



**Position:** [DARE- KY](#)- Aquaponics Research & Research Programming  
**Coordinator**

**FLSA Classification:** Full-time, Salaried, Exempt

**Location:** Lexington, KY, in person

**Report to:** Co-Executive Director(s)

**Effective Date:** Position will Remain Open until Filled

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

FoodChain forges links between community and fresh food. For over a decade, FoodChain has provided education and demonstration of sustainable food systems to the local Lexington Community. For more information, visit [foodchainlex.org](http://foodchainlex.org).

Under the supervision of FoodChain's Co-Executive Director(s) and in collaboration with DARE- KY (Driving AgTech Research and Education in Kentucky) project partners at Kentucky State University, the **Aquaponics Researcher & Research Programming Coordinator** will lead research focused on optimizing mineralization of fish effluent for use in aquaponic and hydroponic systems. As part of this role, the hire will primarily (60%) be responsible for assisting with research investigating nutrient dynamics in soilless agriculture systems with the aim to improve the nutrient recovery and reuse from fish effluent. The secondary part of this role (40%) will be creating opportunities for engagement and participation in aquaponics research. This hire will facilitate efforts to engage middle, high school, and post-secondary students in research, including training on research principles, best practices, publishing, dissemination, study presentation, and conference attendance. This is a grant funded position.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Assist in the design, execution, and analysis of replicated experiments related to soilless agriculture research.
- Maintain research and demonstration aquaponics and hydroponics systems including plant and fish husbandry.
- Collect and store research samples including plant and fish tissue and water quality samples
- Perform water quality testing using spectrophotometry including alkalinity, nitrogen, iron, etc.
- Assist middle and high school students with laboratory techniques.
- Maintain laboratory equipment, chemical and supply inventories, and compliance with safety protocols.
- Perform data analysis using statistical software.
- Collaborate with team members on the development of research protocols.

- Assist in the setup and maintenance of aquaponic systems, including monitoring water quality parameters and troubleshooting issues.
- Keep accurate records of experimental procedures, results, and observations.
- Assist with presentation and manuscript preparation.
- Coordinate with the Director of Operations, Director of Education, and Aquaponics Educator to implement curriculum and educate others about aquaponics research programs and research protocols.
- Collaborate with project partners at Kentucky State University, Bluegrass Community and Technical College, and the University of Kentucky, as well as other industry partners in research related to the DARE-KY grant.
- Guide students in presenting research projects at conferences and public open houses.
- Assist in developing educational modules for teachers to implement to teach soilless agriculture and research techniques to middle, high school, and introductory college courses.
- Travel to meetings, conferences, and presentations at partner universities including KSU, UK, BCTC, and others.

**OTHER DUTIES:**

Perform other related duties as necessary.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- M.S. in Aquaculture, Agriculture, Biology, Biotechnology, or related fields.
- Experience in recirculating aquaculture, hydroponics, or horticulture is preferred..
- Upon hire, a background check will be required.
- Experience supervising middle and high school students is preferred.
- Experience coordinating with multiple institutions is preferred.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, and ABILITIES:**

- Experience in water quality testing.
- Strong knowledge and experience working with agricultural systems (aquaponics, hydroponics, indoor, and urban growing experience preferred).
- Experience working in an educational setting, especially with individuals with limited-resources and barriers to employment (strongly preferred).
- Ability to work with minimum supervision, but cooperatively with others.
- Demonstrated proficiency in organizing and coordinating tasks.
- Capability to create, compose, and edit written scientific materials using Microsoft Office or similar software.
- Experience with the peer review process including publication and editing manuscripts for publication.
- Proactive initiative, resourcefulness, and punctuality.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- A professional attitude and demeanor.
- Strong interpersonal skills and a consistent, solution-oriented, problem solving focus.

- Ability to operate effectively in a demanding, public, constantly evolving team environment that requires high energy and flexibility.
- Ability to work with diverse populations; sensitive to folks with barriers to employment.
- A passion for local food and finding long term solutions to the complexity of food system issues.
- Preferred language proficiency in one of the following: Spanish, Swahili, Arabic, Nepali, Japanese, French, Mandarin, Kinyarwanda, Korean or Portuguese.

**Licensing and Certifications:**

- Must possess a valid driver's license.

**SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY:**

Overseeing middle, high school, and post-secondary students with the guidance of the immediate supervisor.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- Most work will be performed in an interior lab and in the field at a (indoor) farm.
- Will require working in hot and humid environments like greenhouses or wet labs.
- Must be able to lift 50+ pounds to perform aquaponics related tasks.

**Details**

This position is partially grant funded for 2 years. Full-time, exempt with a salary of \$55,000 per year. Full-time employees will begin to accrue PTO 15 days annually; PTO will be accrued to the employee's PTO bank on a weekly basis (2.31 hours per week). PTO days will increase based on years of service with FoodChain and will be reflected on the appropriate work anniversary.

Full Time Employees with 2-4 years of service receive 18 days (2.77 hours per week) of PTO per year; and employees with 5-10 of service receive 20 days of PTO per year (3.08 hours per week); employees with 11+ years of service receive 25 days (3.85 hours per week) of PTO per year.

Primary Workstation: FoodChain

Health insurance, Holiday Pay, and mileage reimbursement.

Complete Application requires [Resume](#) and [Cover Letter](#); References upon request  
Email Resume and Cover Letter to: [jobs@foodchainlex.org](mailto:jobs@foodchainlex.org)

***FoodChain, Inc is an Equal Opportunity Employer***

*The functions, qualifications, knowledge/skills, and physical requirements listed in this job description represent the essential duties of the job, which the incumbent must be able to perform either with or without reasonable accommodation. The Job Functions listed do not necessarily include all activities that the individual may perform.*