



# CCOF

Advancing organic agriculture through certification, education, advocacy, and promotion.

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

### International Technical Specialist

**Position will remain open until December 11 or until filled**

CCOF advances organic agriculture for a healthy world. We advocate on behalf of our members for organic policies, support the growth of organic through education and grants, and provide organic certification that is personal and accessible.

CCOF is a nonprofit organization governed by the people who grow and make our food. Founded in California more than 40 years ago, today our roots span the breadth of North America and our presence is internationally recognized. We are supported by an organic family of farmers, ranchers, processors, retailers, consumers, and policymakers. Together, we work to realize a future where organic *is* the norm.

Applicants must be able to work in a fast-paced office environment with significant job responsibilities. This position requires knowledge of organic standards and food processing practices and the ability to work both independently and as a team with other professionals. This position also requires superior customer service skills, the ability to manage data accurately, and work within a regulatory environment. *To master this position requires approximately one year, so only apply if you are willing to make a multi-year commitment.*

**Position Summary:** The International Technical Specialist ensures CCOF's international certification programs are compliant and consistent by being the point person and decision maker for international technical questions related to imports and exports. International programs that this position is responsible for include CCOF's Global Market Access (GMA) programs for NOP equivalencies and recognition agreements, NOP requirements for imports/exports, and CCOF's International Standards Program (ISP). Technical questions are directed to the person in this role, while personnel management is performed other team members. The International Technical Specialist is a member of the Handler certification department and will report to the Handler department Director or Manager.

The International Technical Specialist is also partially responsible for duties associated with the Handler Certification Specialist role. The expectation is that time will be split roughly 50/50 on each role, however the split will depend on the frequency and intensity of required changes to International Programs. Handler Certification Specialist duties include reviewing inspection reports, mid-year updates, and/or applications of prospective and currently certified organic food processor and handler operations, including manufacturers, co-packers, private label owners, brokers, and other post-harvest handlers involved in the production or handling of organic products.

This position does not include on-site inspections of certified organic operations and will not include field work in the future. There may be occasional opportunities to represent CCOF at trade shows and conferences, depending on interest and availability to travel. This is a full-time, exempt position.

#### Technical Specialist Essential Duties

- Oversees CCOF's GMA (NOP-based) and ISP (EU/Swiss) international programs. Provides technical expertise and final decision making related to imports, exports, NOP equivalencies, NOP recognition agreements, and ISP. May expand to include other international programs.

- Follows changes to NOP equivalencies, NOP import/export requirements, and changes to EU/Swiss standards to ensure CCOF's international programs meet applicable standards.
- Works with relevant CCOF Certification Operations, Farm, and Inspection Operations department staff to ensure consistency within CCOF by implementing USDA and other standards' directives, instructions, memos, guidance and rule-making related to international programs, imports, and exports.
- Works with CCOF Farm department to ensure decisions are consistent with Farm department positions and processes.
- Oversees content of International program manuals, work instructions, positions, inspection/new application checklists, action item templates, OSP forms, CCOF website content, and other resources used to document processes or verify compliance.
- Oversees communication of program changes to CCOF staff, inspectors, and members.
- Provides technical support to CCOF certified members.
- Participates in ACA International Issues working group(s).
- Offers regular support to all CCOF certification staff by hosting weekly office hours. Facilitate internal international working groups or team meetings, as needed.
- Performs monthly Spot Checks of Handler Department staff, as applicable.
- Trains new staff, as applicable.
- Acts as technical point person for CCOF Foundation trainings and webinars, as applicable.
- Works with the CCOF Policy team to review NOSB proposals, proposed guidance from NOP, etc. related to International certification issues.
- May work with CCOF Investigations Team to investigate complaints as needed.
- Liaise with USDA NOP staff, as applicable.

#### **Handler Certification Specialist Essential Duties**

- Provides technical services to certified organic processor/handler clients, including review and communication with certified operations about mid-year updates such as new labels, product formulations, ingredient suppliers, food additives, production methods, equipment sanitation procedures, facility pest control plans, audit trail documentation, etc.
- Ensures timely review of client updates and inspection reports and completes a quantity of work on par with other Handler Certification Specialists.
- Makes autonomous or semi-autonomous decisions about client compliance with USDA NOP and other organic standards and communicates those decisions to clients.
- Provides written and verbal instructions to CCOF clients regarding compliance to all applicable standards via email, letter, phone, and occasional in-person meetings.
- Works daily with a complex, proprietary database to perform the regular tasks of the job. Ensures that database records are consistent and current.
- Ensures that the CCOF quality system is implemented to required standards.
- Works on special projects as deemed necessary by Handler Certification Leadership (Team Leader, Supervisor, Manager, or Director) or the Chief Certification Officer.

#### **Required Qualifications and Skills**

- CCOF Senior Certification Specialist or equivalent experience (3-5 years organic reviewing inspection reports that include NOP equivalency verification).

- Understanding of organic certification standards, including familiarity with reviewing organic operations for compliance to international organic standards or USDA NOP international equivalencies.
- B.A. or B.S. degree or higher in applicable field, such as food science or food technology. Commensurate and relevant work experience will be considered in lieu of degree requirement.
- One or more years' experience in a professional office environment.
- Computer competency in word processing, formatting, databases, and email. Microsoft Outlook, Word, and Excel.
- Comfort using a computer for multiple hours at a time.
- Excellent communication skills in writing, on the phone, and in person.
- Excellent spelling, grammar, and sentence structure.
- Ability to organize, monitor, and track numerous activities with competing deadlines.
- Ability to work with various groups and demographics of people.
- Ability to multi-task in a busy environment with a high workload.
- Ability to logically and autonomously solve problems under pressure.
- Strong attention to detail.

#### **Preferred Additional Qualifications**

- Spanish language skills sufficient to communicate in writing and on the phone with Spanish-speaking clients.
- Experience in working with environmental or food safety regulatory programs.
- Experience working in a food processing facility.
- Experience with organic regulations or organic industry.
- Experience in project management.
- IOIA Organic Handler Inspector training or equivalent experience.
- Auditor training for food quality production systems or similar field.

**Compensation:** CCOF takes pride in offering competitive pay and excellent benefits. The International Technical Specialist's starting compensation will depend on qualifications and experience. Competitive benefits include medical, dental, vision, paid vacation and 401k retirement plan with company match.

Candidates who will work from the Santa Cruz, CA office are preferred but we will consider remote work for candidates with previous organic certification experience.

**Hiring Process:** Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Interested applicants, please submit the following documents to [employment@ccof.org](mailto:employment@ccof.org), with "International Technical Specialist" in the subject line:

- Cover letter summarizing your interest in CCOF and the position, and qualifications
- Current resume
- List of three professional references

Incomplete applications will not be considered. No phone calls please. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Thank you for your interest.

CCOF is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage people with diverse backgrounds and experience to apply.