



## Spring Valley Student Farm Cooperative Housing Spring 2025

Thank you for your interest in living at Spring Valley Student Farm. Please review the information below before submitting your application.

**Highlighted notes for Spring 2025:** We have one space that recently opened at the farm for Spring 2025. Applications for Spring 2025 housing at Spring Valley are accepted on a rolling basis, with all applications received by **Monday, January 6** considered equally. Later applications may also be considered up to a **final hard deadline of Monday, January 27 at 5pm**. Due to the shortened decisions timeline, **we are currently only accepting applications from students who are already approved for Spring 2025 on-campus housing**. Please find more information below.

### About Spring Valley Student Farm

#### Spring Valley Student Farm Concept:

Spring Valley Student Farm (SVSF) was created in spring 2010 as a collaborative venture between Dining Services, Residential Life, and the EcoHouse Learning Community. SVSF provides students of all majors the opportunity to live and work together in a vibrant community focused on common goals. The residential program provides additional independence and responsibility appropriate to returning upper-class students. The farm is located 4.5 miles off campus at 104 Spring Manor Road, Mansfield, CT, 06268.

#### Spring Valley Student Farm Mission:

Spring Valley Student Farm (SVSF) provides an opportunity for UConn students and the greater community to join together to learn about environmentally, socially and economically ethical regenerative food production through hands-on experience. Spring Valley Student Farm aims to be a place where students, faculty, staff, and Storrs-Mansfield community members can come together to learn about the connections between land, food, and people.

#### Spring Valley Student Farm Goals:

- Serve as a vanguard for the local, organic food movement on the UConn campus by encouraging students, faculty, and staff to consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of the foods they consume daily.
- Model efficient, effective regenerative organic farming techniques that yield healthy productive soil, increased farm biodiversity and hundreds of varieties of high-quality vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers.
- Encourage imaginative, innovative, and creative thinking to achieve more sustainable lifestyles and solutions.
- Host workshops, seminars, tours, and volunteer workdays for the campus community, local residents, and local schools.

## **Resident Farmer Program Overview:**

Resident farmers are core members of Spring Valley Student Farm, working alongside the farm manager and community of volunteer, paid and intern farmers to grow produce for Dining Services. Since SVSF is an educational farm, the production team is invited to learn and question at every stage of the season, from planting to harvest. Through the diversity of the working group there is ample opportunity to learn from each other and from the land. Student farmers will learn sustainable, organic, and low-till growing practices for small-scale diversified vegetable production. Student farmers will also learn relational skills for healthy community dynamics and shared decision-making.

We want Spring Valley Student Farm to be a supportive and inclusive space for all who participate.

Everyone who comes to the farm is expected to engage with other humans, species and the land with respect, curiosity, and compassion. As stewards and ambassadors of the farm, resident student farmers support SVSF as a living, welcoming laboratory where everyone may come to learn and grow.

## **Resident Farmer Benefits:**

The resident farmer position is supported by University of Connecticut's Department of Residential Life and Department of Dining Services. Resident farmers receive a discounted housing rate in exchange for their weekly work on the farm.

SVSF residents should expect to pay at least \$1,155 total per semester for Spring 2025. All room fees are payable based on deadlines set for traditional university housing. The current room rate may be adjusted to reflect any future increase in fees passed by the Board of Trustees. The fee includes all utilities: heat, electricity, water, trash and snow removal, laundry, and wireless internet. The houses are equipped with kitchens and so the fee does **not** include a meal plan. Student farmers may purchase the community meal plan at <https://dining.uconn.edu/community-meal-plan-voluntary-residential-meal-plan-purchase/>. There are two houses at the farm, housing four and seven students. Available bedrooms for new student farmers are typically small doubles. We do not have any single bedrooms available for Spring 2025. Student farmers share their bedroom with one roommate and common spaces with the rest of the household.

## **Resident Farmer Responsibilities:**

All SVSF resident farmers contribute at least **10 hours per week** toward running the farm. Farm duties include, but are not limited to: soil preparation, planting crops in field and greenhouses, weeding, watering, harvesting, outreach, educational programming, and weekly meetings. Farmers may choose to lead farm tours for many ages and participate in the on-campus Farm Fresh Market early in the Fall semester. Farmers are committed to working 10 hours per week of classes each semester. This does not include the November or March breaks, or exam week. In a typical semester with 14 weeks of classes this comes out to 140 hours of farm work for the semester.

The weekly schedule is structured around production needs and community events. Each student farmer plays an integral role throughout the year. All student farmers are expected to attend Farm Meeting every week on Monday nights from 6:00-8:30pm. All student farmers are also expected to participate in Farm Friday from 3:30-6pm each week that it runs: every Friday from the beginning of the Fall semester until the last Friday of October, and every Friday after March break until the end of the Spring semester.

