Spannocchia Farm Internship Program Frequently Asked Questions

***Q: How many farm interns are accepted for each session?***

A: We accept eight farm interns for each session.

***Q: How much does it cost to attend the Spring, Summer, or Fall Farm Internship at Spannocchia?***

A: All participants are required to pay a one-time education fee of $1500 directly to the Friends of Spannocchia. This fee is used to offset educational costs including Italian lessons, Italian books, field trips, and educational presentations and includes membership in the non-profit Friends of Spannocchia at the student level for one year. Interns may pay this fee directly or use Spannocchia's crowdfunding platform to support their participation. They must also become members of WWOOF Italia (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms – [www.wwoof.it](http://www.wwoof.it)), which costs €35. Participants are responsible for their own travel costs to and from Spannocchia, and for any expenses they incur in their free time. Please refer to the “Applicant Information” document for further information on the estimated costs of attending the program.

***Q: Can non-Americans apply to the Farm Internship Program?***

A: Yes! All nationalities are welcome to apply. Historically, the majority of interns have been American because the Friends of Spannocchia is based in the United States and the application process is done in English, yet we welcome applications from Americans and non-Americans alike. **Please keep in mind, however, that Spannocchia cannot provide assistance with visa applications,** as the internship is designed to fit within the time frame of a 90-day travel period for tourism.

***Q: Is there an age requirement to participate in either program?***

A: Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years old and maximum of 35 years old by the start of their session. Most farm interns are between 20 and 30 years old. Regardless of age, the accommodation is a shared, double room in a house that is shared by all eight interns.

***Q: Do I need a special Visa to participate in the program?***

A: Both programs are designed to fit within the guidelines of Italy’s tourist visiting requirements (maximum of 90 days stay). If you are an EU citizen and would like to remain in Italy for more than 90 days, it is not necessary to acquire a visa. If you are from outside of the EU, you can remain in the Schengen zone as a whole for up to 90 days without requiring a special visa. For more information for US citizens, see: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/schengen.html>

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***Q: How important is it to know how to drive a "stick-shift" or manual transmission vehicle?***

A: Often, our program participants come from areas where manual transmissions are less common. It is nota requirement that participants have a driving license or know how to drive a manual. **However,** **we have a need for at least three "stick-shift" drivers in each intern group** of eight individuals to assist in farm chores (on-farm transportation, trash duty, supply runs, etc.). **This is particularly important for interns working with our animals,** which are spread throughout the property.

It is important to note that the vehicle that interns have access to for two hours of driving time for weekend travel is a manual transmission, and so **being able to drive greatly opens up your opportunities for time "off the farm" during your weekends,** as weekend travel is not otherwise provided. The more drivers available in each intern group means more flexibility when planning such travel. If you are comfortable with and willing to drive a stick-shift van at Spannocchia, you will have more options for traveling within the region.

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***Q: Can couples, friends, and siblings apply to the Farm Internship Program or Guest Services Internship together?***

A: Yes, although the chances of being selected are greatly reduced. Couples, friends and siblings must submit separate applications. **If you are connected with someone who is applying, you must state clearly on the application what the nature of your relationship is to one another** (i.e. girlfriend, brother, friend, roommate, husband, etc.), **and whether or not you’d like to be considered together or separately in the selection process.** The Farm Internship Program has become highly competitive, so couples, friends, and siblings have a significantly lowered probability of being accepted. Group dynamics are always taken into account when building each group, and we usually prefer to accept individuals with no ties to other accepted candidates.

***Q: Can families apply to the Internship Program? What if I would like to bring my young children with me to the program?***

A: No, families or individuals with dependent children are not eligible to apply. The accommodation we are able to offer is limited to a single bed in a double room, so we simply cannot accommodate families or children.

***Q: How competitive is the Spannocchia Internship Program?***

A: We typically receive anywhere from 35 to 45 applications for any given session for the 8 available spots each spring, summer and fall. We seek to build each internship group as a diverse but well-balanced whole, giving consideration to geographic diversity, educational background, work experience, future goals, age, gender, etc. Summer tends to see the highest number of applications. Due to the high number of applications, we cannot consider any applications that arrive after each session's deadline or that are significantly incomplete (e.g. missing multiple references, etc.) by the session deadline.

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***Q: I’d like to apply, but I can’t participate in the full length of the session. Am I still eligible?***

A: No. All interns must participate in the full duration of the session.

***Q: If I apply early, can I be accepted early?***

A: No. We review all applications for each session following the application deadlines, and make our decisions by the listed notification dates. It is important to us to evaluate each applicant individually, but also to take group dynamics into consideration when examining the applicant pool in our interest of building a healthy, well-rounded group that will work well together.

***Q: The application deadline has passed for the session I am interested in. Can I apply late?***

A: No. Due to the volume of applications received, internship applications received after the appointed deadline dates will not be accepted.

