

GRAZING SPECIALIST Tompkins County

Department: Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation Dist.

Classification: Competitive

Labor Grade: 11

Approved: 0

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in agronomy, agriculture, agricultural economics, natural resources, environmental sciences, or a closely related field and one year of relevant experience; **OR**

(b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two-year college with an associate's degree in agronomy, agriculture, agricultural economics, natural resources, environmental science, or a closely related field **AND** four years of relevant experience; **OR**

(c) An equivalent combination of training and experience as described in (a) and (b) above; **AND**

OTHER CERTIFICATIONS THAT WILL BE REQUIRED WITH a, b, AND/OR c ABOVE:

(a) CCA Certification: not required at time of appointment but employee should be willing to pursue certification as soon as possible. (District will provide resources and opportunities for training)

(b) CNMP Certified Planner: not required at time of appointment but employee should be willing to pursue certification as soon as possible. (District will provide resources and opportunities for training)

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

A valid New York State driver's license is required at the time of appointment and must be maintained throughout the life of employment.

The employee must be able to safely lift up to fifty pounds as a requirement of employment.

NOTE:

The employee must provide protective wear as may required, such as rain gear and steel-toed boots.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This position provides professional services in the planning and application of soil, water, and resource conservation and development activities involving predominately pasture and hayland enterprises. The incumbent serves as a pasture specialist in support of professional rotational grazing management for a multi-county region. The employee works with individuals to install site-specific sustainable grazing systems and uses experience and innovative technologies to interpret, recommend, and consult regarding sound grazing management. Operations may require basic feed-balancing skills with rotational grazing plan. Fieldwork involves exposure to livestock and farm equipment. The incumbent enjoys a considerable degree of autonomy and works under the general direction of the Conservation District Manager. Supervision of others is not a function of this class. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Estimate forage production and potential for rotational grazing sites based on existing kinds/numbers of animals in business and land resources allocated for system development.
- Record existing business operations, interpret information to develop a sound rotational grazing plan to meet the identified needs of the cooperator. Recommend the construction of necessary grazing improvements such fences, alternative watering systems, and laneways.
- Recommend proper use and time of grazing.
- Interpret soils information and forage production data as a basis for pasture recommendations and apply this to the cooperator's rotational grazing plan.
- Assist cooperators in assessing forage needs and requirements. Instruct cooperator on forage sampling, handling, and interpretation of laboratory analysis.
- Modify, develop, and maintain technical guides, job sheets, training aids, and techniques for district staff.
- Use data to develop new or improved procedures, techniques, and guides for cooperators' grazing plan.
- Use NRCS resource conservation planning and AEM Tier 3 Planning process to develop cooperators' grazing plans.
- Work with other counties to full fill the four-county cooperative GRAZE NY agreement. (complete work in both Tompkins and Tioga Counties)
- Work with cooperators to integrate available conservation programs (state and federal) to develop a comprehensive approach to conservation resource planning.
- Work with public and private cooperators and agencies to promote approved resource conservation planning.
- Assist participating agencies with informational and education programs that address rotational grazing management.
- Administer existing Ag Non Point Source grants for cooperators that apply to the position and write additional implementation grants.
- Assists with implementation of other SWCD programs as assigned.
- Other duties as assigned

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of a wide variety of interrelated grazing practices, methods, and procedures to assess cooperators and provide recommendations.
- Thorough knowledge of agronomic principles, soil characteristics, plants, and livestock operations to independently plan and apply grazing systems and structures on pastures and haylands.
- Good knowledge of nutrient management planning at the whole farm scale and the ability to apply this knowledge to nutrient loading, balancing and fertilization of pastures, hayland, and cropland.
- Good knowledge of the AEM planning process with the ability to plan and implement practices in accordance with the program.
- Good computer skills (Microsoft Office suite of programs)
- Good communication skills, both written and verbal
- Working knowledge of surveying, design and implementation of appropriate Best Management Practices.
- Working knowledge of commonly employed conservation practices, such as alternative watering systems, laneway improvements, and any others applicable to livestock operations.
- Working knowledge of geographical information systems (GIS).
- Working knowledge of grants applications and administration of funded grant.
- Working knowledge of other conservation programs (NYS Ag Nonpoint Pollution Program, CRP/CREP, AMA, EQIP, etc.) that are easily integrated into a rotational grazing
- plan to provide sound technical and financial assistance to cooperators.