



AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Position Title: Agricultural Development Officer

FLSA: Exempt

REPORTS TO: Director of Economic Development

SUMMARY OF POSITION: Under the general supervision of the Director of Economic Development, the Agricultural Development Officer (ADO) is responsible for the development of agricultural assets and programs leading to a robust agricultural development program in Botetourt County. Emphasis will be placed upon programs to assist various opportunities for new or expansion of agricultural sectors in the County. In addition, the ADO will advise the County on agribusiness issues and activities, promoting new and expanded local agribusiness opportunities. The ADO will serve as a liaison between the County Administration and various boards, commissions and committees relating to agricultural activities.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS: *Essential functions, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may include any of the following tasks, knowledge, skills and other characteristics. The list that follows is not intended as a comprehensive list; it is intended to provide a representative summary of the major duties and responsibilities. Incumbent(s) may not be required to perform all duties listed, and may be required to perform additional, position-specific tasks.*

- Develops, presents, maintains, and periodically updates the agriculture development plan; advises and assists in long-range agricultural planning in the County; prepares research reports concerning agricultural activities in Botetourt County in order to assess economic trends in the agricultural sector; participates in meetings of the Board of Supervisors and provides agricultural information as directed; makes presentations to Boards, Agencies and Commissions as directed; monitors the County agricultural economy, and provides general assistance in cultivating an environment conducive for agricultural enterprises; assists with any general economic development plans or strategies;
- Carries out a robust Research and Development program for crops and livestock for new opportunities and to demonstrate new production methods that may enhance various agricultural sectors;
- Works to establish vertical integration of the agricultural industry with value added opportunities;

- Coordinates with various local, state and federal agencies for the benefit of Botetourt County, including the agricultural service agencies such as the USDA Farm Service Agency, Soil and Water Conservation District, VDACS etc. to ensure the overall success of agriculture in the County;
- Seeks funding sources for identified economic development and agribusiness projects, prepares grant applications, retains necessary documentation and reporting mechanisms, and provide grant follow-ups as needed;
- Works with the local educational system, Community Colleges and VA Tech/ VA State to develop a new generation of agricultural producers and associated programs;
- Assists with and develop programs and events relating to agricultural education activities and agricultural heritage;
- Drafts County policies, as directed, to enhance, protect and promote the economy, agricultural base and resources of the County; work with public, and private partnerships to enhance the positive exposure of agriculture in the County;
- Works as part of the County's Economic Development team to recruit, retain, and expand the County's overall economic and agribusiness tax base. Help to develop and manage economic development projects. Assist with administration and recordkeeping associated with performance agreements and other related documents;
- Represents the County at agricultural conferences and meetings, when possible;
- Expands business retention and attraction efforts through identification of specialty agricultural groups who share common interests, assist with the organization of new groups, and serve in an advisory capacity to foster new agricultural businesses;
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Must currently hold, at minimum, a Master's of Science in Agriculture or related field. Must have at least 10 years direct agriculture experience. Ability to read and interpret most complex documents, to write speeches and articles using original or innovative techniques and styles. Written and oral communication abilities need to be at a high level that allows for effective sharing of ideas and concepts. Define problems, collect data, establish facts and draw valid conclusions. Ability to interpret an extensive variety of technical instructions relating to agricultural development and /or programs and certifications for farming and agricultural use. Proficient in computer skills including electronic mail, record keeping, routine data base activities, processing spreadsheets, graphics and social media usage. Handle multiple projects simultaneously. Possession of a valid State of Virginia Driver's License.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- Knowledge of the principles, practices and techniques of general management and office organization principles and practices;
- Knowledge of agricultural development programs at the Federal, State and local level.
- Knowledge of the organizational function of the County departments, and other agencies necessary for the operation of agricultural and economic development within the County;
- Thorough knowledge of the basic laws, codes and ordinances of regulation underlying a municipal corporation and the agricultural development both on public and private sectors;
- Knowledge of the Geographic Information System (GIS) computer program;
- Proficient in computer skills, including electronic mail, record keeping, routine data base activities, word processing, Power Point presentations, spreadsheets, graphics, social media, various marketing techniques to include website;
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with County officials and employees, the public and agricultural development specialists, boards, agencies, and commissions.
- Ability to negotiate various deals for the benefit of the program and the County.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: Master's Degree (M.S.) from an accredited college or university in agricultural science, public administration, economics, or political science with at least 10 -12 years' experience in ever increasing responsibilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: Work is performed indoors and outdoors. May be exposed to dangerous machinery, hazardous chemicals and extreme weather conditions. Moderate noise (industrial buildings, business office with computers/copiers and printers, light traffic). Occasional overnight travel. May require additional duties after normal working hours in order to complete tasks necessary for agricultural development. May be required to lift and carry items up to 50 pounds.

EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS UTILIZED: Standard equipment includes motor vehicle, personal computer and standard office equipment. Tractor and agricultural equipment operations as needed.

This description provides information regarding the essential functions of the designated job, and the general nature and level of work associated with the job. It should not be interpreted to describe all the duties and performance that may be required of employees or be used to limit the nature and extent of assignments an employee may be given.