

# Working With Labor: Be the Employer Workers

**Want**

PRACTICAL—FARMERS

*of Iowa*

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Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

# Farm Info



- Zone 5b
- Est in 2003, Family Farm
- 5 acres in production
- Gross \$350k 2023
- Labor



# **This Session**

Farm Culture

Hiring, Onboarding and Training

Maintaining Employee Relationships

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# Becoming the Employer Of Choice (BTEC)

Fairshare CSA Coalition



SPRING

4 session course

FALL

8 session course





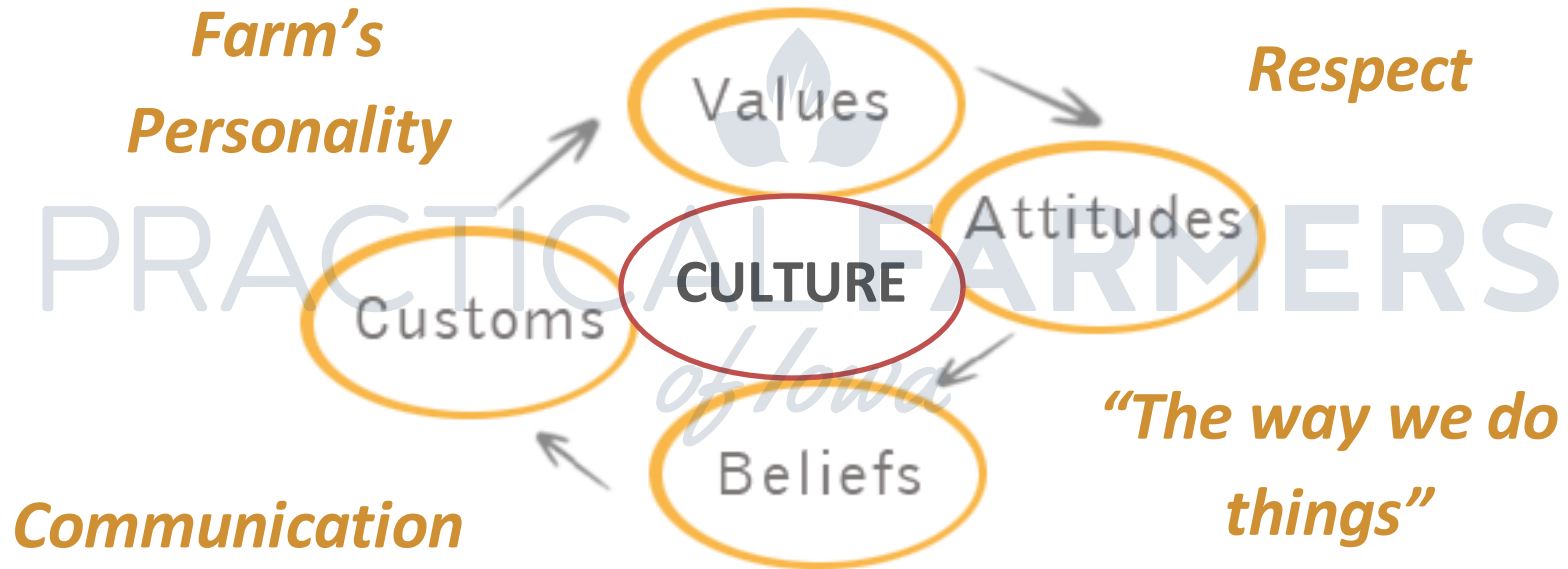
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# Farm Culture




# How we define Culture



# What is FARM culture?



# Think about this....

<p><b>Centralized</b> Close monitoring and control by leadership, most decisions are made by the owner</p>		<p><b>Decentralized</b> Loose monitoring and control by leadership, most decisions are made by the crew</p>
<p><b>Team Communication</b> Communication from management is clear, transparent, and frequent</p>		<p><b>Need to Know</b> Communication from management is infrequent and on a “need to know” basis</p>
<p><b>Results Focus</b> Minimal time is spent on forward planning - the focus is on swift results</p>		<p><b>Forward Thinking</b> Significant time is spent on planning and thinking things through before acting</p>





“Roughly 50-70% of how employees perceive their organization’s climate (or culture) can be traced to the actions of one person: the leader. More than anyone else, the boss creates the conditions...”

