



New Ross District Museum Society, operating Ross Farm Museum for the Province of Nova Scotia since 1970

Ox Teamster

Job Description

Reports to: Interpretation Coordinators

As a Ross Farm employee... It is the collective responsibility of all Ross Farm staff to educate visitors, both through demonstration and oral history. To showcase Ross Farm Museum's living history, staff identify and maintain knowledge, skills and artefacts pertaining to Nova Scotia's agricultural and rural heritage. Life on the family farm life knowledge and interpretation of land-based resources – hay, crops, wood, vegetables, fruit and animals – as well as the local weather and seasons that impact them. Staff create for visitors an understanding of the Ross Farm way of life and its heritage, by learning and interpreting this knowledge and these skills. This learning is done through research, guide manuals, documentation, and through hands-on training and assistance from experienced team members and site supervisors. All staff are collectively responsible for the *General Duties* on the farm. Staff is also responsible for assisting in developing and implementing annual revenue generating programs and production plans. Programs include regular visitation programming as well as specific workshops or additional educational programming.

As a member of the Farm Team... You are responsible for condition of the gardens, animals, farm equipment and crops. Collectively this team ensures the safety of the animals and grounds of the farm while providing historical and educational information to visitors. Found anywhere on the farm during the course of a day, these staff must have a clear understanding of all areas of the farm. This team consists of the horse and ox teamsters, and barn chore persons.

As the Ox Teamster... Your primary duty is the care of animals (with the exception of horses) owned by the Museum. This includes the handling and caring for the animals in a safe and healthy environment, both for the animals and staff. You also assist in all required farm related maintenance work. The Ox Teamster has a key role in the delivery of historical/education programs to visitors while caring for the animals, working with the oxen and ensuring paddocks, pasture and barns are both safe and clean. This care includes regular implementing a regular work and exercise program for the oxen to maintain their health and fitness, as well as actively participating in the training of new ox teams as necessary. The ox teamster may be asked to carry out other farm-related chores as needed, whether they require the use of the oxen or not.

Responsibilities:

- daily inspection of all animals (sheep, poultry, pigs, cats and cattle) - report any need for extra care (i.e. vet) to the Interpretation Coordinators

- care, cleaning of said animals and the barn, paddocks, chicken coop and surrounding areas
- manure disposal
- giving food, water and health supplies, monitoring and reporting any issues
- under the supervision of the Interpretation Coordinators you work to ensure that there is consistency in care of the animals
- care and repair of yoke and straps, ox related farm machinery and all other equipment associated with the farm work
- farm work with the oxen - varies with the season - can include but not limited to: ploughing, harrowing, manure spreading, haying, woods work etc.
- manual farm work including weeding, haying, planting, fence repairs, road maintenance
- animal care and breeding; handling boars, rams and bulls for breeding
- monitor and care for pregnant animals - before, during and after birth
- care and handling of offspring
- assist also in the care of horses on site as directed by the Interpretation Coordinators and in coordination with the horse teamsters
- work co-operatively with all staff to provide care, moving and health monitoring of the horses, sheep, poultry, pigs and cattle.
- occasional duties include parades and other duties that arise as directed by the Interpretation Coordinators

Required Skills/Experience: This position requires skill with people as well as animals. The ability to work well and co-operatively with Managers, Interpretation Coordinators, Co-workers and Visitors and other guests is essential.

- well-developed knowledge and experience in animal care, breeding and ox training and teaming
- skill in handling intact male animals for the Museum's Heritage breeding program
- knowledge of family farm life, farm work as it was carried out from 1816 until 1916, the historic breeds on site, and willingness to learn about these topics
- skill in animal care and husbandry
- skill in working as a team to minimize unnecessary and time-consuming problems with internal communications; expected to act as a responsible employee and work diligently to assist management in running the museum smoothly
- maintenance and proper appearance of the assigned period clothing
- long-term experience operating a tractor with forks, bucket attachments
- long-term experience operating a chainsaw for the purpose of cutting firewood
- willingness to be trained in specific farm-related areas and/or be formally trained for certification in such areas