

**Spring Valley Student Farm**

**Cooperative Housing**

**Summer 2025**

Welcome to the resident summer farmer fact sheet! Please review the information below before completing your application.

**About Spring Valley Student Farm**

Spring Valley Student Farm (SVSF) was created in spring 2010. SVSF provides students the opportunity to live and work together in a vibrant community focused on the common goal of healthy local food production. Students gain practical knowledge and regenerative farming skills through experiential learning. The farm is located 4.5 miles from the center of the UConn Storrs campus at 104 Spring Manor Road, Mansfield, CT, 06268. Spring Valley Student Farm is operated by Dining Services and exists as a collaborative venture with Residential Life and First Year Programs.

**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. The Farm allows students to gain practical knowledge and skills through experiential learning while simultaneously modeling a closed loop food model. All produce grown at SVSF is served to students by Dining Services or sold at our on-campus Farm Fresh Market. 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:**

Summer residence at SVSF is open to all full-time undergraduate students at the sophomore level or above who are enrolled for summer classes or the following fall semester. Resident farmers work 10 hours per week on the farm in exchange for reduced housing cost. 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. 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 Responsibilities:**

All SVSF student farmers contribute **10 hours per week** toward running the farm, in exchange for a discounted living arrangement. Farm duties include planting, harvesting, soil preparation, outreach, and weekly Farm Meetings. Farmers may choose to lead farm tours for many ages and participate in the on-campus Farm Fresh Market. The weekly schedule is structured around production needs and community events, with a general schedule of two four-hour shifts offered daily (8:00am-noon and 2:00-6:00pm) Monday through Friday. All student farmers are expected to attend Farm Meeting every week on Monday nights from 6:00-8:30pm.

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:**

This position is open to undergraduate students of the University of Connecticut who are currently enrolled full time for the fall 2025 semester or enrolled in a summer class. Candidates should be able to perform the following laborious tasks: bending, squatting, kneeling, and standing for significant periods of time, lifting and carrying up to 40 lbs, using long-handled tools such as rakes, shovels, and hoes, and working in direct sun as well as rain, in all temperatures experienced in CT from May- August. We strive to create an inclusive workplace and welcome candidates who utilize assistive technology, adaptive equipment, ergonomic tools, and/or perform labor tasks with modifications.

The resident student farmer needs a curious mind, a sense of humor in the face of adversity, and a proven positive work ethic. Students work in both independent and collaborative situations and should be prepared to meet challenges working solo and in a diverse group of peers. This position is intended to be educational, so previous growing experience is not required. Previous volunteering at Spring Valley Student Farm is considered during the selection process.

**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.

**On-Campus Housing at SVSF:**

SVSF residents can expect to pay at least $76/week in rent. All room fees are payable based on deadlines set for traditional university housing. The current room rate might 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 recycling 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/>.

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. The summer housing application will be available on March 1st. Applicants should email livingoncampus@uconn.edu on or after March 1st to request this application.Only students who are offered on-campus housing by Residential Life will be able to live at the farm.

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 review the Residential Life housing contract now to ensure this will work for you: <http://reslife.uconn.edu/housing-contract-forms/>.

**Accessibility of Farm Houses:**

There are two houses at the farm: Birch Cottage (built in 1886) houses seven student farmers, and Oak Cottage (built in 1888) houses four student farmers. Available bedrooms for new student farmers are typically small doubles. Student farmers share their bedroom with one roommate and common spaces with the rest of the household. Neither house is wheelchair accessible.

**Duration of Stay:**

The summer resident farmer position is open from May 15 through August 15, 2025. Housing at the farm is continuous with Spring and Fall on-campus housing assignments and residents will be able to stay in their current on-campus assignment until transitioning to the farm, and then transition back to on-campus housing a week or so before the start of the Fall semester. These room change dates will be provided by Residential Life.

While we prefer to have one cohort of students throughout the entire summer, it is possible to live at Spring Valley for only a portion of the summer. If you are interested in a shorter stay, please specify those dates in your application.

**Additional Opportunities:**

Those students interested in additional responsibilities may apply for a paid summer student farmer position or other student employment positions through Dining Services. Independent study or internship credits are also possible through the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources. You will find further information about SVSF at <http://dining.uconn.edu/spring-valley-farm/>.

**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:

* Student supervisor Jensen O’Meara via email at aeo22002@uconn.edu or via text at 725-465-4012.
* Farm Manager Jessica Larkin-Wells via email at 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. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.