*~Daniel Goleman*



# Hiring, Onboarding & Training



# Hiring the Right People

## Writing Good Job Descriptions

- Purpose
- Responsibilities
- Methods
- Chain of supervision
- Qualifications
- Compensation

**The Farm Labor Dashboard**  
**University of Vermont Extension**

So we need some help!

Here is our strict requirement to join our stellar team.

👉 Must have a a... life, people, and the world.

👉 Must

children

to take instructions from a ... out

instructions from women.

Must ... to do a background check

Must be o... children running around

destroying every...

-Must have a drive... able form of tra

Must have your own

Must be able to lift 50 pou

... have a strong back.

... healthy.

... healthy state of mind.

... your life

👉 ... can you ever

thought

👉 Must be able ab... options and ideas on how we

should farm to your self. Period.

👉 And the most hardest rule we have: You must not be easily

offended by people who disagree with you and must be able to be

kind and respectful to our team members who will have a different

religion and political opinion and world view than you do.

# Application Process

- Contact Info
- Employment History
- Education History (?)
- Availability
- References



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## Worker Application

Complete this form and we will contact you depending on positions available.

robyn@parkridgeorganics.com [Switch account](#)

Not shared



\* Indicates required question

First Name \*

Your answer

Last Name \*

Your answer

Email \*

Your answer

Phone number \*

Your answer

Do you have any health conditions we should be aware of? \*

Yes

# The Interview

- Pre Screening phone calls
- Asking the Right Questions
- Avoiding the Wrong Questions
- Red Flags
- Follow Up Plan

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# Federal Protected Classes

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity)
- Physical or mental disability
- Genetic information
- National origin
- Age



# Your Hired! Now What?

- Follow up timely with a phone call
- Put it in writing: Worker Agreements

Park Ridge Organics LLC  
Employee Agreement 2023

**Mr Winks**  
**Farm Cat**

**Pay Rate:** \$15.00/hour

**Hours for Season:** approximately 1250 total hours (subject to change...after all, it is farming!)

**Work Shift and Season:** Monday – Friday from 7am to 4pm. Start date of April 10<sup>th</sup> and end date of October 27<sup>th</sup>. Dates and times are subject to change.

**Paid Time Off:** You are eligible for 18 paid hours of paid time off. It is encouraged to take time off during the non operational months of the farm due to the seasonal nature of the work. No more than 2 consecutive work days off during the months of April, May, June, July and August. No more than 3 consecutive work days off during the months of March, September and October. And no more than 5 days off total per month March-October.

**Farm Clothing Stipend:** You will be reimbursed for up to \$100 in approved farm clothing you purchase (list can be found in the barn). You must provide a receipt to the farm owner to receive reimbursement. This reimbursement may be used anytime during the season. It does not carry over to the next season if unused.

**Education Stipend:** You are eligible for an education stipend annually to attend conferences and workshops or educational opportunities. The farm will discuss the options with you and what the stipend will be.

**Vegetable Share:** You are entitled to receive 1 free small or medium share for the share season. Additional add-on items are not covered (unless agreed upon by you and the farm owner). If you opt to not receive the vegetable share you do not get compensation for the share value.

**Farm Store Discount:** You are entitled to 20% off any farm store purchase throughout the calendar year.

By signing below you agree, along with the farm owner, to communicate any issues that may arise during the season promptly and respectfully. You are also aware that you are committing to working at the farm on the start date through the end date listed. Lastly, the working environment at Park Ridge Organics is efficient, fun, energetic and dedicated. Your respect toward others working at the farm are of great importance and vital to the farm's overall success. Now let the season begin!

