



# Irish Seed Savers

*Protecting Ireland's food crop heritage for future generations*

## Job Description

Title:	Head Gardener - Heritage Seed Gardens
Reporting to:	Executive Director
Responsible for:	Heritage Seed Garden team: staff, volunteers, interns, contractors
Hours:	35 hours per week (full-time, permanent)
Salary:	€36,000

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**Overview:** Playing a key role within our renowned conservation organisation, the Head Gardener holds overall responsibility for the maintenance and development of our Heritage Seed Gardens, including the management of garden staff and resources. As part of the management team, the Head Gardener will work in cooperation with colleagues at Irish Seed Savers Association (ISSA) to advance our work in finding, protecting, and sharing for use Ireland's food crop heritage.

**Purpose of the Role:** To manage ISSA's Heritage Seed Gardens and to work in collaboration with the Seed Bank team for the planning, growing, maintenance and harvesting of heritage seed crops.

## Key Responsibilities

### Management Duties

- Lead, direct, and motivate a growing team.
- Develop annual work plans and work schedules for the seed gardens and staff.
- Budgetary planning in liaison with the Executive Director/Operations Manager; and management of the agreed budget for the gardens.
- Provide regular progress reports on the annual work plan, staff-level planning and safety.
- Contribute to the recruitment and retention of garden staff.
- Performance management and supervision of garden team, including identifying training and development needs.

### The Heritage Seed Gardens

- The maintenance and development of the Heritage Seed Gardens to the highest standards.
- Organic seed-to-seed crop production: oversee soil preparation, planting, cultivation, maintenance and harvest of seed crops.
- Long term soil management and nutrient cycling
- Identification and control of pests and disease including invasive species.
- Maintenance of records for the Heritage Seed Gardens, including documenting observations.
- Operating and maintaining garden machinery & tools.
- Responsible for maintaining plant health through organic measures and ensuring compliance with IOA standards; keeping relevant records and contributing to the annual IOA report.
- Administrative duties relevant to the role.

### **Other Duties**

- Observe and implement Health & Safety requirements (e.g., PPE, safe work methods).
- Contribute to ISSA's strategic and annual planning process.
- Liaise with the public, disseminating information, giving guided tours and participating in other on-site events.
- Participate at offsite events, representing ISSA as appropriate.
- Collaborate with other departments within ISSA to promote work and ensure all aspects of organisational needs are attended to.
- Carry out other duties deemed by the Executive Director as reasonable and appropriate to the grade and position.

## **Person Specification**

We are looking for an enthusiastic, motivated, and highly skilled gardener with proven management skills and strong experience in organic horticulture to be part of our dynamic team at ISSA. A positive, flexible and proactive approach to work, with a willingness to engage openly across departments in areas of shared interest. Special conditions of the job include working in inclement weather; working both alone and in teams; regular physical activity and operating farm machinery and equipment.

### **Requirements**

#### **Essential**

- Horticultural qualification minimum QQI Level 7 or equivalent horticultural experience.
- Minimum 3 years management experience.
- Proven track record in organic vegetable production.
- Experience with seed-to-seed production.
- Experienced in long-term soil fertility management, including compost and compost teas.
- Good environmental awareness, knowledge and understanding of biodiversity.
- Full clean and current driving licence, minimum category B & W.
- Ability to use own initiative and efficiently organise/manage a team.
- Ability to multitask, with good attention to detail, focused.
- Ability to work in a physically demanding role.
- Experience with farming machinery (tractor, rotovator, quad etc) and tools (landscaping and cultivation tools).
- Good DIY skills.

#### **Desirable**

- Knowledge of word processing and database management.

#### **Other Conditions**

#### **Schedule:**

- Monday to Friday
- Weekend availability

#### **Job Benefits:**

- Bike to work scheme
- Onsite parking
- Store discount

#### **Ability to commute/relocate:**

The place of work is Capparoe, Scariff, East Clare. The successful candidate will reliably commute or relocate in advance of the start date (required).