Native Seeds/SEARCH seeks to find, protect, and preserve the seeds of the people of the Greater Southwest so that these arid adapted crops may benefit all peoples and nourish a changing world.

Native Seeds/SEARCH
Farming and Seed Saving Apprenticeship
November 2021

Native Seeds/SEARCH (NS/S) is a non-profit that conserves and promotes the food and farming traditions of the desert Southwest. Our collection of dryland open-pollinated seeds has cultural roots in over 50 indigenous and other communities. Specifically, the collection includes many varieties of corn, beans, squash, and other food and fiber plants traditionally grown by farmers of the Southwest. Each year we regenerate a portion of the seed collection for conservation needs and to distribute to the public.

Program Details:
NS/S is seeking a Farming and Seed Saving Apprentice to join our team in Tucson to help maintain and expand seed production at our Tucson growing site. The ideal candidate is committed to working in partnership with tribal communities in the Southwest or Northern Mexico, and has a vocational desire to start a farm or seed bank within the region. Candidates should be organized, team-oriented, have strong interpersonal communication skills, and some experience working in gardens or farming.

Agricultural management at NS/S is not based on any specific practice; the program goal is to provide beginning farmers with an introduction to arid-adapted seed production and seed saving. The apprenticeship is a Seasonal, limited benefits position that includes a housing stipend of $200 per month for 6 months. The period of employment is 6 months, and depending on funding, there may be further work opportunities with NS/S after completion of the apprenticeship. Apprentices will train with and report to the Conservation Garden Farmer and AG Outreach and Education Manager.

Responsibilities of the Farming and Seed Saving Apprentice:
Farm Management and Seed Production
- Support all aspects of seed production, including: direct-sowing seeds, raising transplants in a greenhouse, harvesting, threshing, and cleaning final seed harvest
- Maintain and repair irrigation systems, tools, and equipment
- Manage weeds, pests, and pathogens with appropriate organic control methods
- Monitor and trap pest animals and insects
- Amend soil with cover crops, compost, and mineral nutrients to meet plant needs
- Support site design and development to increase grow-out space and seed yield
- Direct volunteer teams during work events and site development projects

AG Outreach and Education
- Participate in outreach events, including Partner Farmer field trips and trainings
- Support operations of the Community Seed Grant program
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- Complete the Seed Seva Online Mentorship training program (offered by Rowen White and the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network) over the course of the apprenticeship
- Opportunity to conduct research that culminates in a self-directed project
- Present to NS/S staff upon completion of the apprenticeship (experiential learning overview or research project)

**Required Qualifications**
- Ability to relocate to Tucson, AZ and reside in the area for the duration of the program
- Valid Driver’s License with paid insurance and reliable transportation
- Flexibility to adjust schedule seasonally, including 6am start time in summer, and alternating weekend watering duties throughout the year
- Attention to detail, organization, and good time management skills
- Experience managing or working with volunteers and coordinating with staff or teams
- Interest in farming, gardening, seed saving, food security, and food sovereignty
- Ability to occasionally lift up to 40 lbs
- Ability to work outdoors for long periods of time in adverse weather conditions (100°F+)

**Preferred Qualifications**
- Some college-level coursework in crop production, agronomy, horticulture, plant science, or related work experience
- Knowledge or experience working with or for Southwest tribes
- Bilingual—English & Spanish languages preferred

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**How to Apply:**
Send the following application documents to acarter@nativeseeds.org with the subject line “Apprenticeship Application”:
1. A resume listing previous employment, relevant experience, and skills
2. A list of 3 professional or educational references
3. A cover letter detailing why you are interested in the apprenticeship, what you hope to learn, and how you will apply your skills after the apprenticeship

Application deadline: December 31, 2022
Projected start date: January 2022

Hourly Rate is $13.00 and we will offer $200/month for a housing stipend. Applications will be reviewed shortly after the deadline. Select candidates will be contacted for video or in-person interviews. All applicants will be notified upon selection of the candidates. Additional questions can be directed to acarter@nativeseeds.org. Further information is available on our website: www.nativeseeds.org