

Recruiting

It is common in agriculture, as in other industries, to capitalize on the flow of information through friendship and kinship networks. Word of mouth from current employees is the primary channel for recruiting new ones to field crew jobs. Job seekers who become aware of possible openings may first approach crew foremen or field supervisors about employment, sometimes accompanied by a relative or friend already on the payroll. Those without a personal introduction can become “walk-in” recruits by showing up at the work site, company office, or known pick-up points in the morning.

Naturally, more workers come looking for jobs at businesses known as “good places to work.” Earning a reputation for fairness and respect is probably the most effective way of getting a leg up in recruitment, especially when the labor market is tight. Some growers who recognize the power of social networks in recruiting go out of their way not only to develop personal relations with their employees during periods of seasonal work activity but also to show them courtesies and stay in touch with them in Mexican home villages during the off-season.

Written and radio notices also reach many potential employees. Either method requires preparing some kind of job advertisement, ideally based on a job description. Length, language, and placement of a recruiting ad depend on the nature of the job to be filled. When aiming to fill a management position, for example, it is sensible to use farm magazines, major newspapers, or college placement offices. When recruiting for an entry production position, the ad is better placed in local papers, high school bulletin boards, community centers, other agricultural businesses, and service centers.

An effective recruiting ad informs, promotes interest, and encourages self-screening. To do so, it ought to include a descriptive job title, overview of major responsibilities, pay range, required and preferred qualifications, application deadline, employer identification, contact instructions, and any information about the company that may distinguish it as a good place to work — available housing, company values, bonus and advancement opportunities, etc. The three examples below obviously would have different effects on a given reader’s inclination to apply.

Three Ads for the Same Job

#1. Wanted: Hired worker. Phone 123-456-7890

#2. Wanted: Person for general farm work, full-time, on a beef and crop farm. Requires two years farm experience beyond high school. Good wage and benefit package. Call 123-456-7890 before March 31.

#3. Good with plants and animals? Oak Bluff Farms has an opening for a person to assist the owner/operator in management and production of beef and crops. The position offers considerable variety and opportunity for growth. At least two years farm experience or equivalent and/or ag education beyond high school required. Pay and benefit package among the best in the county, exact wage to be based on applicant’s experience and training. Write for application to Oak Bluff Farms (address) or come to farm and request an application form. Please apply before March 31, or call 123-456-7890 for additional information.

Suggestions for writing job ads are to: (1) adopt a natural, friendly style, (2) use large type and graphics to highlight the job title, (3) start off with a catchy opening line or phrase, and (4) make the job sound as interesting as possible without creating unreasonable expectations. Which of the three ads for the same job would lead the most people to apply?

Following are two informative recruiting ads found on company websites (names changed). The first announces one managerial job opening, the second several production and administrative jobs.



Wolf River Farms, the region's leading employer, has an immediate salaried opening in Human Resources for an Employment Supervisor supporting the Orchards Division. The position monitors the hiring of approximately 400 seasonal orchard employees annually, oversees the orchard recruitment process to ensure legal hiring practices, and travels to neighboring states on occasional recruiting trips. Requirements include a bachelor's degree in human resources or related field or at least five years equivalent experience, bilingual ability in English/Spanish, and excellent interpersonal skills with cultural awareness. For more information, visit our website at www.wrf.not. Interested applicants are urged to submit a resume by e-mail to jobs@wrf.not.



Current Employment Opportunities at Murray Nursery

- Production
- Propagation
- Landscape Services
- Delivery Driver
- Office Personnel
- Sales Representative

Production

Seeking individuals who are self-motivated, willing to work hard, and are anxious to grow with our company and fellow employee-owners in the general production areas of our nursery.

Desired Skills and Experience: Willingness to work hard, love of plants, and good communication skills.



Propagation

Seeking individuals who are self-motivated, willing to work hard, and are anxious to grow with our company and fellow employee-owners, in the propagation areas of our nursery.

Desired Skills and Experience: Love of plants, dedication, and willingness to work hard. Agricultural or horticultural background would be beneficial but not necessary.

Landscape Services

Landscape crew leaders and laborers needed for seasonal, as well as full-time year-round positions.

Desired Skills and Experience: Must possess plant material knowledge, ability to operate equipment and motivate work crew. For laborers, experience is beneficial, but not required. CDL beneficial, but not necessary.

Delivery Driver

Murray Nursery Company is looking for seasonal employees to work in a demanding job, yet be home every night. Full-time employment may be available to the right individual.

Desired Skills and Experience: Must have a good driving record, ability to read maps and directions and lift heavy plant material. Pre-employment drug screen and physical required.

Office Personnel

Seasonal data entry operators.

Desired Skills and Experience: Proficiency in all areas of data entry including ability to work independently, to trouble-shoot problems, and to communicate effectively.

Sales Representative

Should have a broad-based agri-related background. Will secure leads and interviews for residential and commercial landscape services in a designated Midwestern sales territory.

Desired Skills and Experience: Business courses, sales experience, horticulture and landscape design courses.