



Position: Head Grower

The nonprofit Land & Garden Preserve offers serenity across 1,400 acres of astonishingly beautiful natural lands and three breathtaking historic pleasure gardens adjacent to Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island, Maine. Visitors enjoy our lands by walking a vast network of trails and carriage roads. We steward three top-tier gardens of wildly different character: The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden, the Thuya Garden, and the Asticou Azalea Garden. Each is a horticultural work of art that reinforces a strong sense of place and contributes to the special wonder of coastal Maine. Our people are among our greatest assets. We proudly employ a dedicated team of talented gardeners and craftspeople with a passion for our mission to conserve and share the beauty of our historic lands and gardens. For more information, visit gardenpreserve.org.

Scope of Work: The Head Grower oversees the plant production operation and landscape maintenance at McAlpin Farm. McAlpin Farm comprises a 6,000 sq. ft. greenhouse facility, a one-acre in-ground nursery field, container storage, cold frames, a lath house, and storage buildings. The McAlpin Farm plant production operation supports the Land & Garden Preserve's three historic gardens and 1000+ acres of natural lands, and supports local partnerships when space and time allow. The manager is an active, working supervisor who oversees a team of content specialists, volunteers, and seasonal staff.

This position is not just about horticulture. It is about being part of a team that upholds the mission, vision, and core values of the Land & Garden Preserve while promoting operational changes to increase ecological sustainability. You will collaborate with other staff members on various projects throughout the Preserve. Reporting to the Director of Farm & Gardens, this 12-month position has a full-benefit package that requires flexibility in scheduling to ensure greenhouse coverage.

Essential Job Functions:

- Manage all aspects of the McAlpin Farm landscape, plant nursery, and greenhouse.
- Lead the research, testing, and implementation of novel techniques to propagate challenging specimens, especially in support of the Asticou Azalea Garden's collection of rare *Rhododendron*. Ensure the viability of backup specimens for historic and rare collections.
- Develop and maintain in-ground growing spaces for ericaceous and ephemeral native plants.
- Oversee the propagation and production of an extensive range of native and non-native annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees via cutting, seed, division, and plug. Ensure the crop production schedule is met and solve problems as they arise. Ensure greenhouse settings are managed appropriately for crops, seasonal weather, and energy savings.
- Oversee the outdoor nursery's production of cut flowers, annual replacement plants, and care of in-ground and containerized stock plants. Collaborate with the Director of Farm and Gardens, the plant nursery assistant, and the garden staff to make decisions on space optimization.
- Support integrated pest management strategies, including scouting, beneficial insects, biological sprays, and fertility management. Support the McAlpin staff in assisting with comprehensive pest management strategies, Preserve-wide. Obtain and maintain a pesticide license. Comply with the Master Pesticide Applicator's requirements and the State of Maine's recommendations regarding the use of pesticides.

- Ensure proactive and timely communication and recordkeeping. Ensure staff create the annual master grow list, integrated pest management planning, plant labels, inventories, and propagation documentation accurately.
- Ensure that greenhouses and outdoor landscapes are maintained efficiently and to the highest standards. Incorporate sustainable products and practices.
- Support winterizing McAlpin container plants, landscape, garden equipment, and supplies.
- Monitor facilities, turf, and hardscape elements for maintenance or renovation needs. Collaborate with Preserve staff specialists to schedule preventative and deferred maintenance.
- Create and review communication content related to McAlpin. Provide newsletter and social media content, as requested.

Leadership:

- Support, prioritize, and manage the work of the McAlpin staff and volunteers. Ensure proper staffing for daily operations, weekend/holiday coverage, and projects. Monitor and evaluate work for quality, safety, and efficiency. Meet with staff regularly, process timesheets, and conduct annual performance reviews. Support the growth of staff into content specialists with training and development opportunities.
- Grow volunteer involvement at McAlpin Farm.
- McAlpin Farm is the hub for horticulture at the Preserve. Ensure the team meets high communication standards and is out in the Preserve's landscapes networking, identifying plant needs, and collecting propagation materials.
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained to operate and maintain all equipment and have the appropriate State of Maine pesticide licenses. Share documentation annually with the Master Pesticide licensee.
- Serve as an ambassador at McAlpin Farm during tours with external groups and VIPs.
- Collaborate with the Director of Farm & Gardens on crafting job descriptions, recommend staffing adjustments to meet operational needs, interview and hire, long-term planning, budgeting, projects, new programs, and staff professional development, and participate in developing future programs, such as facility upgrades, plant sales, partnerships, and internship offerings.
- Maintain a strong relationship with the Facility Department regarding annual greenhouse maintenance needs, identifying and fixing facility issues, and planning for renovations.
- Make staff available to assist in other areas of the Preserve as projects and workflow allow.

Qualifications:

- Experience leading small-scale greenhouse and outdoor plant nursery operations.
- Experience supporting and developing staff as content specialists.
- Experience propagating a diverse range of plant materials. Applied knowledge of woody plant propagation, including *Rhododendron*.
- Familiarity with greenhouse pests and diseases and biological controls.
- Experience with ornamental gardening, including organic gardening practices, staking, fertilizing, weeding, pruning, and training woody plant nursery material.
- Knowledge and ability to use botanical Latin nomenclature.
- Experience with setting and meeting deadlines and implementing efficient workplace practices.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office 365, managing data through Excel. Ability to learn new systems.
- Valid driver's license and proven ability to operate small equipment.

- Able to work a physically active eight-hour day in various conditions outside and in a glass greenhouse, lift 50 pounds, and perform detailed repetitive tasks.
- The selected candidate must obtain a pesticide license within the first 8 months of employment. For the first three test attempts, the employer will pay the test costs and allow the employee to study for and take the test on work time. If the employee has not passed the exam after three attempts, further attempts will be at the employee's cost and on the employee's time.

Salary Description:

Starting pay range of \$30.00 - \$37.00 per hour, based on experience. Relocation housing is available.

To Apply: Send your resume and cover letter to info@gardenpreserve.org, referencing Head Grower in the subject line.