



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FOOD + FARM EXPLORATION CENTER
PLOVER, WISCONSIN

Food + Farm Exploration Center's Mission: To educate current and future generations about agricultural innovation and sustainability.

Food + Farm Exploration Center has partnered with Spano Pratt Executive Search to identify their new Executive Director. For a confidential conversation and to learn more about this opportunity, please contact Shelly Beaver or Lindsey Kriete.

Spano Pratt Executive Search

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ORGANIZATION

The Food + Farm Exploration Center is a 50,000 sq ft facility on 24 acres, conveniently located off I-39. The Exploration Center is a place for people to come together on a journey into the world of modern agriculture, to meet the people behind the food, to build new science and engineering skills, and to connect, play, and learn. It is a teaching farm, a children's exploration space, a science center, and a community workshop all rolled into a tantalizing celebration of food and farming.

The Food + Farm Exploration Center is a place for people to discover agriculture as they interact with educational exhibits, programs, and events. Crucially, these experiences will help grow a sense of community, give people a reason to get excited about agriculture, and ignite a lifelong journey of learning about food and farming. It connects visitors to all kinds of people, to the region they have come to visit, and to the places they live in. Food + Farm Exploration Center is building a bridge for visitors, meeting them where they are and finding ways to connect their agricultural needs and interests with its mission.

The Food + Farm Exploration Center connects the disconnects of where food comes from and the people who grow it. The exploration center brings people face to face with the truth: farmers are scientists, engineers, and innovators who are making incredible advances in technology and sustainability. The Food + Farm Exploration Center also increases agricultural literacy, shows how agriculture supports health and nutrition, and helps develop the next generation of the agricultural workforce.



Food + Farm Exploration Center offers the following:

CHILDREN’S “SEEDLINGS” GALLERY: Activate the imagination, senses and creativity in a space designed for our **little learners**. Learn about agriculture in a way that is most familiar to our littlest learners – through play.



Interactive Sandbox Exhibit

AG STEM GALLERY: Over 60 immersive exhibits are featured which **include**.

- An interactive sandbox. Level a field, install windbreaks, plant and water a field. Shape the soil to collect, channel or drain away water.
- Interactive media and model equipment.
- An optical sorter in action; it kicks out unacceptable potatoes and keeps acceptable ones in real-time.
- A crop to light up where it grows on a map of Wisconsin.

EDUCATION: Food + Farm Exploration Center’s goal is to educate all learners about the importance of agriculture in our daily lives through the creation of learning materials and experiences. This includes field trips, classroom outreach, and high school ag innovation challenges, as well as collegiate programs and adult education.

FARM TECH SHED: Onsite ag equipment showcasing the latest in technology and innovation. Visitors can sit in the driver’s seat, explore the inner workings of the state-of-the-art farm machinery and equipment, and even experience a bird’s-eye view from the mezzanine of the machinery.

EVENT SPACE: With over 10,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, the Ag Grand Hall was designed with one-of-a-kind events in mind, and full-time, on-site staff make meetings or conferences a success. The meeting space offers state-of-the-art technology and food and beverage options. The space also includes an adjacent observation deck accommodating up to 250 people overlooking the farm demonstration fields.

FARM DEMONSTATION FIELDS: Comprised of four one-acre field plots, the Farm Demonstration Fields are a learning space extension spanning beyond the actual walls of the exploration center. Each field has its own crop rotation and a center pivot irrigator. It allows visitors to witness agriculture in action right where it occurs – in the field.

KITCHEN LAB: Combine agricultural science with culinary arts in a creative intersection! Build cooking confidence in a space that mimics a home kitchen. Programmatic offerings will range from novice to expert, youth to adult.

AG LAB MAKER SPACE: This classroom environment will engage visitors with both their hands and high-tech tools to promote problem-solving skills and critical thinking. It is a space uniquely designed to cultivate creativity and innovation with an agricultural focus.

COLORFUL PLATE CAFE: Open to the public; no ticket required to visit the café. The cafe serves scratch made breakfast and lunch offerings with locally sourced ingredients that are simple and healthy. Great food comes from small kitchens!



Demonstration Field U-Pick Event

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Executive Director for the Food + Farm Exploration Center will further the mission and vision to promote agricultural literacy and instill a greater appreciation of the origins of food and the people who grow it. The Executive Director will oversee the administrative, programming, and strategic plan of the organization while looking toward future opportunities. The Executive Director will develop diverse and ongoing sources of financial support while managing and developing relationships with donors, sponsors, community and industry leaders.



World's Largest Potato Masher

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Planning

- Advance the center's primary goal by promoting agricultural literacy, increasing the understanding of the origins of our food, and to deepen the relationship between farmers and consumers.
- Maintain transparent communication and relationships between board, staff, and key external stakeholders.

Operations

- Develop and implement a comprehensive business plan utilizing the board's strategic vision.
- Identify operating efficiencies, expenditures, and revenue opportunities, driven by specific KPI's, in each department and program, and execute to improve bottom line performance.
- Prepare, manage, and forecast the annual operating budget for the center.
- Oversee all communications, marketing, and correspondence for the center.
- Establish and maintain the necessary conditions for success across all levels, encompassing operational effectiveness, policies and procedures, etc.

