



Welcome to the Rock Spring Farm Team! We are excited to have you as part of our team. We hired you because we believe that you can contribute to the success of our business, and share our commitment to achieving our goals as stated in our mission statement.

Rock Spring Farm is committed to quality and unparalleled customer service in all aspects of our business. As part of the Farm Team, we hope you will discover that the pursuit of excellence is a rewarding aspect of your work here.

This employee handbook contains the key policies, goals, benefits, and expectations of Rock Spring Farm, and other information you will need.

Rock Spring Farm's Mission Statement

Rock Spring Farm grows, harvests, washes and packs high quality, good tasting, nutritious, clean, certified organic vegetables and herbs for timely and accurate delivery, in a friendly and professional manner. We serve individuals, families, stores, and distributors with great products and excellent customer service. We encourage an environment of mutual respect, trust, and education between our company and our customers, suppliers, regulators, colleagues, and partners.

The success of Rock Spring Farm is determined by our success in operating as a unified team and as self-motivated and engaged individuals. In the demanding and competitive environment of vegetable and herb production in the Upper Midwest, we have to earn the respect and trust of our customers every day in order to ensure that customers continue to make the decision to choose our products and services. We sell quality produce, and quality produce is grown, harvested, washed, packed and delivered by people. There is no magic formula.

The success and reputation of Rock Spring Farm has been built by hard-working, productive, and creative employees who enjoy the work and relish the connection that food can make in the community. Rock Spring Farm's goal, and yours, as one of its employees, is to live our mission statement and continue to be a leader in the Upper Midwest's vibrant organic produce community. We achieve this through dedicated hard work and commitment from every employee. It is the desire of Rock Spring Farm to have every employee succeed in their job, and be a part of achieving our goals.

Please use this handbook as a ready reference during your time with Rock Spring Farm. Additionally, this handbook assures good management and fair treatment of all employees. At Rock Spring Farm, we want to recognize the contributions of all employees.

Welcome aboard! I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Chris Blanchard

Farmer

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Employee Handbook

- Updated 16 May 2010

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Rock Spring Farm is an Equal Opportunity Employer

This means that we will extend equal opportunity to all individuals without regard for race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, handicaps or veterans status. This policy affirms Rock Spring Farm's commitment to the principles of fair employment and the elimination of all vestiges of discriminatory practices that might exist. We encourage all employees to take advantage of opportunities for promotion as they occur.

Food Safety

At Rock Spring Farm, we handle food that people eat. That means that we need to take steps along the way to ensure that the food our customers receive is free of contamination that may sicken people.

Contamination can take many forms:

- Manure contamination, either directly or indirectly;
- Other biological contamination, such as diseases transmitted in unsanitary conditions;
- Physical contamination from foreign objects;
- And chemical contamination from cleaners, sanitizers, and petroleum product.

Everybody at Rock Spring Farm must take appropriate steps to prevent food contamination and promote a safe-food environment.

Handwashing

You can't really go overboard with handwashing. All employees must wash their hands upon arriving to work. Handwashing is required before handling food and when preparing to enter the packaging room.

Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting.

When washing hands with soap and water:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend!
- Rinse hands well under running water
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel or your elbows to turn off the faucet

Remember: If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based gel to clean hands.

When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Apply product to the palm of one hand
- Rub hands together
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before preparing or eating food

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- After going to the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
- Before and after tending to someone who is sick
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling an animal or animal waste
- After handling garbage
- Before and after treating a cut or wound

Keep Contaminants Out of Food Handling Areas

Outside food is not allowed in food-handling areas such as the wash room and the packaging room. Food may not be consumed while harvesting crops. Drinks may be consumed from lidded containers.

Don't Come to Work Sick

Sick employees represent a hazard to fellow employees and customers in the potential transmission of food-borne illnesses. Sick employees are not to come to work, and may be asked to leave.

Don't Bring Manure to Work

If you live on a farm that handles livestock, or work around livestock or other critters, or clean the kitty litter at home, make certain to avoid bringing manure contamination to Rock Spring Farm. Unlike many dairy operations, our food is constantly handled by people. Assess whether you need to change clothes before coming to work, or take steps on your livestock farm to avoid contamination of your clothing, such as wearing coveralls.

Maintain a Clean Work Environment

To avoid creating an environment favored by rodents and flies, compost and food waste should be removed from the packing house on a daily basis. Floors should be hosed down or swept to remove all food waste before the end of each work day.

