

SUZANNE NOLTER

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Professional Summary

I am an experienced professional organic grower with proven success in the production of high-quality cut flower and food crops. I have started multiple farm projects and sales outlets from scratch, including the first CSA and farm-florist ventures in my previous community. Over the last 20 years, I have developed strong horticultural, management and business skills.

Work and Management Experience

Farm Owner and Manager

March 2020 - present

Blazing Star Flowers. Asheville, NC

- Started and continue to run a small organic specialty cut flower farm.
- Manage annual farm budget, expenses and bookkeeping using Excel and Quickbooks.
- Market sales through digital marketing, including social media, email newsletters, website, and online store development.
- Develop systems to support all aspects of the business, including crop planning, hoop house and heated greenhouse management, soil management/fertilization, propagation, fencing, drip irrigation, organic pest/weed management, cultivation using machinery/hand tools, recordkeeping, efficient harvest/post-harvest techniques using best practices to maintain consistent high-quality products for daily deadlines.
- Market and promote sales through diverse local outlets, including CSA, plant sales, and farmer's markets.
- Create and led educational farm tours and workshops.
- Provide upscale floral designs, logistics and customer service for weddings and special events.

Farm Owner and Manager

Jan. 2003 - April 2017

Blazing Star Farm. Block Island, RI

- Founded and built a successful, highly diverse organic production farm.
- Effectively managed, oriented and trained staff, including full/part-time/seasonal employees, apprentices and volunteers.
- Managed annual farm budget, expenses and bookkeeping using Excel and QuickBooks.
- Developed systems to support all aspects of the business, including: crop planning, hoop house construction/management, soil management/fertilization, propagation, fencing, drip irrigation, organic pest/weed management, cultivation using machinery/hand tools, recordkeeping, efficient harvest/post-harvest/packaging techniques using best practices for food safety and maintaining consistent high-quality products for daily deadlines.
- Marketed and promoted sales through diverse local outlets, including CSA, restaurants and farmer's markets.
- Created and led educational farm tours and programs for school groups, garden clubs and the general public.
- Presented educational conference workshops at the Stone Barns Center (NY) and for the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers.
- Established and organically managed fruit orchards, honeybee hives, and pastured laying hens.
- Provided upscale floral designs, logistics and customer service for weddings and special events.

RAD Farmers Market Board Member

December 2024 - present

River Arts District Farmers Market. Asheville, NC

- Support the RAD Market in decision-making, hiring, and through challenges affecting the market.

Coordinator, Executive Committee Member

May 2005 - May 2015

Block Island Farmer's Market. Block Island, RI

- As Coordinator, created organizational by-laws, managed new member outreach and admissions, on-site vendor logistics, annual budget reporting, communication with municipal and business partners, and meeting facilitation.
- As Executive Committee Member, updated by-laws and responded to challenges affecting the market.

Assistant Farm Manager, Teaching Assistant

Nov. 2001 - Nov. 2002

University of California, Dept. of Agroecology. Santa Cruz, CA

- Assisted farm manager with logistical and educational support for the Ecological Horticulture Apprenticeship Program, which consisted of 35 residential students from diverse backgrounds.
- Taught six-week modules covering propagation, irrigation, market harvest/sales, beekeeping, composting and soil cultivation.
- Assisted farm manager with all aspects of maintenance of the three-acre Alan Chadwick Garden.

Education

Certification in Ecological Horticulture

University of California, Department of Agroecology. Santa Cruz, CA

2001

Bachelor of Arts, English Literature

The College of William and Mary. Williamsburg, VA

1998

Skills and Interests

Organization and time management. Microsoft Office. Website building. Spanish proficiency. Art and design. Hiking. Yoga (certified teacher) and meditation. Trainings in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Non-Violent Communication and Business Foundations (Mountain Bizworks).