



RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS  
Agricultural Research Service  
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

## United States Department of Agriculture

**Announcement Type:** ALL SOURCES/ALTERNATIVE MERIT PROMOTION

**Position Title:** Interdisciplinary: Research Agronomist/Soil Scientist

**Series/Grade:** GS-0471/0470-13/14/15

**Salary:** GS-13: \$69,762 - \$90,692 per annum

GS-14: \$82,438 - \$107,170 per annum

GS-15: \$96,970 - \$126,064 per annum

**Type of Appointment:** Permanent, Full-Time

**Location of Position:** U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center (USDFRC), Institute for Environmentally Integrated Dairy Management (IEIDM), Marshfield, Wisconsin

**Announcement Number:** ARS-X4W-0300

**Opening Date:** September 7, 2004

**Closing Date:** November 29, 2004

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

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

**DUTIES:** Incumbent will function as the lead research agronomist/soil scientist conducting basic and applied research to develop grazing, crop and manure management systems and develop and evaluate conservation practices that reduce losses of nutrients to water and air while protecting the environment. The goal of this research is to develop environmentally sustainable, profitable dairy systems that maximize nutrient efficiency and herd health. The scientist also works to reduce losses of environmentally damaging compounds through volatilization, denitrification, runoff, and leaching to reduce pathogen movement and survival in the environment. This position is located at the Institute for Environmentally Integrated Dairy Management (IEIDM), Marshfield, WI, where research is conducted on improving nutrient management, minimizing emissions, and controlling pathogens at all stages in the dairy production system. Science conducted at this working location of U. S. Dairy Forage Research Center will contribute to the overall mission to develop the science and technology base of the dairy industry to more fully utilize the forage producing potential of the U.S. Incumbent will be part of a multi-disciplinary team with major responsibility to develop a nationally and internationally recognized research program in the area of nutrient management, emissions reductions, and pathogen control in all stages of the dairy production system.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Basic Requirements:

*Transcripts must be submitted.*

**(Agronomist)** Degree: agronomy; or related discipline of science that included at least 30 semester hours of course work in the basic plant sciences, including at least 15 semester hours in agronomic subjects, such as those dealing with plant breeding, crop production, and soil and crop management.

**(Soil Scientist)** Degree: soil science or a closely related discipline that included 30 semester hours or equivalent in biological, physical, or earth science, with a minimum of 15 semester hours in such subjects as soil genesis, pedology, soil chemistry, soil physics, and soil fertility.

In addition to the above basic requirements applicants must have:

One year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade in the Federal service.

Specialized Experience: Professional research experience that provided the applicant with:

1. Ability to document soil/ crop research, publish results in peer reviewed journals and make presentations at scientific meetings.
2. Knowledge of soil and water nutrient management, nutrient transformations and fate.
3. Knowledge of forage crop production, forage quality, forage utilization, and manure nutrient conservation and pathogen control.

YOUR EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE WILL BE EVALUATED AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (KSAs) AS OUTLINED UNDER SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE. A SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO THE REQUIREMENTS

OUTLINED UNDER SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TO ENSURE ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS.

**APPLICATION 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 is required**)
- Veterans' Preference (If applicable--see "Veterans' Preference" below for required forms and documentation)
- Highest Federal civilian grade held (if 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 (if required under **QUALIFICATIONS** or if applicable to the position).
- 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

**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.**

- 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.

- This position is being filled in accordance with the Alternative Merit Promotion system. All merit promotion principles remain in effect.

- **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 [www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/hrd/hrdhomepage/empopp.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/hrd/hrdhomepage/empopp.htm) and click on Policy 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.

- 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.

- **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.

[ X ] may be required to submit a financial disclosure report.

- 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.

- **APPLICATIONS MUST BE  
[X] 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 OR tdd 478-744-2299. Select "Federal Employment Policies and Procedures" and then "Veterans Preference and Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans." 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: Jean Weinbrenner, 608-264-5357.

Name and phone number of Servicing Specialist, Margy Trout, 301-504-1580.

Submit applications to:

USDA, Agricultural Research Service  
Human Resources Division  
ATTN: Western Services Branch  
ARS-X4W-0300  
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)**