



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS  
Agricultural Research Service  
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT  
RESEARCH POSITION

**Announcement Type:** ALL SOURCES/ALTERNATIVE MERIT PROMOTION  
**Position Title:** INTERDISCIPLINARY: Supervisory Research Plant  
Pathologist/Molecular Geneticist (Research Leader)  
**Series/Grade:** GS-0434/440-14/15

**Salary:** GS-14: \$82,438 - \$107,170; GS-15: \$96,970 - \$126,064

**Type of Appointment:** Permanent Full-time

**Location of Position:** Midwest Area, Sugarbeet and Bean Research Unit  
East Lansing, Michigan

**Announcement Number:** ARS-X4W-0054R

**Opening Date:** September 20, 2004

**Closing Date:** November 22, 2004

**Area of Consideration:** All U.S. Citizens

**APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED FROM USDA SURPLUS AND FEDERAL DISPLACED EMPLOYEES IN THE COMMUTING AREA.**

**DUTIES:** As Research Leader of the Sugarbeet and Bean Research Unit, the incumbent will lead a multi-disciplinary team of scientists responsible for conducting basic and applied research that leads to new knowledge of the physiological, biochemical, and genetic systems associated with food quality, disease resistance, and production efficiency of dry bean sugarbeet, and vegetable crops, specifically pickling cucumbers and to develop and use engineering technologies to improve the marketability and profitability of apples and cherries. The Research Unit's mission is accomplished through the use of molecular genetic technologies, optical sensors, and robotics. As Research Leader, the incumbent will develop a personal research program that uses genetic and biotechnological solutions to solve intractable problems confronting dry bean food quality or sugar beet fungal host-pathogen interactions.

The incumbent will be responsible for planning, organizing, enhancing and maintaining the creativity and productivity of the unit; providing supervision over scientists and support personnel assigned to the unit; hiring personnel and managing the human, fiscal, and physical resources; serves as the Unit fund holder; provides technical information and consultation as well as ensuring the proper interpretation and reporting of scientific research results and information.

**YOUR EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE WILL BE EVALUATED AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (KSAs) AS OUTLINED UNDER SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND SELECTIVE PLACEMENT FACTOR(S). A SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO THE REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED UNDER SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TO ENSURE ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS.**

**BASIC QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS:**

**Research Plant Pathologist:** A degree in Plant Pathology or a related scientific discipline that included at least 20 semester hours in basic botany or plant science and 10 semester hours in plant pathology.

**Research Geneticist:** A degree in genetics or one of the basic biological sciences that include at least 9 semester hours in genetics.

**IN ADDITION TO THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS:** applicants must have 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level in Federal service.

**SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE is:** Professional research experience that provided the applicant with:

1. Knowledge of the principles and techniques of molecular and/or genomic approaches to contemporary plant pathology or plant genetics.
2. Ability to conceive, plan and conduct an independent research program in the area of plant pathology or plant genetics and publish results in peer reviewed journals, and to make presentations on plant pathology, molecular biology and/or genetics at scientific meetings.
3. Ability to manage resources, including fiscal planning and accountability.

**In addition to the above, the following supervisory/managerial competencies will be used to evaluate candidates in the interview process:**

1. Ability to lead and accomplish work through others (i.e., team building, conflict management, cultural awareness, strategic thinking, decisiveness, technology management and political savvy).

2. Ability to communicate with individuals or groups from diverse backgrounds in a variety of situations.

### **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

**This position requires the selectee to undergo a pre-employment check and a full background investigation. Any offer made is considered a tentative job offer pending the outcome of the pre-employment check. Retention in the position is based upon a favorable adjudication of the background investigation. The incumbent will be subject to periodic reinvestigations.**

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

HOW TO APPLY: Send a resume, Curriculum vitae, Optional Application for Federal Employment (OF-612), or SF-171, to the contact address listed below. The following information is required to evaluate applicant qualifications and to determine if applicants meet legal requirements for Federal employment:

- Announcement number, title, and grade(s) for the position
- Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- Social security number
- Identify country of citizenship (U.S. Citizenship required)
- Veterans' Preference (If applicable--see AVeterans= Preference@ below for required forms and documentation)
- Highest Federal civilian grade held (it applicable)
- Current Federal employees must submit their most recent performance appraisal.
- Current Federal employees and reinstatement eligibles should submit an SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify competitive eligibility
- Highest education level achieved. Specify:
  - Name, city, state, zip code (if known)
  - Date or expected date (month/year) of completion of degree requirements
  - Type of degree received
  - Graduates of foreign universities must include proof of foreign education equivalency to an accredited U.S. college/university
- Copy of college transcripts or list of college courses.
- Paid and nonpaid work experience related to the position. For each work experience include:
  - Job title
  - Series/grade (if Federal employment)
  - Duties and accomplishments
  - Employer's name and address
  - Supervisor's name and address
  - Starting and ending dates
  - Hours per week
  - Salary
  - Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer
- Job-related:
  - Training courses (title and year)
  - Skills (e.g., other languages, typing speed, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)
  - Certificates/licenses (current)
  - Honors, awards, and special accomplishments
- A one-page abstract of MS thesis and/or PhD dissertation.
- List of:
  - Names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with applicants stature, contributions, and recognition;
  - Honors and awards;
  - Memberships in professional or honor societies;
  - Invitations to make presentations at scientific/
  - Technical meetings;
  - Scientific society office and committee assignments;
  - Presentations (other than invitations); and

