**ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

**Date Created:** [XX.XX.XXXX]

**Purpose:**

This policy prohibits any discrimination, harassment, or other abuse by Next Step Farms employees, volunteers, directors, officers, or any other related person.

**Policy:**

Next Step Farms provides equal opportunity and equal treatment in all aspects of employment to all employees and volunteers without regard to any protected characteristic such as race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender expression or identify, national origin, age (40 and over), disability, genetic makeup, veteran status, military obligations, or participation in protected activity (i.e., reporting of alleged unlawful treatment). Next Step Farms will not tolerate discrimination in any form, including adverse job actions against employees or volunteers based upon protected characteristics, and including harassment based on protected characteristics. This policy applies, to the extent required by law, to all terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, treatment, and training.

Next Step Farms expects you to respect the feelings of your fellow employees and volunteers and to treat your fellow employees and volunteers in a courteous and professional manner. Next Step Farms endeavors to maintain a workplace free of unlawful harassment and it will not tolerate any form of harassment of employees or volunteers. Violations of this policy will be punished by disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge of the offending employee or volunteer.

**a. Avoiding Workplace Harassment**

Although discrimination in the workplace can manifest itself in many forms, one common type of workplace discrimination is harassment. Harassment of employees and volunteers on the basis of some protected characteristic as outlined above is unlawful and violative of Next Step Farms’ policies. Because some people are not familiar with what constitutes unlawful harassment, Next Step Farms feels that it is important to provide some basic information in that regard.

Unlawful harassment includes any hostile, intimidating, offensive, insulting, demeaning or otherwise unwelcome words or conduct based upon the protected characteristics listed above – i.e., race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age (40 and over), national origin, disability, genetic makeup, military obligations, veteran status, or participation in protected activity (i.e., reporting of alleged unlawful treatment).

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, derogatory, threatening or demeaning remarks, epithets, slurs, conversation, or other communication involving the above-listed categories; derogatory, threatening, or demeaning writings, drawings, graffiti, photographs, cartoons, or depictions involving the above-listed categories; derogatory, threatening, or demeaning gestures, physical contact, or attempt to simulate physical contact involving the above-listed categories. Further examples of prohibited harassment include offensive stereotypes, remarks, gestures, jokes, pranks or slurs involving the above-listed categories.

Although Next Step Farms recognizes that its employees and volunteers are mature and responsible adults, workplaces around the nation often have serious problems with harassing conduct, especially harassing conduct as a result of sexual, religious, or racial differences. In an effort to ensure that our employees and volunteers understand the boundaries without any question, the following specific **examples** of prohibited conduct are provided; however, employees and volunteers should be aware that many other unlawful forms of harassment based on other protected characteristics also exist, and the following examples are just some types of prohibited harassment:

* Unwelcome sexual flirtations, sexual advances, or sexual propositions;
* Use of certain profane or vulgar language that may offend someone who is a minority or who has protected characteristics as listed above;
* Sexually-, religiously- or racially-oriented or suggestive jokes or comments;
* Comments about a person’s body or sex life, race, or religion;
* Sexually-, religiously- or racially-degrading words, including sexual, religious, or racial slang, used to describe any person;
* Verbal or physical abuse of a sexual nature, including unwelcome or inappropriate touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, or hugging;
* The display in the workplace of sexually-oriented or suggestive pictures or objects or religiously- or racially-offensive materials;
* Sexually-suggestive, vulgar, or racially- or religiously-demeaning graffiti, including words and drawings;
* Comments suggesting that an employee or volunteer will suffer employment consequences, such as demotion, discharge, or denial of a pay raise, if s/he does not agree to sexual demands or if s/he complains about offensive sexual behavior or if s/he does not adhere to certain religious dictates or practices;
* Comments suggesting that an employee or volunteer will receive favorable employment treatment in exchange for sexual favors or religious participation.

b**. Supervisory Enforcement of Anti-Discrimination and Anti-**

**Harassment Policy**

All managers and supervisors have a responsibility to enforce this anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy. The managers’ and supervisors’ responsibility includes immediately stopping any harassment that is observed or reported and reporting any violations directly to the Executive Director.

**c. Reporting of Discrimination and Harassment**

If any employee or volunteer believes they have been the victim of unlawful discrimination or harassment, or if anyone believes they have observed unlawful discrimination or harassment, they **must** report this immediately to the Executive Director. Although employees and volunteers are also encouraged to report discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor or other manager since such reports may enable the supervisor or manager to immediately act to correct any problems, it is not sufficient to report to one of these persons without also reporting to the Executive Director. Of course, if the Executive Director is the person who is alleged to have taken the discriminatory or harassing action or you are otherwise uncomfortable reporting to the Executive Director, you may report the discrimination or harassment to a member of Next Step Farms’ Board of Directors. However, **complaints to coworkers or supervisors will not be deemed sufficient to provide notice to Next Step Farms and will not satisfy the employee's or volunteer’s responsibility to report harassment under this policy.**

Reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment may be made in person, over the telephone, in writing, during or after work hours and will be kept in confidence to the extent reasonably possible. Next Step Farms takes all reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment seriously and each report will be investigated. Appropriate action will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation. In no event will a person who makes a report of unlawful discrimination or harassment be penalized in any way as a result of the making of the report or as a result of your cooperation with another employee or volunteer who makes a report or protests unlawful conduct.

The employee or volunteer may be required to prepare a written report detailing the alleged harassment or any other violation of our policy, and to sign the report. To the extent practicable, the investigation will be confidential with due regard for the sensitive nature of such complaints. If, after completing an investigation, it is determined that a complaint is valid, Next Step Farms will take prompt and appropriate disciplinary action against the person or persons engaging in such conduct. Depending upon the severity of the violation, appropriate discipline may be immediate discharge.

# Procedure: No procedure required for this policy.

# Approved by:

Board President Date

# Person Responsible for Review:

[INSERT relevant Committee Chair] Date