

DESCRIPTION OF APPRENTICESHIP

Synopsis: _

Tide Mill Farm is a nine generation family farm located on the coastal waters of Downeast Maine. Carly and Aaron and a hardworking farm crew operate a diversified organic farm with 100 dairy and beef cows, 25 pigs, 50 hens, 300 turkeys, 7000 broilers, 40 acres of pasture, cover crops, 3 acres of row crops and composting.

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| Farm Name | Tide Mill Organic Farm | Certified Organic Farm |
| Contact Person | Carly DelSignore | Phone 207-733-2551 |
| Mailing Address | 91 Tide Mill Road | Best time to call: Morning between 7 and 9 |
| Town: | Edmunds, ME 04268 | County Washington |
| E-Mail | eatlocal@tidemillorganicfarm.com | Website www.tidemillorganicfarm.com |
| Number of apprentices sought: 2, Ideally a couple who can live well together. | | |
| During what time period? April 15-November 30 | | |

Describe the physical setting of your farm and the nature of the community in which you live (e.g., acreage, woods/fields, buildings, near town/remote area, recreation available, etc.):

Tide Mill Farm is located along the shores of Cobscook Bay in downeast Maine. We are situated on Rt 1 about 30 minutes north of Machias and 45 minutes south of Calais and between Lubec and Eastport. It is a very rural setting. There are 40 acres of prime pasture, 20 additional acres we are converting to pasture, 1500 acres of woodland, and 6 miles of shore frontage. Hiking, canoeing and sea kayaking are common recreation pastimes for people to enjoy the amazing raw beauty of this area.

We have a large free stall barn that houses our dairy herd, calves and beef cows with an attached shop. We also have a greenhouse with an attached shed and a hoop house. We have a hoop house and various outbuildings that house pastured animals. There are 5 Bell families that each have houses on the farm and a renovated century-old farmhouse that hosts weekly renters.

Recreation includes the exploration of the woods, the stony beach, and the bay. The Cobscook Community Learning Center (www.thecccl.org) is located 4 miles from the farm and offers a network of social individuals, the arts and events including a Old Time Music jam twice a month, a pottery studio, and a place to gather. Tide Mill Farm is also home to a local Weston A. Price chapter (www.westonaprice.org)

Describe your farm operation (e.g., livestock, crops, bees, herbs, forestry work, greenhouse, orchards, building projects, haying, maple sugaring, meat processing, level of mechanization, products made, marketing, dairy, stock dogs, etc.):

Carly and Aaron run a diversified, certified organic farm that includes ~4 acres of row crops and cover crops, with a little herb and companion flower production as well. We have a greenhouse where we start our own vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Our livestock that we raise for meat include 25-30 pigs, 5000-7000 broilers, and 200-300 turkeys. We harvest and process our own poultry once a week from June-November. We have a flock of 50 laying hens. We are milking 40 cows that are rotationally grazed during the growing season. We have an additional 50 cows which consist of dry cows, calves, steers and heifers. We run a Farm Stand on our farm, participate in the Senior FarmShare program (with about 60 shares), have a 20 member CSA, and deliver to customers via home deliveries, buying clubs and health food stores from Calais to Belfast. Our milk is primarily sold to H.P. Hood who processes our milk and packages it for sale in stores under the Stonyfield Farm milk label. We do bottle our own milk for local customers. We work closely with Crown of Maine Organic Cooperative (www.crownofmainecoop.com) and are involved in developing a agricultural cooperative in our county. We make butter and yogurt and preserve a lot of our vegetables for our family to eat during the winter, as well as prepare whole food for delicious healthy meals.

Are all your crops organically grown? Yes _____ If not, to what degree are organic methods used on your farm?.

Describe the work to be performed and the skills to be learned by an apprentice (e.g., care of livestock, planting, cultivation, harvesting, selling at market, use of equipment, carpentry, food preservation, woods-work, etc.). Please break the season (or months) into 4 major tasks to be performed during each.

Veggies: Spring: Tending Seedlings, Seeding and Transplanting Crops into the Field, Cultivation, Record Keeping

Summer: In addition to tasks in the Spring there will also be Planting Cover Crops, Pest Control, Irrigation, Harvesting, Washing and Packaging Vegetables, On-farm Marketing and Delivering

Fall: Harvesting crops, Washing and Packaging Vegetables, On-farm Marketing and Delivering, Drying and Preserving Food and Seed, Planting garlic, and Cleaning the fields of debris.

Animals: Spring, Summer, & Fall: Settling in pigs and day-old chicks, Daily animal care of cows, pigs, chickens and turkeys (feeding, watering, clean bedding, fresh pasture, & fence maintenance), Chicken Harvesting & Processing, On-Farm Marketing and Delivering, Calf feeding and care, Assisting with milking and barn chores.

Other: Piling brush and making fences to make way for new pasture

Skills to be learned: Holistic care of organic livestock for maximum health and vitality, Raising organic livestock within a pasture based system, Harvesting poultry safely and efficiently, Seedling production, Mixed vegetable production from seeding through harvest and preserving that harvest for optimal nutrient density, Building and maintaining relationships with customers, Observation skills to maintain animal and crop health, Basic record keeping and analysis for farm profitability. How to make butter, yogurt and preserve vegetables as well as learning to make stock, ferment foods and prepare whole foods.

We expect to train you and be patient while you get accustomed to the tasks and routine, but do expect you to become efficient, developing and honing your farming skills throughout your stay with us.

What do you expect of an apprentice? (e.g., hours to be worked in a day, days to be worked in a week, heavy physical labour, time off, etc.):

You can expect to work six days a week and are guaranteed one day off a week.

