

AGRICULTURE SPECIALIST

DEFINITION OF WORK

Employee in this classification provides and administers the North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program in support of the Soil and Water Conservation District. An employee in this class presents applications and contracts to District Board of Supervisors, assists clients and farmers develop applications, contracts, and requests for payment, provides design and construction layout to clients, and assists with project implementation. Work includes addressing the needs of clients through the distribution of educational materials and consultation on conservation and horticultural topics and issues, researching and recommending solutions to clients; coordinating the application process with the Board in order to enhance water quality and conservation efforts in addition to enhancing the productivity from the land. Work also includes managing the district's grain drill rental program and assisting in the rain barrel fundraiser project. Work requires considerable creativity, independent judgment and initiative in researching topics and designing and implementing conservation solutions. Work requires technical horticultural, conservation, and water quality and wastewater management knowledge. Work also requires a high degree of initiative, tact and sound judgment in consulting with clients and farmers and in recommending workable solutions. Work is performed independently under the general supervision of the Administrative Program Officer I over the Soil and Water Conservation Program and is evaluated through feedback, conferences, review of reports, and feedback from clients.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

Employee in this class administers the north Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program; establishes priorities and ranking for various cost share funds based upon survey and investigations of data; participates in the developing the annual strategic plan and budget development; meets with farmers and other landowners to address resource concerns, gathers field site current condition data, observes problems and makes recommendations for improvements; performs site reviews and surveys and develops contract and agreements according the North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program and Natural Resources Conservation Service specifications; shows cost practice and reimbursements; develops design plans, specifications and maps for recommended conservation practices and consults with clients to install and maintain best management practices; works with landowners to implement plans and certifies proper installation; utilizes computer and available software to develop plans, contract documents, ranking tools, reports and records; prepares maintains various cost share contracts and agreements; administers and tracks budget for available funds; manages the district's grain drill program by providing technical assistance on the use of drills and seeding rates, etc.; assists district conservationist with annual watershed inspections; attends district board meetings and reports on various program activities; performs related work as assigned.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Education and Experience:

Graduation from a community college with a technical degree in agriculture education, agricultural conservation, or engineering and two years of a progressively responsible agricultural conservation experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Considerable knowledge of applicable federal, State, and local laws, and standard practices, methods and techniques of agriculture and conservation operations; considerable knowledge of horticulture and plant pest identification techniques; considerable knowledge of water quality and wastewater management; considerable knowledge of the policies and procedures, organization and functions of the Cumberland Soil & Water Conservation District and of the needs and requirements of target population and services; general knowledge of the principles of program marketing, supervision, organization and administration; general knowledge of tools and supplies used in soil and water conservation management; skill in working with farmers and landowners and in serving as credible provider of services and information; ability to make presentations on program services to participants, leaders or volunteers; ability to use office machines, including web, word processing, spreadsheet and file maintenance programs; ability to recognize types of soil and erosion issues, to determine soil content and suitability for various uses, and make recommendations; ability to exercise considerable tact and courtesy in contact with farmers, landowners, land users and the general public; ability to perform rigorous outdoor work in various types of weather; ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with citizens, program participants and other employees.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

An NCDA Pesticide License is required. Background check with local law enforcement agency required. Must have and maintain a valid North Carolina driver's license with an acceptable driving record. Condition of Employment: Each applicant who is tendered an offer for employment for any position with Cumberland County shall be tested for the use of drugs specified in the county policy. Refusal to submit to testing or a confirmed positive test shall be basis for withdrawal of the conditional employment offer.

ADA REQUIREMENTS

Requires the ability to perform simple movements requiring moderate coordination. Tasks regularly require oral communications ability. Tasks are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Must be able to physically perform the basic life operational functions of stooping, kneeling, crouching, reaching, walking, fingering, talking, and hearing.
Must be able to perform medium work exerting up to 50 pounds of force occasionally, and/or a up to 20 pounds of force frequently or 10 pounds of force constantly to move objects.
Must possess the visual acuity to prepare data and reports, to read extensively, to observe soil and water activities, and to operate a computer terminal.