Food and Drink at Work

Outside food is not allowed in the working areas of the packing house during work times or when product is present; or in areas of active harvest activity. Drinks must have closed lids.

Contaminants on Plants

At Rock Spring Farm, our food grows out in the real world. Animals of all stripes walk through and fly over our fields.

- Don't harvest or handle crops that have been contaminated with manure.
- Keep petroleum-based grease and toxic cleaners away from crops.
- Maintain equipment to avoid fluid leaks.

Work Hours, Breaks, and Reporting

Workday

The normal workday is eight hours for hourly workers. Times vary according to the needs of the farm and the dictates of the season. Salaried employees generally work the same hours, but may be required to work more hours as the work dictates. While you are generally expected to work the number of hours stated above, Rock Spring Farm does not guarantee that you will actually work that many hours in any given day or week (or that you will be paid for such hours if you do not work that many hours).

Employees are expected to work necessary overtime when requested to do so. Hourly employees will receive time and one-half pay for time worked exceeding 40 hours in any given work week. Salaried employees are not entitled to overtime pay.

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Lunch and Breaks

The Rock Spring Farm Team takes a 45-minute lunch break at around noon. 30 minutes of this break is an unpaid lunch break that will be automatically deducted; 15 minutes is a paid break. Employees do not need to punch out for a normal lunch break, but must punch out for a longer break. Longer breaks must be pre-approved by a supervisor.

Employees are expected to be productively engaged in Rock Spring Farm business by the end of the lunch break.

Time Clock and Time Cards

Where applicable, Rock Spring Farm employees must punch in before beginning their work shift and punch out at the end of their shift. All such employees are expected to work their entire shift.

Punch your time card only when you are fully ready to begin work; i.e., after you have your boots on and have used the bathroom. It is acceptable to punch in prior to the start of your shift, but once you are punched in you must find something productive to do.

You are not allowed to punch the time clock of another employee. Should your time card be incorrectly punched, for any reason, your supervisor will note the correct start and/or end time, and initial the correction. All time cards must be approved by your supervisor.

For employees required to complete time cards, the cards must be filled out with all hours worked on a daily basis. Vacations days, sick days, holidays, and absences such as jury duty, funeral leave or military training, must be specifically noted on the time cards for days on which they occur.

Payroll and Pay Schedule

Rock Spring Farm's work week runs from Saturday to Friday. The pay period lasts for two full work weeks. Paychecks are issued on the Tuesday four days after the pay period ends; if Monday is a bank or government holiday, paychecks are issued on Wednesday.

Attendance

Employees are expected to arrive at work before they are scheduled to start, and to be productively engaged in Rock Spring Farm business by the scheduled start time. All unapproved absences, including late arrivals, will be noted in the employee's personnel file.

Rock Spring Farm is an intense seasonal business. Excessive absences, including for Sick Leave, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Absences will be evaluated differently for seasonal versus year-round employees.

Sick Leave and Funeral Leave

Sick employees represent a hazard to fellow employees and customers in the potential transmission of food-borne illnesses and less-than-optimal performance in potentially-hazardous situations. Sick employees are not to come to work, and may be asked to leave. Rock Spring Farm does not provide payment for sick leave.

In the event of an unplanned absence employees are expected to contact Rock Spring Farm by telephone at least one-half hour before their scheduled start time. Email is not an acceptable means of notification of an unplanned absence.

It is not permissible to be gainfully employed elsewhere while out on sick leave. Any employee doing so will be considered to have voluntarily quit without notice and to not be in good standing at the time of resignation.

Voting Leave

All regular employees of voting age may take off work, up to two hours with prior notice, to vote in a state primary or general election.

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Planned Time Off

Requests for time off must be submitted in writing to the Farmer at least two weeks in advance, and must include the reason, dates requested, and the time the employee will need to leave or arrive to accommodate a partial-day absence.

Holidays

Because of the nature of our business, we do not take time off for holidays during the production season.

Standards of Conduct

Use of Company Property

Rock Spring Farm will provide you with the necessary equipment to do your job. None of this equipment should be used for personal use, nor be removed from the physical confines of Rock Spring Farm - unless it is approved and your job specifically requires use of company equipment outside the physical facility of Rock Spring Farm.

Computer Use

Computer equipment may not be used for personal use during work hours except at the discretion of the farm manager, and may not be used at all without prior permission from a manager. It is forbidden to install any other programs to a company computer without the permission of your supervisor.

Outside of work hours, computer equipment may be used with permission from your supervisor. Computers may not be used for illicit or illegal activity.