Occasionally the sixth day will include only animal chores. We expect an average of a 9 hr day, but there will be at least one 10-11 hour day a week. On one of your days a week that you are working, you will be working with Rachel and Sam on various aspects of their homestead (draft horses, logging, carpentry, home garden, beef cows, goats, laying hens) to provide a more diversified experience.

We operate with a weekly “to do” list and then try to get those tasks accomplished within the week based on the weather and other deadlines. Farming, especially when you are depending on it for your sole source of income, is very physically demanding work in adverse conditions. You will be expected to work in the rain and heat and bugs (black flies and mosquitoes). Many farming tasks are tedious (weeding and thinning) and repetitive (basic animal chores that need to be done everyday). You should be able to lift and carry 50 lbs of weight and squat or kneel (or those equivalents) for an hour or two at a time.

Explain how you intend to provide instruction and training to an apprentice (e.g., work along with the apprentice, demonstration, apprentice working alone, training “classes,” reading to be done, extent of supervision by yourself or others, etc.):

We tend to operate more with the “learning by doing” philosophy. We will demonstrate how we want a task to be done and go into the details about why we do it that particular way. Carly or an experienced field worker will work along side you for the most part, but there will be a fair amount of time where we will be present for the beginning part of the project, to get you started and answer the questions that come up, and then you will finish on your own. You must be accountable and reliable. We intend to share at least one meal per week with you, sharing in the experience of learning to prepare the foods you are working hard to grow. You are welcome to respectfully use our large selection of farming books and Internet use, as well as other local library resources. We are also open to going to visit other farms in our area.

Are you a full-time farmer? Yes If not, describe what other occupation(s) you have:

Carly and Aaron are also parents, raising their 3 young children ages three, seven and nine.

Can you pay a stipend or a wage in addition to providing room and board? Yes
If so, what are you offering and under what conditions? (i.e., experience level, duration of commitment, graduated scale)

Without farming experience, we offer \$75 a week per person, with a raise to \$100 per week per person after working for 4 weeks. If you have farming experience there is room for negotiating a higher stipend. We also offer \$10 per week per person for additional food that we don't have that you may want (coffee, bread, peanut butter, etc.).

Do you require a prospective apprentice to visit your farm before a final arrangement is made?
Ideally, yes, but we understand that distance can be an issue.

Do you require a trial period?
No

Explain the room and board arrangements (e.g., would the apprentice live with the family, live apart but eat with the family, are there young children, what household duties would the apprentice share, are a vegetarian household, would you provide vegetarian meals, are there rules about smoking/drinking/drugs, are there any other important considerations?):

Our housing situation is a cozy, private room at the studio next to Sam and Rachel's house. It has electricity and no running water, but a nice system set up to be able to wash dishes and clean up. It has a woodstove and its own kitchen facilities. There will be either an outhouse or composting toilet available for use. It adjoins their barn for their draft horses and possibly above our new farm store. You will primarily be expected to be

independent and eat on your own, but are invited to share at least one meal a week with Rachel and Sam and their family and one meal a week with Carly and Aaron and their family if you want.

There are also spaces to camp and private places off Tide Mill Farm, but nearby to rent.

We will provide a solar shower, but you may want to build a shower wooden, private shower stall. You must bring appropriate footwear (eg, rubber boots and work boots) as well as your own rain gear. There are many wet, mucky days that we will be working in the fields. We also provide insurance if you should get injured while working for us.

Partly because it is so rare in the growing season, our privacy and exclusive family time is extremely important to us. There will be a designated afternoon where you are welcome to use our shower and washer, as well as internet and library. We practice a Weston Price diet using traditional foods that contain animal products but do have several non-meat meals. We will provide food from the farm and some additional staples, like coffee and sugar and some additional vegetables in the early part of the year when produce is hard to come by. We provide seasonal vegetables, fruits and herbs, cow milk, yogurt, eggs, turkey, chicken, pork and beef that we grow on Tide Mill Organic Farm.

Our family has 3 young children. We incorporate our children into practically everything we do and value their participation, even though that participation takes more time and care. You will not be expected to do any childcare.

Other considerations that make our situation unique is the fact that multiple Bell families live on the farm. There are 5 households consisting of 12 adults and 6 children. That has many positive qualities, but we also need to pay more attention to co-habiting with many people in regards to respect for other people's space. There is an 18th century farmhouse that is a weekly rental. We need to be aware of keeping the farm aesthetic and being conscious of the presence of renters, guests, and other family members. With that

said, it is also a great opportunity to meet and interact with many really neat, diverse people. We do not allow apprentices or hired help to bring their pets with them to work.

Describe yourself, your family, background, farming experience, philosophy, goals & interests:
Aaron Bell and Carly DelSignore are the husband/wife team that own and operate Tide Mill Organic Farm, the certified organic meat, dairy and produce business. They work together to manage their different passions within their business and to balance their different strengths and weaknesses. Carly currently manages the greenhouse, vegetable, pig and chicken ventures as well as the direct marketing of the meats and vegetables. She also manages the poultry processing and financial recording keeping of the farm. Aaron focuses his energy on managing and working with the dairy and beef herd, field management for feed for the cattle, and maintenance of equipment and buildings.

Since January of 2000, we have been farming and trying to figure out how we can make our living from our farming endeavors. We believe we can make the world a better place by helping to connect people to the production of healthy food. We would like to exchange our knowledge and experience for an extra set of hands or two who value hard work, dedication, and the desire to provide healthy food for a community of appreciative people.

Our mission, values, and goals can be found on our website,
www.tidemillorganicfarm.com

Are you interested in participating as a mentor and/or host farmer in MOFGA's Journey person program for advanced training in organic farming? Yes
