program's goal is to empower students, educate them about nutrition and improve their diets and health.
- A Comprehensive School Nutrition Policy is being developed through a Trust-initiated task force which is working with the School District of Philadelphia to pilot a policy designed to change the school environment to one which supports healthy eating, increased physical activity, and a decreased prevalence of childhood obesity and diet-related diseases.
- The Trust's signature program, the Farmers' Market Program supports 16 weekly open-air markets, which provide a major sales outlet for small-scale agricultural producers in the mid-Atlantic region. At the markets, Trust staff members use interactive displays to provide nutritional information. The Trust helps coordinate a Farmers Market Nutrition Program that reaches out to at-risk seniors and low-income mothers and their children.

Integral to its programmatic initiatives, The Food Trust functions as an advocate linking private business with communities, especially those most negatively affected by limited access to a range of fresh and nutritious foods. In this capacity, The Food Trust supports the Food Marketing Task Force and the Farm Fresh Package in partnership with SHARE. In collaboration with Greensgrow, The Food Trust convenes the Farmers' Market Alliance, an affiliation of diverse organizations in Southeast

Pennsylvania, working together to develop strategies to increase political and economic support for farmers' markets and to leverage public policy changes that will improve the viability of small family farms. The Trust also sponsors the Mid-Atlantic Food and Farm Coalition and the annual Future of Our Food and Farms Summit. In addition, the Trust supports a social marketing effort and is undertaking a public education and advocacy campaign in order to direct greater attention to the severe nutritional gaps faced by low-income residents of Philadelphia.

Primary funding for the Trust's initiatives is through the PA Nutrition Education Program, part of the USDA's Food Stamp Program, and USDA SARE. In addition, through a partnership with the University of Pennsylvania, a three-year grant has been provided by the Center for Disease Control to evaluate the impact of the school nutrition policy initiative on childhood obesity, thus validating the Trust's community-based interventions and ultimately supporting changes in public policy.

THE POSITION

The Food Trust issued a special report entitled "The Need for More Supermarkets in Philadelphia", as part of an initiative to provide "food for every child". The research study concluded the following: Philadelphia has too few supermarkets in low income areas of the City; low income Philadelphians suffer from heart disease, cancer, and diabetes at rates significantly higher than the general population; cutbacks in food stamp and public assistance programs have strained family budgets in many Philadelphia neighborhoods; and access to fresh, affordable, nutritious food must be improved if the health and well being of Philadelphians is to improve.

The Health and Human Services Committee of Philadelphia's City Council held public hearings on supermarket access in 2002. Following the hearings, City Councilors asked The Food Trust to convene the Food Marketing Task Force to educate the public, policy makers, and business leaders about the need for more supermarkets, and to develop public policy recommendations intended to reverse the documented diet and health problems. The Task Force, co-chaired by Christine James-Brown, President and CEO of the United Way, and Walter Rubel, Director of Government and Community Relations of Acme/Albertsons, Inc., met to craft a plan for supermarket development in Philadelphia. With the advice and consultation of Task Force members, ten recommendations were presented for action to the Mayor and Philadelphia City Council.

In 2004, the Pennsylvania legislature enacted a nationally-significant economic stimulus package (SB 1026) containing provisions supporting the development of supermarkets in underserved communities throughout Pennsylvania. Promoted by Governor Rendell and an alliance of food and farming interests, this legislation positions Pennsylvania as a national leader in developing supermarkets in underserved communities and promoting the sale of Pennsylvania farm products at farmers' markets. This initiative will improve access to nutritious foods for all Pennsylvanians, stimulate the development of community-based food retail enterprises, and generate additional markets for Pennsylvania's farmers.

The Project Coordinator will play a critical role in developing new supermarkets in Philadelphia, working with supermarkets, community organizations, City and state agencies, political leaders and financial intermediaries. The position of Project Coordinator will report to and work closely with the Executive Director of The Food Trust.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR THE POSITION

Serve as the point of contact for supermarket development inquiries.

Conduct market analysis of supermarket proposals to determine if:

1. the project is located, or will be located, in a rural or urban underserved area; and,
2. the local market will support such development.

Assess prospective developer and operator capabilities.

Provide direction and technical assistance to developers and operators on how to access state and federal programs.

Provide direction and technical assistance to developers and operators on how to access private capital.

Track supermarket development from point of contact to project completion.

Track use of state and federal programs related to supermarket development.

Provide a written reports on the above activities.

KEY ATTRIBUTES

Excellent administrative skills and the ability to establish clearly defined accountability systems designed to promote a results oriented approach to program administration.

An advanced degree would be desirable.

Knowledge of real estate development, city planning or related experience.

Strong written and verbal communication skills.

A professional with a style that promotes collaboration and communication.

The ability to work with others in a collegial environment to implement the agency's vision.

Team building skills and the ability to encourage innovative thinking about problems, opportunities, and situations. The ability to develop a clear sense of purpose, identity, and esprit de corps in others.

Strong written and verbal communication skills.

Adept at forging strong relationships with key people inside and outside the agency.

The ideal candidate will have the following personal characteristics: unquestioned integrity; personal stature; a passion for excellence; a high energy level; a sense of urgency; excellent listening skills; persuasive communications skills; an entrepreneurial spirit; a sense of humor; an open mind; a candid manner; a commitment to The Trust's mission.

E-mail your résumé and cover letter to contact@thefoodtrust.org or fax to 215-568-0882. Please reference "Project Coordinator" in the subject line.