***Q: Can I participate in more than one session?***

A: No. Our spring, summer and fall internship programs are highly competitive, and it is important for us to offer this unique educational experience to as many people as possible. **Intern program alumni, however, are welcome to apply for our Winter Volunteer or Butcher Apprentice positions.**

***Q: Do I need to speak Italian in order to participate in either program?***

A: While we welcome applications from individuals who have studied the Italian language, it is not necessary to have Italian language skills in order to be considered for an internship. However, all accepted candidates are expected to study some Italian before arriving. It is important to remember when considering coming to Spannocchia that **this is not a language immersion experience,** and while we hope you are able to learn some Italian language, it is not the main aim of our programs here.

***Q: Do I need to have lots of experience with farming, and/or gardening in order to apply to the Farm Internship Program?***

A: Not necessarily. We ask that applicants have an interest in organic farming, be committed to the Friends of Spannocchia mission, and have a willingness to learn through experience. We do appreciate skills in these areas, and experience with manual labor of some sort is advantageous.

***Q: My background is in organic farming, animal husbandry, and/or Italian language and I am looking for an experience to build my resume. Is the Farm Internship Program right for me?***

A: Maybe. The Farm Internship Program provides a good introduction to organic farming and Italian language. **The internship is most fitting for individuals who are fairly new to one or all of the above noted fields, or have had little practical experience and wish to engage in “hands on” learning.** If you have a strong career background in these areas and are looking to engage in an intensive, advanced course, then the Farm Internship Program is not the right program for you. In any event, it is important to have realistic expectations of what the program offers.

Some farm duties include:

**Team Orto (3 interns)**

* Work in the vegetable gardens and olive groves: seeding, transplanting, weeding, hoeing, applying treatments, watering, harvesting, taking samples, weighing/measuring/recording, bringing harvest to kitchens/storerooms, etc.
* Collect the compost for the pile every morning.
* Help prepare harvest baskets for guests when needed.
* Monitor chickens and ducks (feed and water, eggs, keeping track of the flock and closing them in at night, repairs to chicken coop/tractor, etc.).
* Do rotating orto duty on weekends.
* Rotating general chores (trash/recycling, dinner duty, lunch duty).
* Anything that needs doing!

**Team Animali (2 interns)**

* Work with the pigs, cows, and donkeys, including all feeding and animal care during the week and on weekends.
* Collect slop for pigs every morning.
* Do rotating animali duty on weekends.
* Occasional cleaning of animal stalls/housing.
* Help with building projects for the animals.
* Maintain and/or build new fence lines on the property.
* Patrol/fix/maintain the electric fences on the property.
* Mill feed for animals.
* Rotating general chores (trash/recycling runs, serving at Villa dinner duty, intern lunch duty)
* Anything that needs doing!

**Team Tuttofare (3 interns)**

* Work in vineyards including: hoeing weeds, selecting and tying vines, pruning, applying treatments, etc.
* Harvesting (depending on time of year: grapes, olives, tree fruits, etc.)
* Work in the cantina helping with the wine (winemaking, bottling, labeling, cleaning, depending on season)
* Responsible for making *fascine* (brush bundles) and working with the *caldaia* (furnace) for hot water/heat on a rotating basis.
* While it's open, clean and maintain the pool, including keeping area orderly and doing some chemical treatments, on rotating basis.
* Responsible for Pizza Night fire on a rotating basis.
* Assisting in the gardens with seeding, weeding, transplanting, harvesting, etc. when needed.
* Keeping tools in good condition and keeping workshops clean and organized.
* When necessary, assisting in preparation of firewood on property
* Rotating general chores (trash/recycling runs, serving at Villa dinner duty, intern lunch duty)
* Anything that needs doing (including assisting in other team duties)!

***Q: How long has the Internship Program been in existence at Spannocchia?***

A: Since 1985, Tenuta di Spannocchia and the Etruscan Foundation have hosted volunteers and interns who have worked on the farm in exchange for room and board. Under the auspices of the Etruscan Foundation in the late 1990s, the Internship Program (formerly called the “Farm Program” and “Garden Internship”) developed a more formal syllabus that included Italian language study, field trips, and educational presentations. Friends of Spannocchia has supported the educational elements of the Internship Program since 2003.

***Q: Do more internship programs like Spannocchia’s exist?***

A: Yes and no. There are several agriculture volunteerships, internships, and apprenticeships in the States and Europe, and the WWOOF organization (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms - [www.wwoof.it](http://www.wwoof.it) for Italy) lists organic farms looking for volunteers. The Internship Program at Spannocchia is unique, as it offers formal exposure to the Italian culture through its curriculum offerings, and is much more than a work exchange. Online searches for “farm internships,” “volunteer in Italy,” etc. may be helpful if you’d like to find out about more programs in existence.