Telephone Use

The telephone lines at Rock Spring Farm must remain open for business calls to service our customers. Employees are requested to discourage any personal calls - incoming and outgoing - with the exception of emergency calls. Due to our location, brief long distance calls are permitted with discretion.

Showers, Washing Machines, and the Like

The shower and the washing machine are available for occasional non-work-related use. Regular use must be approved by the farm manager.

Cell Phones and Other Private Communications Technology

Cell phones, pagers, and similar devices must not be carried or used during work hours unless you are expecting an important call; please leave your cell phone in your car or with your things in your break room. If you are expecting an important communication, please communicate with your supervisor prior to leaving your telephone on. The farm manager may allow exceptions at his or her discretion.

Music

Music selection, and presence or absence, should be agreed on in communal spaces. Music volume must be kept at a level that enables communication without requiring raised voices. And music should be turned off when no one is actively listening to it. Lyrics and tone must comply with the other codes of conduct.

Headphone Use

Headphone use is not allowed on the farm with the exception of certain solitary tractor operation activities, such as mowing, rototilling, subsoiling, and transporting, at the discretion of a manager. Exceptions may be approved by the farm manager.

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Personal Health, Safety, and Accidents

Safety is everyone's job at Rock Spring Farm. Rock Spring Farm provides a clean, hazard free, healthy, safe environment in which to work. As an employee, you are expected to take an active part in maintaining this environment. You should observe all posted safety rules, adhere to all safety instructions provided by your supervisor and use safety equipment where required. Your workspace should be kept neat, clean and orderly.

All safety equipment will be provided by Rock Spring Farm. Employees will be responsible for reasonable upkeep of this equipment. Any problems with or defects in, equipment should be reported immediately to your supervisor.

As an employee, you have a duty to comply with the safety rules of Rock Spring Farm, to assist in maintaining a hazard-free environment, to report any accidents or injuries, and to report any unsafe equipment, working condition, process or procedure, immediately to a supervisor.

All work-related injuries, with the exception of minor cuts, scrapes, and bruises, must be reported immediately to your supervisor. In addition, any injuries sustained while off the job that will affect job performance must be reported before or immediately upon arrival at the farm following the injury. Failure to report injuries may be grounds for dismissal.

Due to the nature of work on a farm, it is every employee's responsibility to be up to date on tetanus vaccinations. In addition, employees must inform supervisors and the Farmer in writing of life-threatening allergies to potential hazards present in a farm environment, such as to bee stings.

All work related accidents are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance pursuant to the laws of the states in which we operate.

General Safety

- Do not consume alcoholic beverages and nonprescription drugs on the job; check prescription and over-the-counter drugs for warnings about possible side-effects, especially drowsiness.
- Report all on-the-job injuries promptly to the Farmer.
- Maintain order in your work area.
- Report hazardous or suspicious conditions promptly.
- Always follow all safety precautions.
- Do not horse play around equipment.
- Always bend your knees when you lift objects and get help with heavier loads.
- Wear protective equipment if the job requires it; i.e., ear plugs, eye protection, or respiratory masks.
- Wear sun protection and long sleeves.
- Keep your shoes on.
- Know where first aid equipment and fire extinguishers are located.
- Training for jobs involving equipment are done by a supervisor. Do not use equipment that you have not been trained to use.
- Communicate a problem as soon as you recognize it - preferably while it's only a potential problem.
- Put tools back in their intended place.

Machinery, Equipment, and Vehicle Safety

- **NEVER EVER** put your hands or other body parts near moving machinery parts.
- **ALWAYS** make sure equipment is turned off before attempting to clean, unclog, service or repair. Even if it's hard to start.
- Never operate Rock Spring Farm equipment, machinery, or vehicles unless you have been trained to operate that equipment at Rock Spring Farm (sometimes things may seem obvious, but come with quirks.).
- Do not allow others to ride on equipment you are operating at any time unless with Chris.
- Keep all guards in place.
- Lower all attachments before working on a machine.
- Use safety blocks and jacks when suspending parts of machinery, using a jack alone is unsafe.
- Perform a safety check before using equipment.
- Use care when mounting or dismounting equipment.

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- Use extreme care when operating around ditches, embankments, and swales, or on sloping ground.
- Check behind vehicles before backing.
- Do not wear loose or ragged clothing near rotating shafts or gear trains.
- **ASK** if you have questions about machinery safety.

