Farm Start Trainee:

**Enterprise Start-Up Placement**

We grow organic produce at Hawkwood, our 12 acre community market garden and plant nursery, and distribute it to our own market stalls, box scheme and local restaurants. In 2018 we produced over
10 tonnes of produce, including 2 tonnes of salad leaves, featuring 115 different varieties of leaf.

We believe that more food should be grown organically and locally, and yet we cannot meet the demand, notably for salad. As part of our *Farm Start* programme of supporting new entrants into organic farming, we are looking for a trainee to assist with, and learn about commercial veg & salad growing; to progress to managing their own salad rotations and veg area at Hawkwood, before graduating to their own site. OrganicLea is committed to supporting them in finding an appropriate site, and providing them with growing, marketing and next-steps support throughout the process.

This placement will suit someone looking to develop a food growing enterprise in East London.

# Details of the role

* Unpaid voluntary role
* Travel expenses, within London, if needed

#          A seasonal, vegan, organic lunch will be provided on Wednesdays

* Dates: Tuesday 26 March to Wednesday 18 December 2019
* Time commitment:
* We are asking for a one day per week commitment, but different days at Hawkwood have a different flavour, structure and learning objectives, so it is necessary that the candidate's working day changes during the course of the traineeship.

From March - June this will be on a Wednesday, after which it will change to a Tuesday from June - Oct. From Oct - Dec it is hoped the trainee will commence work on a site outside of Hawkwood, and be able to work more flexibly

* Hours: 9.00am – 5.00pm
* Based at: Hawkwood Community Plant Nursery, with occasional work at Marsh Lane Kitchen Garden, Leyton; and later another growing site, to be confirmed
* Supported by and responsible to: OrganicLea’s Production Support Worker

**To apply:** Please send a CV or a description of your employment (and volunteering) history; and a covering letter detailing how you meet the person specification and why you want this post to: volunteering@organiclea.org.uk or by post to the Hawkwood address below. For more information about this role please contact Clare at: volunteering@organiclea.org.uk/020 8524 4994.

**Deadline for applications:** 10 am on Monday 11 February

* **Interview date:**  Tuesday 26 February or Friday 1 March

# Main objectives

# To learn about and assist with all aspects of propagation in the glasshouses

# To learn about and assist with all aspects of planting and maintaining the maket garden areas of the Hawkwood site

# To assist with harvesting and preparing produce in accordance with the needs of the OrganicLea stall, box scheme or other independent outlets

# To provide support for the vegetable production at Hawkwood

# To gain the necessary skills, confidence, contacts and support to run a successful veg/ salad growing enterprise

# Graduating to managing a veg and salad area, and with consultation, making decisions about the planting, maintenance and harvest schedule.

# Main Activities

# *Growing*

* Formulating propagation media
* Raising plants from seed
* Irrigation
* Preparing ground, planting and maintaining salad crops, green manures and companion plants
* Organic weed, pest and disease management
* Harvesting schedules and techniques
* Winterising salad beds
* Undertake other activities in support of OrganicLea, as appropriate

# *Harvesting*

* Cutting/picking produce to the agreed methods, ensuring quality control
* Preparing produce according to ‘product descriptions’
* Weighing, packaging, sealing, labelling and organising dispatch

**Person Specification**

## *Essential*

* Interest in sustainable food production and the desire to put that interest into practice
* Desire to learn about, and establish, a small-scale commercial growing enterprise
* Two years' experience of growing
* Happy to work mainly outdoors throughout the year
* Ability to carry out shared tasks and work within a team
* Ability to work on own initiative, prioritise tasks and work to deadlines
* Commitment to and understanding of the aims of OrganicLea