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Owner Signature \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



**Onboarding & Training**



# Effective Onboarding Components:

- Employee orientation
- Farm tour
- “Work liaison”- Buddy System
- One-on-one check-ins



# Setting up Employees for Success

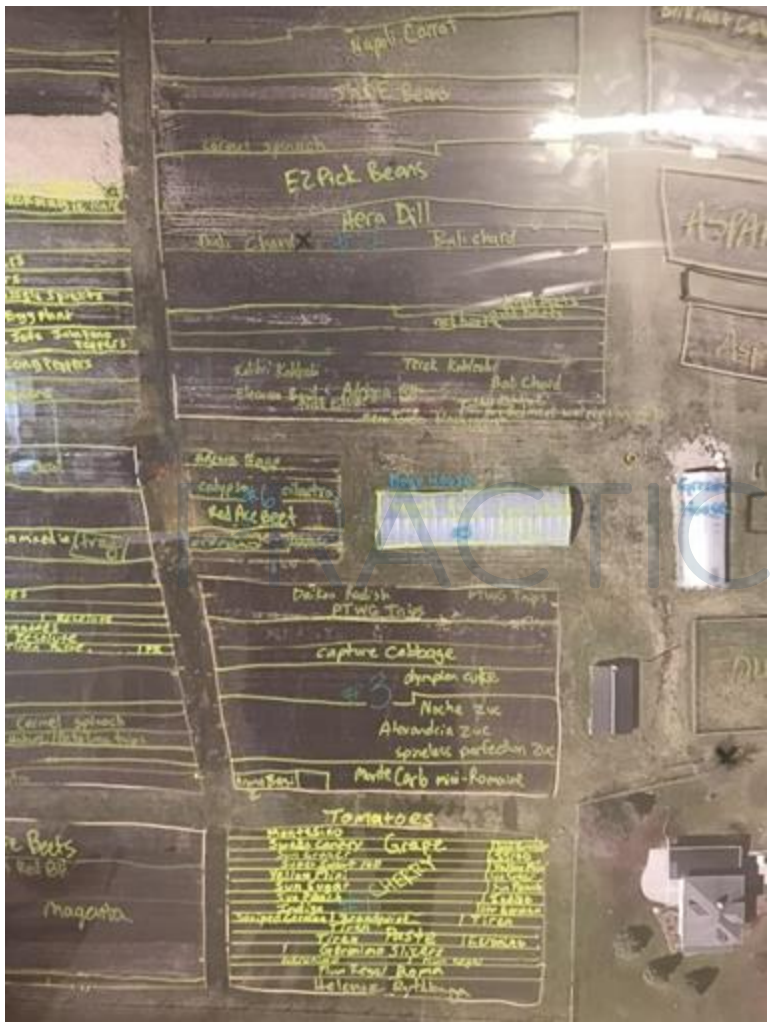
- Employee Manual
- Communication Plan
- Feedback Preferences



**“Doesn't the handbook state that you can't do gaming at work?”**

# The More We Know.... The Better We Work!

Kale, wholesale	@ 60 bunches/hr	@ 40 bunches/hr	@ 20 bunches/hr
Sales	\$3.50	\$3.50	\$3.50
Harvest Labor Only	-0.33	-0.50	-1.00
Other Expenses	-2.50	-2.50	-2.50
Profit =	\$0.67 😊😊😊	\$0.50 😊	\$0.00 😞



# PARK RIDGE ORGANICS LLC

Harvest						
Crop	Tools	Container	Amount per container	Other supplies	Technique	Notes
Beans	red bucket, stool	yellow/teal crate	15lbs		Be sure to look everywhere!	
Beets	red knife	yellow bucket	15lbs	rubber bands (if bunching)	Harvest only request ball size or larger	3-6 per bunch, bunch like sizes together, amount per crate will vary
Bok Choy (full size)	red knife	black crate	8-12 each		Remove discolored or small broken leaves from bottom after harvest	
Broccoli	red knife	harvest tub	30-40 heads		Cut stem at an angle at least 4 inches below crown. Stem is delicious!	
Brocolini	red knife	black crate	10 bunches	rubber bands	Cut stem at angle at least 8 inches below crown or where stem naturally wants to snap. Should not be tough.	
Cabbage, Green	red knife or machete	black crate	6-10 each		Cut at base just below soil. Remove discolored and broken leaves from bottom.	
Cabbage, Napa	red knife	black crate	10-15 each		Cut at base just below soil. Remove discolored and broken leaves from bottom.	
Cantaloupe	yellow bucket	black crate	10-15 each		Full slip from vine, pull	watch for soft spots

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## Knowledge is Power!