Inclement Weather

Due to the nature of our business, we work in any weather. Employees need to come to work prepared to deal with the day's weather. Our Iowa climate is not always pleasant or conducive to work; we frequently deal with heat, humidity, and rain in the summer, and snow and cold in the winter. Employees need to be aware of how they are coping with the physical challenges of our work: stay hydrated, get enough sleep, eat well, and wear appropriate clothing.

Dress Code

Rock Spring Farm employees are expected to dress appropriately for engaging in farm work of all sorts, as well as for handling food, on a daily basis. Shirts and closed-toe shoes will be worn at all times. Shoelaces must be tied.

Due to the nature of farm work, employees must have available to them at all times long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Failure to have such items available will be considered in the same vein as an unapproved absence.

In addition, we recommend that all employees supply rain gear and keep an extra change of clothes available. A broad-brimmed hat is also a useful addition.

Because we work around machinery, loose clothing and dangly jewelry should be avoided. Necklaces, earrings, and large rings all present a potential hazard. Rock Spring Farm retains the right to dictate acceptable accessories in this and all other situations.

Employees who come into contact with public, such as on deliveries, are expected to present a tidy and professional appearance. Rock Spring Farm retains the right to dictate acceptable dress in this and all other situations.

Substance Abuse

Rock Spring Farm takes seriously the problem of drug and alcohol abuse, and is committed to providing a substance-free work place for its employees. This policy applies to all employees of Rock Spring Farm, without exception, including part-time and temporary employees.

Without the prior permission of the farmer, no employee is allowed to consume, possess, sell or purchase any alcoholic beverage on any property owned by or leased on behalf of Rock Spring Farm, or in any vehicle owned or leased on behalf of Rock Spring Farm. No employee may use, possess, sell, transfer or purchase any drug or other controlled substance which may alter an individual's mental or physical capacity. The exceptions are aspirin- or ibuprofen-based products and legal drugs which have been prescribed to that employee, and which are being used in the manner prescribed.

Rock Spring Farm will not tolerate employees who report for duty while impaired by use of alcoholic beverages or drugs.

All employees should report evidence of alcohol or drug abuse to a supervisor or a personnel representative immediately. In cases where the use of alcohol or drugs pose an imminent threat to the safety of persons or property, an employee must report the violation. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action for the non-reporting employee.

Employees who violate the Substance Abuse Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

As a part of our policy to ensure a substance free workplace, Rock Spring Farm employees may be asked to submit to a medical examination and/or be clinically tested for the presence of alcohol and/or drugs. Within the limits of federal and state laws, we reserve the right, at our discretion, to examine and test for drugs and alcohol. Some such situations may include, but not be limited, to the following:

- All employees who are offered employment with Rock Spring Farm
- Where there are reasonable grounds for believing an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- As part of an investigation of any accident in the workplace in which there are reasonable grounds to suspect alcohol and/or drugs contributed to the accident
- On a random basis, where allowed by statute

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- As a follow-up to a rehabilitation program, where allowed by statute
- As necessary for the safety of employees, customers, clients or the public at large, where allowed by statute
- When an employee returns to duty after an absence other than from accrued time off, such as vacation or sick leave

It is a condition of your continued employment with Rock Spring Farm that you comply with the Substance Abuse Policy as stated above.

Tobacco Use

Rock Spring Farm endeavors to provide a healthy environment; in addition, tobacco can serve as a disease vector to economically important crops. Therefore, any form of tobacco consumed on company property, including leased property, vehicles, and equipment, is prohibited.

Employees who use tobacco outside of work must wash their hands immediately upon arrival at Rock Spring Farm, and should not report to work smelling of tobacco.

Sexual Harrassment

Rock Spring Farm will not, under any circumstances, condone or tolerate conduct which may constitute sexual harassment on the part of any of its employees. It is our policy that all employees have the right to work in an environment free from any type of illegal discrimination, including sexual harassment.

Any employee found to have engaged in such conduct will be subject to immediate discipline, up to and including discharge.

Sexual harassment is defined as:

- Making submission to unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors a term or condition of employment
- Basing an employment decision on submission or rejection by an employee of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature
- Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment or atmosphere either by:
 - Unwanted verbal actions, such as calling employees by terms of endearment; using vulgar, kidding or demeaning language; or
 - physical conduct which interferes with an employee's work performance.

We, at Rock Spring Farm, do encourage healthy friendships among its employees; however, employees, especially management and supervisory employees, must be sensitive to acts of conduct which may be considered offensive by fellow employees and must refrain from engaging in such conduct.