Staff Development

- Oversee department directors for each pillar of the center including education, marketing, donor development, events, and operations and exhibits (interior and exterior).
- Develop a cross-functional organizational culture built on inclusivity and transparency and collaboration throughout the organization.
- Build and maintain a cohesive staff to implement all the center's efforts.

Board Development

- Participate in an impactful partnership with the center's Board of Directors, building alignment while also maintaining role clarity.
- Build, sustain and strengthen all board functions like operations, administration, planning, committee work, policy and bylaw compliance, etc.

Donor Development

- Collaborate with the board, fundraising committee, and donor development to create, assess, and enhance guidelines, objectives, and strategic plans for all philanthropic and development funds and programs on an annual basis.
- Build trust and foster long-term partnerships to steward current and prospective donors.

Community Partnerships

- Execute marketing/advertising and communications plan to increase visibility, grow and support revenue generating opportunities; increase F+FEC visitors, events, on-site meetings, industry support, educational opportunities, and school outreach.
- Partner with organizational and state-wide community stakeholders to maximize the impact of the center.
- Represent the center's mission in local, state and industry-wide circles, as well as at community events and public presentations.
- Identify potential risks and opportunities both internal and external to protect the center's interests and integrity.



Soil Exhibit

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Demonstrated leadership of community-based and community-led approaches to program development, strategic planning, and evaluation.
- Experience building and conducting outreach for educational programming.
- In-depth understanding of how a nonprofit organization governs, operates, and thrives.
- Successful experience building a high performing staff team and a dynamic culture.
- Experience in building strategy, evaluating impact, tracking data, and short-and long-term visioning for educational results.
- Experience with complex annual financial management and forecasting.
- Competence in creating, reading, and understanding financial documents.
- Ability to establish effective and meaningful relationships with a variety of key stakeholders, including service providers, donors, industry and community leaders, and/or decision-makers.
- Strong strategic thinking and analytical skills.
- Effective communication and relationship-building abilities, adept at engaging with staff, colleagues, and diverse stakeholders across various disciplines.
- Experience with policy development and implementation in areas such as IT, HR, and DEI.
- Proven track-record of working collaboratively with partner organizations and entities.
- Strong writing, organizing, and presenting skills.



Seedlings Gallery

PERSONAL QUALITIES

The Executive Director must possess a passion for helping people understand where their food comes from and for supporting farmers in sharing their stories and an appreciation for the agriculture industry. The ideal candidate is a strategic leader and steward of the vision, who has a passion for Food + Farm Exploration Center's mission, for the people it serves, and the programs it offers, along with an affinity for the agricultural industry. The candidate should possess a record of inspired leadership that develops talent, embraces growth, and contributes to a collaborative work environment.



Colorful Plate Cafe

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

Compensation includes a hiring range of \$120,000 - \$145,000 and a competitive benefits package. The position is on-site, based in Plover, Wisconsin.

LOCATION

Plover is a village in Portage County, Wisconsin. Located in the heart of Wisconsin, Plover is a vibrant, welcoming community in the greater Stevens Point area. With a variety of recreational activities and attractions, there is sure to be something for everyone. Nature enthusiasts can explore Standing Rocks County Park, which is filled with hiking trails and picturesque landscapes. For a fun family outing, head to Lake Pacawa Park, where one can enjoy the splash pad or picnicking by the lake, just south of the exploration center. Enjoy a meal at one of Plover's many local eateries.

In the greater Stevens Point area you will find Wisconsin's oldest farmers market still held in the same spot and the Point Brewery - a staple here since 1857 - along with the other breweries, wineries, and

distilleries that make up the Central Wisconsin Craft Collective for a tour and a taste! Check out the nation's longest running renewable Energy Fair, test your knowledge with the world's largest Trivia contest, or visit the Sky Club, the home of the first refrigerated salad bar, in a classic Wisconsin supper club, of course! Order up at Ruby, named the best coffee in Wisconsin by Food & Wine, then explore more local makers from Tapped to Siren Shrubs. Venture outdoors in the Stevens Point Area and enjoy nature on the popular 27-mile Green Circle Trail, complete with a view. Bike one of Wisconsin's best mountain biking trails at Standing Rocks – a mix of old-school and flow trails. Golf Sentry World, known as one of the best public courses in the nation. Paddle the backwaters of the Wisconsin River or fly-fish the Tomorrow River. Explore the local art and Insta-worthy spots – from vibrant murals to the Stevens Point Sculpture Park. The area is also home to the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To learn more about Food + Farm Exploration Center:

- Food + Farm Exploration Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOuYeUv-UQs>
- Cultivating Connections Campaign: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=se_PES4Aw1M
- Explore the Uncommon Ground: <https://youtu.be/n70WUGnADrk>
- Farming is Community: <https://explorefoodandfarm.org/blog/farming-is-community>
- Ag Innovation Challenge Food + Farm Exploration Center: <https://vimeo.com/806909328>

This position is not just a job; it is an opportunity to be part of Food + Farm Exploration Center's legacy.

To be considered for this opportunity, please submit a cover letter, and resume to:

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