

## GROWING GROUNDS FARM

### IN SANTA MARIA

#### Transitions-Mental Health Association



Growing Grounds Farm in Santa Maria combines horticultural therapy and vocational training to provide individuals with mental illness employment and a supportive environment where personal growth can be realized. Growing Grounds Farm Santa Maria was launched in October 2000, modeled on the successful Growing Grounds Farm San Luis Obispo.

- What Services Are Provided?
- Job-skills training through the use of horticultural therapy.
- Experience working on a farm.
- Opportunities for job advancement and increased responsibility.
- Daily contact with an on-site mental health worker to discuss and create personal milestone related to work, socialization or other areas of interest and concern to the individual.
- A safe, supervised environment for strengthening social skills among peers.
- A job and a paycheck.

#### What Is the Work Like?

Employees are paid and are involved in every aspect of production—from propagation and seeding to weeding, harvesting, flower-arranging, and selling directly to customers.

Employees work varying shifts, from 3–20, hours per week in an environment that rewards personal growth, responsibility and initiative.

Employees perform most of the work at the farm outdoors. The work is physical—at times demanding, rewarding and can contribute significantly to an individual's recovery.

#### Who Can Work at Growing Grounds?

Most employees are referred to us by Santa Barbara Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services. Employees are diagnosed with persistent illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder or major depression.

#### Visit the Farm Stand!

Visit our Farm Stand at the corner of Foster Road and California Boulevard next to the Sheriff station in Santa Maria. We are open Thursdays from Noon to 6 p.m.

All produce and cut flowers grown at the Farm are chemical and pesticide free.

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