It is, also, expressly prohibited for an employee to retaliate against employees who bring sexual harassment charges or assist in investigating charges. Retaliation is a violation of this policy and may result in discipline, up to and including termination. No employee will be discriminated against, or discharged, because of bringing or assisting in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment.

Physical and Verbal Abuse

Physical and verbal abuse are prohibited, as are threats of physical abuse or aggression. Don't even joke about this stuff. One violation of this rule is grounds for instant dismissal.

Firearms and Weapons

Employees may not possess or use firearms and weapons of any kind on the farm. If you have any doubts about whether something you bring to the farm is a weapon, you probably shouldn't bring it.

One very narrow exception to this rule is the use of firearms for pest control. Such activities must be approved in advance by the Farmer.

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Personnel Records

It is important that the personnel records of Rock Spring Farm be accurate at all times. In order to avoid issues or compromising your benefit eligibility or having W2's returned, and so that we can contact you if necessary, Rock Spring Farm requires employees to promptly notify the Farmer of any change in name, home address, telephone number, email address, marital status, number of dependents, or any other pertinent information which may change.

Final paychecks will be sent to the most recent address we have on file.

Food from the Farm

Employees may take a reasonable amount of vegetables from the farm for personal use. For inventory management purposes, food may only be taken from the designated employee food shelf; the packing shed coordinator may occasionally approve additional distributions.

Confidentiality, Nondisclosure and Nonuse Agreement

Rock Spring Farm produces, markets, and sells natural and organically grown products, including produce, livestock and livestock products, plants, and other farm products. During the course of employment at Rock Spring Farm, employees may have access to the company's and the owners' confidential information, proprietary data and trade secrets, including but not limited to distributor (wholesale accounts and retail customers) and supplier names; information about distributors and suppliers; volume information; business practices and procedures; growing practices and procedures; marketing techniques and methodologies; crop variety names; and financial information.

This proprietary information has both actual and potential economic value derived from not being generally known to other individuals and organizations who can obtain economic value from its disclosure and use. Improper use or disclosure would threaten the competitive advantages necessary to the successful continuance of Rock Spring Farm's business.

For the duration of the employment relationship, including the off-season for returning employees, and for twelve months following the severance of the employment relationship:

- Employees shall not disclose or threaten to disclose Rock Spring Farm's proprietary information to other individuals and organizations without the express written consent of Rock Spring Farm.
- Employees shall not use or threaten to use proprietary information for personal or organizational gain, whether as an individual or within an organization, during their employment or for a period of twelve months following the severance of the employment relationship, without the express written consent of Rock Spring Farm.

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How to Succeed at Rock Spring Farm

Instructions and careful listening

Listen carefully to instructions. Repeat them back to the instructor. Don't presume to understand a complex instruction or question after two or three words have escaped our lips.

Sometimes an instruction will seem inappropriate and you might be tempted to reinterpret it. Many of the reasons for doing a task in a specific way are not readily apparent to the novice farmer. If your instincts insist that what we told you is wrong, check with us that your understanding is clear.

Ask questions

When in doubt, ask questions. Ask questions even when you are not in doubt. Many mistakes can be avoided by being very clear about the goal of a task and how to execute it.

Wear a watch.

More than anything else, farming is about time and timeliness. Wear a watch. Time how long tasks take.

If we are about to give a demonstration, but we delay starting because one member of the team hasn't shown up, it creates both a time and a morale problem.

If possible, notify your supervisor *before* you or your crew finish a job; this allows your supervisor time to plan and make changes.

Be present

Rock Spring Farm is dedicated to a system that gets the work done efficiently so that evenings are free. The field work must be steady and conscious in order for this goal to be reached. In addition, the relationship to the plants and soil and work is enhanced by keeping attention on the task. Through this relationship, one's farming instincts and insights develop. Fellowship in the field is a beautiful occurrence when it is balanced. Generally, though, the work slows down as the talking picks up.

Our work affords many opportunities for conversation. The trick is to keep working if you are talking, and to let the work, not the talk, set the pace.

Get enough rest

The work is demanding and must be executed efficiently and in a state of clarity.

Be open to a new system

Be open to a new system, a new idea, an improvement of yesterday's method, a new way to use a tool. Rock Spring Farm is a dynamic farm. Learning continually occurs. New systems are tried. Old systems are modified. We sometimes change the procedure for a task right in the middle of the execution, then change it again, then again. We are not a factory or a computer, where every facet can be regimented. We are in ongoing relationship with materials, weather, goals – flow with it.