-- Publications.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

- All status candidates who wish to be considered under both alternative merit promotion and non-status competitive examining must submit two (2) complete applications. When only one (1) application is received, it will be considered under the alternative merit promotion procedures if the applicant is a current or former Federal employee with reinstatement eligibility.
- This position is being filled in accordance with the Alternative Merit Promotion system. All merit promotion principles remain in effect.
- Applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent of their experience, education, and accomplishments. This may include factors such as number of credits in directly related subjects, grade point average, relatedness of work experience, and any other evidence of ability to do the work of the position. For current and former Federal employees, the performance evaluation may also be taken into consideration. Please be sure that your application or resume contains all of the information we need to determine if you are well qualified.
- Vacant research positions may be filled at any one of several grade levels depending upon the scientific impact of the person selected. A peer review may be required to determine the appropriate grade level of the position and supplemental materials from the selectee may be required.
- Relocation Expenses: Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5 Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay, Sections 6 and 7, which may be found at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/index.htm> and click on, APolicy on Payment of Relocation Expenses@ under General Information.
- USDA surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified surplus and displaced employees within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. Well-qualified means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective placement factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the knowledge, skills, and abilities or quality criteria; and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry. Applicants must submit the following:
  - a copy of their RIF Separation Notice (for displaced employees) OR Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation identifying you as surplus;
  - evidence of full performance level of current position;
  - a copy of their most recent performance appraisal; and
  - a copy of their most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify reassignment eligibility.
- Promotion Potential: Research scientists have open-ended promotion potential. Research accomplishments and their impact on the duties and responsibilities of positions are evaluated periodically. The grade level is limited only by the individual's demonstrated ability to perform research of recognized importance to science and technology.
- Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for a Federal job.
- If applications do not contain all of the requested information, applicants may lose consideration for the job.
- If applicants make a false statement in any part of their application, they may not be hired; may be fired after they begin work; or may be fined or jailed.
- Applicants will not be notified of the status of their application until a final selection has been made.
- Applications submitted via Government envelopes will not be accepted.
- Financial Disclosure. Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. The incumbent of this position will be required to submit a financial disclosure report within 30 days of their effective date of appointment and annually thereafter.
- APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY THE CLOSING DATE OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

**SPECIAL HIRING AUTHORITIES:** If you meet the basic eligibility requirements and you are eligible for a noncompetitive appointment (a list of who may be eligible for noncompetitive appointments can be found at [www.usajobs.opm.gov/a1.htm](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a1.htm), please indicate the type of special appointment you are seeking on your application and follow all other instructions in this announcement. If you do not indicate the type of special appointment you are seeking, you will be considered under competitive procedures. If you wish to be considered under both noncompetitive and competitive procedures, please submit two (2) complete applications.

**VETERANS' PREFERENCE:** If applicants served on active duty in the United States military and were separated under honorable

conditions, they may be eligible for veterans' preference. To claim 5-point veterans' preference, you must attach a copy of your DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, or other proof of eligibility. To claim 10-point veterans' preference, attach an SF-15, Application for 10-Point Veterans Preference, plus the documentation required by that form. For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 912-757-3000. Select "Federal Employment Topics" and then "Veterans." Or, dial OPM's electronic bulletin board at 912-757-3100 or visit their VetGuide web site: [www.opm.gov/employ/html/vetguide.htm](http://www.opm.gov/employ/html/vetguide.htm).

**EEO STATEMENT:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice or TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202)720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**ACCOMMODATION:** This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process or have questions/concerns regarding reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact Sue Dixon, ARS, Civil Rights Staff, 202-690-0372 or DC Relay Service: 202-855-1234 (TDD). The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

**CONTACT:** For a copy of this vacancy announcement and/or applications forms, call 301-504-1482.

For specific questions regarding this vacancy only, call: ( Location contact), Cynthia Glasscock, 517-337-6825

Name and phone number of Servicing Specialist: Rosita Spears, 301-504-1556

Submit applications to:  
USDA, Agricultural Research Service  
Human Resources Division  
ATTN: R. Spears, ARS-X4W-0054R  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5106

FAX applications to: 301-504-1535

E-MAIL applications to: [scirecruit@ars.usda.gov](mailto:scirecruit@ars.usda.gov) (If submitting applications via E-mail, be sure to mail or fax other required documentation such as college transcripts, SF-50, most recent performance appraisal, and/or DD-214/SF-15 separately and include the vacancy announcement number of the position.)

For employment information and current job opportunities:

INTERNET ADDRESS: [www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)  
DIAL-A-VACANCY: 301-504-1482  
DC RELAY SERVICE: 202-855-1234 (TDD)