Georgia’s Food Safety Internship Program & NexGen Inspectors

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Georgia Department of Agriculture

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10:30 – 11:30am
Georgia’s Internship Program

Goal: Identify & recruit students who may become future hires at the GDA, and/or who will become advocates and proponents of Georgia’s agriculture industry.
Where do we find interns?

This is a national platform to share information, or find upcoming career events you could advertise at.
Hey, what's your major?

- Agriculture (Agribusiness, AgComms, etc.)
- Animal Science
- Communications
- Environmental Health
- Food Science
- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Nursing

"Choose a major you love and you'll never work a day in your life because that field probably isn't hiring"
Interns + Standards = Success

- Data collection/tracking for recalls, outreach, etc.
- Create products (training manuals, guidance docs, etc.)
- Organize document control, inventory equipment
- Draft/edit/update SOPs, MOUs, etc.
- Help plan & execute events
- Ask them for input, they can provide creative/new ideas!

Actual poster created by an intern! (showcased at the 2018 Rapid Response Team National F2F)
What else do they do all day?

- General office support wherever it's needed
- Shadow our inspectors to see what they do in the field
- Attend outreach events & related meetings/trainings
- Visit our Food Lab to see sample intake/testing
- Help with a variety of communications-related tasks, such as:
  - Electronic newsletters & email blasts
  - Social media content (reviewed prior to posting)
  - Design surveys & summarize responses
  - Article drafting to showcase our program
- Optional: ICS & FDA ORAU basic online courses
When I applied for my internship in April of 2012, I had no idea it would turn into a FT position! I am forever grateful for what my internship turned into.

Working at headquarters shaped me into the inspector I am today...I have insight on both sides.

Intern → Retail Compliance Specialist → Field Supervisor
Brandon Sauceda:
Intern one day, then leading our response to Super Bowl LIII the next...
Internship manager, Jessica Badour

Public Affairs Specialist for GA DNR Environmental Protection Division, starting law school in the fall for an env. law degree

GDA Feed Program Manager & Georgia’s Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards Coordinator

Summer 2016: Bailey & Sydney
Hannah – Summer 2017

• “Thrilled by the diversity within the internship.”
• “So many internships baby the workers or don’t let them do serious work, but you treated me like an adult.”
• “I felt like I was an asset to the program.”
• “It’s a wonderful job.”
Meet our 2019 summer intern

Our first repeat!
Ashley Batten
2014 – Freshman undergrad (Nursing)
2019 – Pursuing a Masters in Public Health, focused on Epidemiology, Health Mgmt & Health Communications
Benefits & Lessons Learned

• Passionate, eager employees for your program
• Include them in anything & everything – treat them like any other employee (to a degree)
• Encourage ownership for tasks & give them project(s)
• Find interns nearing graduation (flexibility to extend the internship or hire them full-time)
• Limited timeframes for the position can make it difficult for training/oversight of projects
• Students enrolled in coursework during the internship (vs summer) create time management challenges
• Honest constructive feedback to help them improve
Thank You!

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