

Things to Keep in Mind When Hosting Volunteers



Despite what you may think, having a volunteer program doesn't equate to free labor. Oftentimes you'll find the energy invested into training and hosting volunteers exceeds the costs of hiring a local laborer. If well designed, however, the benefits of a volunteer program can be mutually plentiful!

There are several smart ways to host volunteers:

- Organize volunteer labor to focus, at least in part, on activities that'll save or generate revenue for your project
- Allocate jobs according to individual strengths and weaknesses.
 - Some people will be well equipped for hard labor, while others may have a passion for painting, design, or online skills that you could put to good use
 - Find out what your volunteers are passionate about and channel that passion
- Many veteran projects have learned to only host volunteers, skilled in a particular practice
 - Otherwise, it may be more appropriate to charge them for the training needed, to make them valuable assets to the team
- Do an outreach campaign to universities or other educational institutions and offer an internship opportunity for their students of relevant departments (agriculture, biochemistry, environmentalism, etc.)

- 
- Integrate guests into as many aspects of farm life as you're comfortable with
 - this enriches the guest's experience and can save you time if it's done in a way that empowers them to take it on
 - It's also important to invest in yourself
 - Teaching is a skill that needs to be practiced to realize its full potential

Some good resources to find volunteers:

- Volunteerlatinamerica.com
 - Numundo.org
 - Workaway.info
 - Wwoof.net
 - HelpX.net
- 

Work on your interpersonal & communication skills and look into management courses to see how others run effective and happy teams. When you become a better teacher, the whole project will benefit!



To hear more, check out Episode #016 on Hosting Guests, Volunteers, & Students

<https://sharinginsights.net/podcast/hosting-guests/>