Independence

Know that your supervisor may not always be with you. A farm places many demands on its owners outside of the hands-on work. When they are not with you, they are busily engaged in other activities that accrue to running the business. Be assured that they will prioritize the day's labor, and will work interactively with you to insure its smooth execution; however, sometimes the capriciousness of farming will cause them not to be there when you need them.

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Be prepared to offer observations about field operations

Be prepared to offer observations about field operations, including time, quality, and conditions. Let a supervisor know when work is not going to be completed on schedule.

Communicate a problem

Communicate a problem as soon as you recognize it - preferably while it's only a potential problem.

Put Tools away

Put tools away. It is easy to set a tool down in the field and forget about it. Be conscious of the act of putting a tool down; knives, clippers, twist ties, and rubber bands can be easily strewn in a field on a busy day. Remember, you are held accountable for the tools you use.

Be prepared

Be prepared. Have water available in the field, warm clothes, mud boots, cool clothes – "think weather". Frequent and /or lengthy breaks to get the correct apparel (or for other reasons) slow the work down, and degrade the teamwork.

Protect yourself from sun and wind with a hat, sunscreen, and a long-sleeve shirt. And your favorite lipbalm.

Be Considerate

Music selection, and presence or absence, should be agreed on in communal spaces. Music volume must be kept at a level that enables communication without requiring raised voices. And music should be turned off when no one is actively listening to it.

The Rock Spring Farm Team Secrets

- 1) **Make every move count.** This means carry your tools, water and supplies with you so you don't make several trips back to the tool shed or supply area. If you are walking down a crop row at harvest time, check to see if crates or twist ties are needed. Walking an extra 75 feet adds up over the course of a week. Travel in the High Occupancy lane whenever you can, whether it's moving two crates out of the field or two tomatoes to a crate.
- 2) **Use the right tools.** This can be a major timesaver. Let's start with the most important. Many quick fixes can be accomplished with a **jackknife** (we like the Leatherman Juice and Wave models). Lots of time can be wasted trying to break twine. *Use your knife.* A **watch** helps you know how long something takes, or when lunch starts without having to be tracked down; an awareness of time makes us all happy. The farm's **radios** - not the "jam on it" type but the communication type - save many steps and helps keep miscommunication from happening. We also use a myriad of **other tools**. Pay attention to what tools are needed with each job. And use them.
- 3) **Keep your cool.** Literally and figuratively. A **broad-brimmed hat** can help you keep your cool in hot weather, and you'll look good, too. **Water** is essential – drink lots, both during the day and after work. Carry it with you. And keep your cool when it comes to dealing with the difficulties the job, the day, your coworkers, and your boss might bring.
- 4) **Keep all tools and machinery in impeccable shape.** Dull knives don't cut. Broken crates don't hold vegetables. Rusty hoes don't kill weeds. And broken tractors just make life hard.
- 5) **Repetition makes for smoother moves.** Always put your tools back where they go. If you always keep your knife in the same place, you can reach for it without looking. The same goes for bunching cilantro: the same hand does the same thing, every time.
- 6) **Put things where they belong.** Again. We can't spare the time to look for misplaced tools, knives, or radios. A \$10 harvest knife left in the field can ruin a \$700 tractor tire; this, in turn, ruins everyone's day. Wrenches aren't as destructive, but can be just as frustrating. So, get in the habit of putting things away.
- 7) **Pay attention.** Almost everything else will fall into place if you do. Don't think about your girlfriend, boyfriend, dog, or big toe. In Latin: *Age quod agis*--- "Do what you are doing."
- 8) **Keep track of your time.** Get a little faster at every task, every time.
- 9) **Use both hands.** You are half idle if one hand is doing all the work. Finish one step with one hand and start the next step with the other; both hands like to pick vegetables, so don't play favorites.
- 10) **Work from left to right.** Or right to left if you're a southpaw. Either way, you'll be faster if you move into the work to be done, and leave the finished work behind.
- 11) **If there are more than one of you, work as a team.** You're what biologists call a "superorganism." If a team member gets done 10 minutes faster, the team gets done 10 minutes faster. Help each other out.
- 12) **Have fun.** We do. We truly love our work. Some days more than others. Try every day to choose your attitude instead of letting circumstances force one on you.

Like any new skill, farm work must be learned, practiced, reviewed and perfected. It's more fun to get more done. And it's worth it. The payoff is that you will save hours each week. Hours that can be used to learn a new skill or accomplish a fun project.

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