

WWOOFing at Wellspring CSA

I arrived at Wellspring in July 2009 from Long Island, New York. I had been interested in learning more about the everyday experiences of those working on and operating organic farms in the United States and decided to WWOOF for a few weeks to see what I could learn. Individuals with similar interests will find Wellspring a beautiful, organized, and friendly place to pursue a short or long-term internship. Volunteers are welcomed as members of the team and assist in all areas of production. On non-harvest days, activities might include hoeing paths and walkways, hand weeding, hanging traps designed to monitor pest infestations, and germinating and transplanting vegetables from seed. On Mondays and Thursdays, CSA members come to pick up their share and the day's activities center on harvesting, washing, and bunching produce. Though WWOOFers need only work four hours each morning, I would encourage any volunteer to put in full days either regularly or on occasion in order to gain a holistic understanding of how projects unfold from start to finish. Having the opportunity to see the way in which careful planning and hard work translate to satisfied CSA members during pickup makes the job worthwhile.

Those interested in volunteering at Wellspring will undoubtedly have an amazing experience if they are genuinely interested in learning more about the day-to-day activities of farm businesses. The staff has plenty of patience for novice farmers and is open to answering questions. I cannot stress enough, however, that volunteers should be independent and self-sustaining. At the end of the workday, members of the staff do go their separate ways. There is quite a bit of alone time to be had and WWOOFers coming from out of state should understand that they will be away from their friends and family for an extended period of time. A working set of culinary skills will come in handy, as all meals are prepared independently and in the absence of running water or electricity. That being said, with a car and some motivation, volunteers will find PLENTY to do in Central Vermont. Montpelier, the state's capital, is a short drive away and offers great food shopping and a variety of restaurants. Hiking and backpacking enthusiasts can spend weekends exploring nearby trails, while those looking for some city excitement can take the drive to Burlington or Montreal (one and two and a half hours respectively). Those who feel adequately prepared for the independent lifestyle of a volunteer can expect to have a positive experience at Wellspring. The farm's arresting physical beauty and knowledgeable staff make this a prime spot for those curious about organic agriculture.