Student farmers are also responsible for upholding our community agreements. Members of the Spring Valley community agree on the following values:

- **Community:** We value a strong, healthy community where members can collaborate, resolve conflict, and learn from one another. We regard the health of our community as fundamental to our sustainability goals and inseparable from the success of the farm.
- **Compassion:** We practice compassion for ourselves, others, and the earth.

- **Curiosity and Learning:** We approach our farm community with curiosity. We practice experiential learning with a balance of action and reflection. We recognize that the best way to understand different perspectives is to ask and listen.
- **Inclusion:** We recognize that diversity is integral to the resilience of every human and ecological community. We strive to create a “safer space” for people of all identities.
- **Sustainability:** We recognize our responsibility as an educational farm to practice agriculture that is both environmentally and socially ethical, to “take care of the land as if our lives, both material and spiritual, depended on it.” (Robin Wall Kimmerer).
- **Action:** We act not only to learn but also to transform our food system. We farm to feed our community and to equip ourselves with the skills necessary for food sovereignty.”

### **Resident Farmer Qualifications:**

The resident farmer position at SVSF is open to all full-time undergraduate or graduate UConn students at the sophomore level or above who are approved for on-campus housing. Applicants must be physically capable of performing the strenuous physical labor necessary to do farm chores under a variety of climatic conditions. The resident student farmer needs an open and curious mind, a sense of humor in the face of adversity, and a proven positive work ethic. Resident student farmers take on considerable responsibility and must be prepared to hold themselves accountable to meet their goals and commitments. Students work in both independent and collaborative situations and should be prepared to meet challenges working solo and in a diverse group of peers.

Previous volunteering at Spring Valley Student Farm is considered during the selection process. This position is intended to be educational, and so previous growing experience is not required.

### **Additional Housing Information**

#### **Transportation:**

SVSF housing is located 4.5 miles away from the center of campus at 104 and 86 Spring Manor Road in Mansfield. There is no University transportation provided between the farm and the main Storrs campus. Students who come to the farm without their own car must be prepared to meet transportation challenges with creativity and determination. Many SVSF residents carpool or ride their bicycles to campus. Drivers purchase a commuter parking pass in order to park on campus.

#### **On-Campus Housing at SVSF:**

Housing at Spring Valley Student Farm is operated by Residential Life at UConn as part of the on-campus housing system. This means that **all applicants to the SVSF residential program must apply for on-campus housing through Residential Life** in order to be considered for housing at the farm, and must ultimately be offered on-campus housing by Residential Life in order to live at the farm. Please see <https://reslife.uconn.edu/housing-selection/> to apply.

**Note for Spring 2025:** Due to the shortened decisions timeline for Spring 2025 admissions, SVSF is currently only accepting applications from students who are already guaranteed Spring 2025 on-campus housing.

As on-campus residents, all students living at SVSF must sign and comply with the rules contained in the UConn On-Campus Housing Contract. Please read the Residential Life housing contract now to ensure this will work for you: <http://reslife.uconn.edu/housing-contract-forms/>. All students living at SVSF will also be required to abide by any Covid-19 rules set forth by the university and Department of Residential Life.

### **Duration of Stay at SVSF:**

Once a student takes up residence at Spring Valley, they are eligible to stay for four semesters, assuming they do not break code of conduct outlined in the SVSF Constitution and continue to be offered housing by Residential Life. Student farmers also have housing priority for the summer months to continue their 10hr/week volunteer commitment. Other opportunities at the farm include paid employment from May-August or internship for academic credit year-round. You will find further information on our website, <http://dining.uconn.edu/spring-valley-farm/>.

### **Additional details for Spring 2025:**

We have one space available at the farm for Spring 2025 and will do our best to process applications over winter break and select a candidate promptly. However, **the earliest a new farmer will be able to move in will be during the first week of classes.** If a student moves in after the start of the semester the rate of the room will be prorated so they pay for their current assignment for the number of weeks they remain there and then pay for their new assignment at the farm for the number of weeks there. We will work with Residential Life (as well as Dining Services, if you have purchased a meal plan) to ensure a smooth transition to the farm. It is unusual for us to run applications at this time of year and we are looking forward to the challenge!

### **Questions?**

We encourage you to seek more information about the farm on our website or Instagram page @springvalleystudentfarm. You can also reach out to us individually:

- Current student farmer Sydney Kolz via email at [sydney.kolz@uconn.edu](mailto:sydney.kolz@uconn.edu) or via text at 860-405-7140.
- Farm Manager Jessica Larkin-Wells via email at [Jessica.Larkin-Wells@uconn.edu](mailto:Jessica.Larkin-Wells@uconn.edu) or by phone at 203-215-9345.

Please use phone numbers respectfully by contacting us during regular working hours: Monday through Friday, 7am-5pm.

**How to Apply:** Please submit the SVSF General Application, found under the Housing tab of the SVSF website. Complete instructions are listed at the top of the application. **Applications for Spring 2025 housing are accepted on a rolling basis, with a final deadline of Monday, January 27 at 5pm.** We look forward to hearing from you soon!