Regenerative Ag and Conservation Specialist
SW Michigan

Application Deadline: Open Until Filled

Location: This position will be based out of a home office in SW Michigan. Exact location is negotiable. Significant time will be spent in the field working with farmers and conservation agencies in Southwest Michigan, with limited travel throughout the rest of the state.

Anticipated Start Date: September 1, 2023

Overview: In cooperation and with support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, General Mills, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Pheasants Forever Inc. is seeking a talented individual to apply his or her skills to advance sustainable agricultural practices and environmental outcomes focusing on soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat on working lands throughout Southwest MI. Specifically, the incumbent will work directly with farmers to plan and implement regenerative ag and conservation practices that simultaneously improve farm sustainability and profitability. The incumbent will serve as a conservation leader in the area to foster and expand collaborative public-private partnerships with state and federal conservation agencies, NGOs, and Ag industry professionals that help advance a voluntary, incentive-based approach to private lands conservation. The incumbent will lead efforts to enhance coordination, training, and information for the farming community so that both public and private sector organizations can provide integrated and complementary conservation assistance to their shared customers.

Primary Responsibilities:

Technical Assistance:

- Work with farmers to identify and address resource concerns through strategic implementation of regenerative ag and conservation practices.
- Understand and relay how the use of agricultural economic information and precision data can be used to develop profitable conservation alternatives on agricultural operations.
- Serve as a leader to advance public-private partnerships through state and federal conservation programs, such as USDA’s Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and other relevant state and local programs.
- Work closely and maintain good working relationships with conservation agency/organization technical staff and other resource management professionals, both public and private, in support of a holistic approach to the management of natural resources.
- Track, compile and report accomplishments for partnership accountability and growth.
- Work as a member of a team to develop innovative strategies for implementing conservation solutions that increase farm sustainability and profitability.
Information and Education

- Provide training and information to ag industry professionals on regenerative and precision ag, and on state and USDA conservation programs to improve awareness, farmer access to assistance, and on-the-ground coordination with conservation staff and organizations, such as MI DNR Farm Bill Biologists, MI Department of Ag MAEAP Technicians, and NRCS Field Office staff.
- Provide training and information to conservation agencies and organizations on modern production agriculture systems, including regenerative and precision ag, nutrient and pest management, and other agronomic services that improve productivity while minimizing natural resource impacts.
- Develop and implement workshops and field days designed to educate farmers, farm- and farmer-led/support organizations on best practices and other innovative conservation systems that benefit wildlife habitat, water quality, soil health, and farm productivity.

Required Knowledge Skills and Abilities:

- Demonstrated experience as a leader with strong initiative.
- Excellent oral and written communication, coordination, and organizational skills.
- Strong customer relations and interpersonal skills, ability to communicate effectively, and excellent attention to detail.
- Self-motivated and ability to work independently and with a diverse clientele.
- Demonstrated knowledge of modern farm equipment and techniques, technology, and agronomic and conservation practices common to Michigan and the Upper Midwest.
- Ability to relate to farmers and farmer-led organizations, agribusiness, and conservation professionals.
- Ability to organize, develop, and implement educational and outreach activities, including workshops and seminars. Must be comfortable with public speaking.
- Knowledge of conservation program offerings, including USDA Farm Bill Programs, as well as state and local programs, is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience successfully partnering with farmers, ag industry, conservation agencies, University Extension, etc. is preferred.
- A strong passion for the outdoors, agriculture, and conservation.
- Ability to travel frequently within the Southwest Michigan region and occasionally travel within and outside the state to attend professional meetings/conferences.
- Valid driver’s license required; Use of personal vehicle required (mileage reimbursement provided); Home office required (Computer, printer, and general office supplies provided)

Education and Experience Guideline: Applicants for this position should possess a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in Agriculture, Agronomy, Ag Systems Technology, Ag Business, or a Natural Resources field with relevant agricultural experience. Direct experience working on a farm operation is strongly preferred. A passion for agriculture, the outdoors, conservation, wildlife and working directly with farmers and other ag and conservation professionals is highly desired.

Salary: $45,000 - $50,000 commensurate with qualifications and experience + benefits (see our benefits summary at www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs).

To Apply: Please combine your cover letter, resume and three (3) references into a single Microsoft Word document or PDF file before uploading to our recruitment website at www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs.
Pheasants Forever, Inc and Quail Forever is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, status as a protected veteran, status as a qualified individual with disability, or any other category that may be protected by law.