# Maintaining Employee Relationships



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**What is one thing strong leaders have  
in common?**

***Emotional intelligence!***



# EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

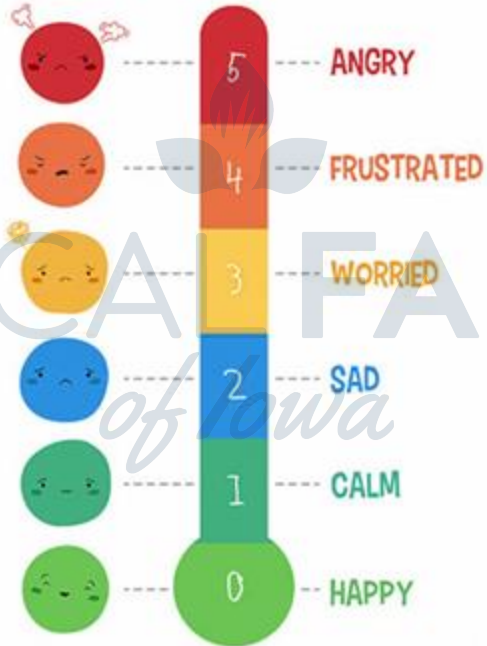
## DEFINITION

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively express one's own emotions, as well as the capacity to effectively interact with others by understanding and managing their emotions. It plays a significant role in personal and professional relationships, decision-making processes, and overall mental well-being.

## 5 Core Skills of EI

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Self-motivation
- Empathy
- Social skill

how are you  
**FEELING?**



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# What is your leadership style?

#1	COMMANDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Do what I tell you to, and do it now!”</li><li>• Direct and efficient. May inhibit growth.</li></ul>
#2	VISIONARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “This is why.”</li><li>• Inspirational. Big picture goals.</li></ul>
#3	AFFILIATIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “People come first.”</li><li>• Employees as people. Community-building.</li></ul>
#4	DEMOCRATIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “What do you think?”</li><li>• Transparency. Invites active participation.</li></ul>
#5	PACESETTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Do like I do - follow me.”</li><li>• Push hard. Results-focused.</li></ul>
#6	COACHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “I believe in you. Trust me!”</li><li>• Develop skills and capacity. Long-term process.</li></ul>

# Task Ranking

	Scale of 1-5				
	Hate it is 1, Love it is 5	Can Hand Off is 1, CAN'T Hand Off is 5	The HIGHER the score, the more likely you should hold on to this task.	DELEGATE IT	You likely have to do this or assess the task process.
What Becky Does...	Hate it / Love it	Can Hand Off / Can't Hand Off			
Cut things	1	5	3		
Social media specials - determining what we need to move	1	2	1.5		
FB posting	1	4	2.5		
IG posting	1	4	2.5		
Hand weeding	2	1	1.5		
send store emails	2	2	2		
member communications (farm happenings)	2	1	1.5		
Website management for plant sale	3	1	2		
Row cover	3	1	2		
bagging for shares	3	1	2		
finalizing deliveries, print labels and reports, etc	3	4	3.5		
email	3	5	4		
answering farm phone	3	3	3		
Greenhouse Summer mgmt	4	2	3		
Trellising	4	1	2.5		
Plastic mulch laying	4	1	2.5		
Landscape fabric laying	4	1	2.5		

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## Reviews & Check In's



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- Make a schedule and stick to it!
- Be consistent with your questions
- Keep record of the conversation for future reference

# Meetings

- What time/day works best for you
- Don't do all the talking
- Set a Timer
- Have a Meeting Leader



**Questions or Comments?**

**THANK YOU**

