



EDMUNDITE
Missions



DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATIVE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

| June 13, 2025

CATHOLIC RECRUITER ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE SEARCH • MANAGEMENT CONSULTING



BACKGROUND

For over 80 years, **The Edmundite Missions** has walked alongside the people of Selma and surrounding communities, not just witnessing their struggles but actively participating in their triumphs. Now, we invite you to become part of a visionary initiative that will transform lives across the Black Belt of Alabama—a region rich in history and potential yet historically challenged by persistent poverty and limited economic opportunity.

A Seed of Hope Taking Root

Over the past three years, we've witnessed something remarkable: small-holder Black farmers in Lowndes, Wilcox, and Perry counties transforming their lives through increased agricultural capacity. Families who once struggled to make ends meet are now seeing meaningful increases in income. Children are growing up watching their parents build sustainable livelihoods from the rich soil of their ancestors. Communities are beginning to envision a future where economic dignity is possible.

Beginning in 2022, and with the support of foundations and major donors and in partnership with the Deep South Food Alliance, the Missions has provided on-farm development grants to 13 small and medium-sized farms with the objective of increasing production and product quality. Over the last three growing seasons, the effort has expanded production four-fold and increased incomes from farming by over 30%. This beta test has proven that a trusted, bespoke effort to meet these farmers where they are and support their growth can have economic results. Furthermore, those economic results have social consequences. That four-fold food increase was consumed on the tables of the communities in the Black Belt, improving nutrition in a region with some of the highest obesity, diabetes, and heart disease rates in the nation.

The objective now is to scale the effort into a structured program for as many as 40 farmers and make that structure a sustainable economic engine.

Position Summary:

Position Title: Director of Agriculture Cooperative Planning & Development

Reports To: President, Edmundite Missions

Supervises: Associate Director, Rural Economic Development Center

Responsibilities:

Organizational

- Form an Advisory Board that has the capacity to transition into an independent Board.
- Develop a facility plan for the existing Good Shepherd Community Center (GSCC) in Mosses (35 minutes from Selma) to become a Rural Economic Development Center (REDC) housing not only the current market, but also a farmer-entrepreneur micro-enterprise center, a shop for products from those entrepreneurs, and an education and technical assistance center.
- Oversee the above facility conversion.
- Develop the performance metrics for the entire rural economic development initiative outlined below, both for the supply and demand sides of the work.

Scaling the Agriculture Initiative: The Supply Side

- **Carry Out Due Diligence**
 - Work with the Deep South Food Alliance and existing farmers to brainstorm options for how to scale the existing effort.
 - Meet with farmers who are not part of current program and who are also not part of an existing cooperative to discuss their interests and ambitions, bringing this customer-view into the planning process.
 - Meet with existing cooperative structures in Alabama to discuss the desire to grow and the options that might be available for partnerships.
 - Consult with the Advisory Board on these findings.
- **Develop a Plan**
 - Develop a strategy for structuring growth with the objective of creating a sustainable, self-reliant institution.
 - Develop a plan for implementation, with associated mile markers.
 - Develop a financial plan against that growth plan.
- **Execute the Plan**
 - Over four years, create the sustainable institution, ensuring that its financial base and operating costs can be met by its Profit and Loss record.
 - Develop a plan for spinning that institution off from Edmundite Missions as appropriate.
 - Identify alternative social impact capital options for continued growth.

Scaling the Agriculture Initiative: The Demand Side

- Develop a plan for bringing together major agriculture product purchasers in the Black Belt region of central Alabama, including the Missions, to form a purchasing collaborative.
- Ensure that the effort meets best practices of national collaborative efforts.
- Chair the Collaborative and oversee its growth.

Scaling the Agriculture Initiative: Technology Incubator (likely Year Two of implementation)

- Spec out the structure of this.
- Initial research on technologies/companies who might be of interest.
- Initial conversations with farmers who are part of the Demand Side scaling.

Education & Experience:

- BA in business, organizational behavior or related field; MA or MBA preferred.
- Experience in agricultural institutional design and management with technical knowledge of agriculture and markets.
- Demonstrated achievements in creating and maintaining businesses, nonprofit organizations, or programs.
- Valid driver's license and willingness to submit to a background check.
- Most importantly: a profound respect for the teachings of the Catholic Church and commitment to serving the poorest with dignity.

Travel: Some travel throughout the farm communities and to conferences as required.

Salary: Commensurate with background and experience (\$90,000-\$100,000). Comprehensive benefit program provided by the Missions (details will be furnished to finalist candidates).

Application Deadline: August 31, 2025

(We reserve the right to shorten the deadline for applications if we have sufficient interest. Please apply early to ensure your background will be considered.)

For consideration, please email resume to:

Ken Rowe
Vice President CAO
Catholic Recruiter Associates
Kenr@CatholicRecruiter.com

Note: Only those selected for an interview with the search committee will be contacted.

Search managed by:

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