



# Irish Seed Savers

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

## Job Description

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|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Title:</b>        | <b>Horticultural Assistant, Irish Seed Savers Association, Capparoe, Scarriff, Co. Clare</b>                                 |
| <b>Reporting to:</b> | Head of Horticulture                                                                                                         |
| <b>Hours:</b>        | 35 hours per week, full-time. You may occasionally need to work weekends for workshops or tours, always with advance notice. |
| <b>Salary:</b>       | Depending on experience                                                                                                      |
| <b>Start date:</b>   | TBC                                                                                                                          |

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**About us:** Irish Seed Savers Association is a charity working to protect Ireland's food crop heritage. Our 20-acre organic site at Capparoe holds a seed gene bank, crop heritage vegetable gardens, a native heritage apple orchard, nursery beds and a visitor center. We produce organic open-pollinated crop vegetable seed and heritage fruit trees for sale.

**Purpose of the Job:** You carry out the daily work in ISSA's gardens, vegetable crops, nursery beds and orchards. Your schedule changes with the season, and you work sometimes on your own and sometimes as part of a team. You also learn specialist skills such as grafting and seed crop management from our team.

**Who you report to:** The Head of Horticulture, who leads the strategic planning and management of the gardens and orchard teams and handles the related administration.

**What you bring:** You deliver daily tasks reliably, flag issues promptly and anticipate problems before they affect the crops or the work plan.

### Main duties and responsibilities

This list is not exhaustive. Your line manager may ask you to take on other tasks to meet the organisation's schedule.

- Prepare soil, sow, propagate, plant out, cultivate and harvest heritage seed crops, plants and fruit trees
- Maintain labels and records for rare and heritage varieties, protecting varietal identity at every stage
- Prune shrubs and hedges, and help with fruit tree pruning, budding and grafting under guidance
- Monitor plant health, identify common pests and diseases, and carry out agreed organic control measures
- Carry out seasonal planting schedules and crop rotations, and give feedback on how they are working
- Run and check irrigation systems, fix simple faults and report larger ones
- Manage composting systems day to day, and apply mulches and green manures as part of our organic and regenerative practices
- Maintain wildlife habitats and native planting, protecting pollinators and beneficial insects
- Follow ISSA procedures that support Irish Organic Association certification
- Use hand tools and garden machinery such as mowers, trimmers and hedge trimmers safely.

- Operate tractors, rotovators or chainsaws only after training and authorisation
- Carry out routine checks, cleaning and basic maintenance on tools and equipment, and report faults
- Follow ISSA health and safety procedures, including manual handling, lone working and PPE, and report hazards to protect colleagues, volunteers and visitors
- Welcome visitors, assist with guided tours, demonstrations and workshops (training is provided), and prepare materials and equipment for events on and off site
- Show volunteers and interns how to do routine tasks and keep them on track
- Keep clear records of planting, watering, harvesting, plant health and equipment faults

## **Skills and Experience**

### *Essential*

- At least 1 year of practical experience in a garden, nursery, farm or similar setting, or a horticultural qualification such as QQI Level 5
- Solid knowledge of planting, watering, weeding, pruning basics and safe tool use
- Working knowledge of organic growing, composting and organic pest and disease control, or a clear commitment to learning it
- Interest in biodiversity and the conservation of Ireland's food crop heritage
- Ability to plan your own day from a task list and work on your own once briefed
- Good attention to detail in labelling and record keeping
- Clear communication and a professional manner with colleagues, volunteers and the public
- Willing to work outdoors in all weather conditions and to carry out physical work, with reasonable accommodations where needed

### *Desirable*

- Full clean driving licence; categories B and W are an advantage. The site is rural, so you will need your own transport.
- Experience of seed saving, seed crop production or heritage varieties
- Nursery or orchard experience, including propagation or pruning
- Machinery training or certificates, such as strimmer or chainsaw
- Experience of irrigation, landscaping or working with visitors and volunteers
- Basic computer skills for keeping records

## **How to apply**

Send your CV and a short cover letter to [raul@irishseedsavers.ie](mailto:raul@irishseedsavers.ie). Applicants must have the right to work in Ireland. ISSA is an equal opportunities employer.