

Ontario Agricultural College

Associate Diploma in Horticulture



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The horticulture industry is an exciting sector with many employment opportunities for people who enjoy working outside, are interested in plants and care about the environment. The Associate Diploma in Horticulture (DHRT) Co-op program offers students the chance to experience working in the industry while accomplishing their studies. The program ensures students develop relevant skills through practical labs and hands-on experiences. Graduates are prepared for a variety of careers in greenhouses, landscaping, nurseries, and agribusiness. This program gives you the chance to broaden your knowledge by taking specialized courses including arboriculture, cannabis production, greenhouse management, viticulture and horticultural pest management. Students will learn to function in a professional environment, work in teams, solve problems, and be knowledgeable about a wide variety of plants and their growing requirements.

WHY CO-OP?

As a co-op student, you will gain firsthand work experience, build professional networks, and develop interpersonal skills that are essential for pursuing a career in horticulture. You will also get paid while earning your diploma. Guelph's co-op program is unique due to the exceptional level of support provided, including a co-op preparatory course, a personal connection with Co-op Coordinators to assist you during the employment process, and access to senior student mentors.

COURSE SEQUENCING

In the DHRT co-op program, you will participate in one co-op work term in addition to four academic semesters throughout your two years at the University of Guelph.

YEAR	FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
ONE	Academic	Academic	Work
TWO	Academic	Academic	

SAMPLE JOBS

Horticulture Technician

The student may be responsible for planting trees and vegetables outside, or seeding and planting greenhouse plants; maintaining crops; landscaping and yard maintenance; minor repairs and building maintenance (e.g. painting); harvesting, sorting and packing; produce delivery; filling orders and managing inventory; managing retail sales and merchandising; managing the day-to-day operation; general miscellaneous farm work and some data entry.



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Greenhouse Technician

The student may be involved in all aspects of crop production including seeding, plant care and maintenance, harvesting and packing. Responsibilities will include pest monitoring and control, fertilization, maintenance of equipment and assisting with the implementation of the Food Safety Program. Students will perform crop registrations to track plant growth and development, and ensure plants are growing at optimal rates. Problem solving skills, as well as an ability to collaborate with team members will be important while working in a fast-paced environment.

Student Gardener

Students will work in one of various horticultural areas, each unique in its diversity of plant material, featuring a wide range of aesthetically pleasing garden beds and an assortment of more scientifically oriented plant collections. Responsibilities may include the planting of annuals, perennials, trees, and shrubs; cultivating, mulching, raking, digging, garden clean-up watering and weeding; deadheading and pruning of various plants; grass cutting using riding mowers, push mowers, weed trimmers, and leaf blowers; operation of golf carts and gators; and contributing to a positive experience for visitors.

Seasonal Irrigation Technician

The student will assist with irrigation through daily block-weight measurement, sprinkler checks and mixing fertilizer; use computer systems to monitor and adjust crop environmental conditions and irrigation; accurately carry out measurement of seedling growth and enter data into spreadsheets; assist in the Integrated Pest Management program monitoring pests and diseases; assist in the application of pesticides; assist with other nursery maintenance such as weeding and trimming that may be required from time to time; maintain and complete repairs on irrigation systems.

SAMPLE EMPLOYERS*

- Arbutus Grove Nursery
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- City of Guelph
- Fenwick Berry Farm
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Royal Botanical Gardens
- Valley Harvest Farms
- Zomer's Greenhouses Inc.

*Sample co-op employer list only. Employers will vary depending on recruitment needs. During a job search, students are encouraged to be actively engaged and are also supported in establishing and maintaining their own personal contacts.

SALARY INFORMATION

Students receive compensation from their employer for co-op work terms. The rate of pay will vary depending on a number of factors including the industry, the student's program of study, and the student's previous work experiences. For your reference, a Co-operative Education Salary Guide is available on our website, which provides hourly rates (averages and ranges) for associate diploma programs.

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED

Horticulture co-op students exhibit strengths in the following key areas, developed through the combination of educational, extra-curricular and work experiences:

- Skills in greenhouse and field production
- Practical skills for employment with landscaping firms
- Nursery / Greenhouse management
- Business and computer skills