



“I could not have asked for a better introduction into a career in sustainable agriculture policy.”

“Such a unique opportunity. I can’t say how grateful I am.”

“It was a permanent transformation in terms of what I learned.”
- former interns

Background and Purpose – The Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (MFAI) is a non-profit agricultural institute founded in 1984 in East Troy, Wisconsin. Our research, education, technical assistance and public policy work seeks to revitalize farming and help both urban and rural populations meet common concerns. These concerns include how our food is grown; whether farming is a profitable enterprise; the long-term fertility of the soil; purity of water; and conservation of the Earth’s resources. MFAI has a vigorous student program, which draws international enrollees for a comprehensive training program in market gardening, organic farming, research, food preparation, and other practices.

Consistent with this tradition, in January of 2009 we will begin our sixth year of public policy internships. We do this largely to help the sustainable agriculture movement continue to draw exciting, committed, informed activists into the work of creating and advancing public policies that support sustainable agriculture. We believe that the work of MFAI’s policy program, combined with our excellent student program, offers an avenue to engage potential participants in such policy work.

What the Policy Internship Offers – Policy interns will have the opportunity to assist in coordinating the Fiscal Year 2009 grassroots agricultural appropriations campaign; help assure optimal implementation by USDA of sustainable agriculture programs and provisions in the Farm Bill; work on Farm-to-School provisions in the 2009 Child Nutrition Reauthorization; develop new grassroots contacts in key congressional and senate districts nationally and develop similar strategies for Wisconsin grassroots network development; participate in state sustainable agricultural policy development; join policy conference calls of groups such as the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition; and work as NSAC interns for two weeks in Washington, D.C. Interns will be able to attend a NSAC membership meeting in Washington, D.C. as well as at least one other major movement-related conference. Interns will be able to conduct background research on an agricultural policy topic that both benefits the movement and is of personal interest to them; MFAI will assist them in publicizing and distributing their findings. Interns will have an opportunity to write an opinion editorial and write press releases and/or newsletter articles on policy issues. MFAI’s policy interns will be able to participate to the degree they wish to in MFAI’s other education and training workshops.

The Policy Program Director will commit to providing supervision of no less than 2 hours per week after an intensive introduction and orientation.

Expectations – MFAI will expect no less than a 50% time commitment from the policy interns. Unlike MFAI’s other internships, which are located in East Troy, policy interns will operate from Madison, Wisconsin, the location of MFAI’s Policy Program. The interns will be responsible for arranging their own housing, food, computer access and other needs.

Duration/Schedule – We offer these internships for five months, from January through June. Start and end dates are negotiable once interns are selected, and the weekly schedule of internship hours worked is flexible.



Potential Candidates – We will consider any candidate with a demonstrated interest in sustainable agriculture and/or agricultural policy. We place a priority on candidates who see sustainable agricultural policy as a likely career course, and we pay attention to the quality of the writing sample submitted.

Finances – MFAI will pay a \$450/month stipend, up to \$50/month in non-transportation expenses, such as paper and office supplies, up to \$50/month in phone, Internet service and mailing costs, and up to \$100/month in transportation. We will pay for a roundtrip ticket to Washington, plus metro and lodging expenses while in Washington, D.C. for two weeks. We will also cover registration to participate in MFAI trainings and events and will assist in your attending at least one major movement-related conference.

Application Process – Interested applicants should submit a letter expressing reasons for interest in this position, relevant background, a writing sample, names/contact information for three references, and confirmation of housing and other arrangements by Friday, November 21, 2008. (Applicants from out of town may simply note that they understand that they need to make these arrangements and are prepared to do so.) Please send applications to Margaret Krome, MFAI Policy Program Director, 2524 Chamberlain Ave., Madison, WI 53705. For more information, you may contact Margaret at mkrome@sbcglobal.net or (608) 238-1440.

Michael Fields Agricultural Institute is a public, non-profit institute for education and research in sustainable agriculture.

We actively encourage students of all races, colors and national and ethnic origins to apply. Please inquire if special arrangements may be needed.