

Biological Science Technician

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION RESEARCH UNIT

Summary

This position is located in the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Soil and Water Conservation Research Unit in Pendleton, OR.

In this position, you will actively participate in one or more phases of the research process related to plants and soil by performing a variety of technical duties in a laboratory, field, or greenhouse environment.

Overview

Accepting applications

Open & closing dates

🕒 04/12/2024 to 05/03/2024

Salary

\$49,025 - \$77,955 per year

Pay scale & grade

GS 7 - 9

Location

1 vacancy in the following location:

📍 Pendleton, OR

Remote job

No

Telework eligible

Yes—as determined by the agency policy.

Travel Required

Occasional travel - You may be expected to travel for this position.

Relocation expenses reimbursed

No

Appointment type

Permanent -

Work schedule

Full-time -

Service

Competitive

Promotion potential

9

Job family (Series)

[0404 Biological Science Technician](#)

Supervisory status

No

Security clearance

[Not Required](#)

Drug test

No

Position sensitivity and risk

[Non-sensitive \(NS\)/Low Risk](#)

Trust determination process

[Suitability/Fitness](#)

Announcement number

ARS-S24Y-12375073-KP

Control number

786319400

This job is open to



[Career transition \(CTAP, ICTAP, RPL\)](#)

Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.



[The public](#)

U.S. Citizens, Nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.

Clarification from the agency

US Citizens and Nationals; no prior Federal experience is required.

Duties

- Assist with agricultural management practices in the field including planting, cultivating, harvesting, and applying pesticides to test plots.
- Tabulate, statistically analyze, and summarize data using personal computers and software packages.
- Operate, maintain, and repair complex equipment including tractors, soil water sensors, combines, and hydraulic soil samplers.
- Collect, prepare, evaluate, and verify plant and soil samples for laboratory analyses.

Requirements

Conditions of Employment

- You must be a US Citizen or US National.
- Males born after 12/31/1959 must be Selective Service registered or exempt.
- Subject to satisfactory adjudication of background investigation and/or fingerprint check.
- Successful completion of one-year probationary period, unless previously served.
- Direct Deposit: Per Public Law 104-134 all Federal employees are required to have federal payments made by direct deposit to their financial institution.
- Successfully pass the E-Verify employment verification check. To learn more about E-Verify, including your rights and responsibilities, visit E-Verify at <https://www.e-verify.gov/>

Qualifications

Applicants must meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements by the closing date of the announcement including specialized experience and/or education, as defined below.

GS-07:

Specialized Experience: Specialized experience is experience directly related to the position to be filled. Specialized experience must be described for each grade level advertised. The specialized experience requirements for this position are: Qualifying experience for GS-07 includes one year of specialized experience comparable to GS-06 which is directly related to the work of this position, and which has equipped the applicant with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position. For this position, specialized experience includes experience participating in a research project related to plants or soil; statistically analyzing or summarizing data; and maintaining equipment or automated systems used in a laboratory or field environment.

OR

Education: Successful completion of one full year of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to a master's or equivalent graduate degree, if directly related. Related degrees may include Crop Science, Soil Science, Biosystems Engineering, Agricultural Science, or Botany.

OR

A combination of graduate level education and experience as described above.

GS-08:

Specialized Experience: Specialized experience is experience directly related to the position to be filled. Specialized experience must be described for each grade level advertised. The specialized experience requirements for this position are: Qualifying experience for GS-08 includes one year of specialized experience comparable to GS-07 which is directly related to the work of this position, and which has equipped the applicant with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position. For this position, specialized experience includes experience setting up and conducting an experiment or research project with plants or soil; analyzing samples from plants or soil; and operating, maintaining, calibrating, or modifying specialized equipment.

OR

Education: Successful completion of two full years of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to a master's or equivalent graduate degree, if directly related. Related degrees may include Crop Science, Soil Science, Biosystems Engineering, Agricultural Science, or Botany.

OR

A combination of graduate level education and experience as described above.

GS-09:

Specialized Experience: Specialized experience is experience directly related to the position to be filled. Specialized experience must be described for each grade level advertised. The specialized experience requirements for this position are: Qualifying experience for GS-09 includes one year of specialized experience comparable to GS-08 which is directly related to the work of this position, and which has equipped the applicant with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position. For this position, specialized experience includes experience participating in the maintenance of plots including planting, weeding, or harvesting agricultural samples; collecting, preparing, and evaluating plant or soil samples and supporting records; and utilizing software tools to manage and analyze data.

OR

Education: Successful completion of two full years of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to a master's or equivalent graduate degree, if directly related. Related degrees may include Crop Science, Soil Science, Biosystems Engineering, Agricultural Science, or Botany.

OR

A combination of graduate level education and experience as described above.

Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religious; spiritual; community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

Education

Please see above for education qualification requirement information.

Additional information

- Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Reemployment Priority List (RPL), or Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP): Visit the [OPM](#) website for information on how to apply as a CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP eligible. To exercise selection priority for this vacancy, CTAP/RPL/ICTAP candidates must meet the basic eligibility requirements and all selective factors. CTAP/ICTAP candidates must be rated and determined to be well qualified (or above) based on an evaluation of the competencies listed in the How You Will Be Evaluated section. When assessed through a score-based category rating method, CTAP/ICTAP applicants must receive a rating of at least 85 out of a possible 100.
- Recruitment or Relocation Incentive may be authorized. The final determination to pay an incentive will be made by the hiring official at the time of job offer.
- If you are selected for a position with further promotion potential, you will be placed under a career development plan, and may be non-competitively promoted if you successfully complete the requirements and if recommended by management. However, promotion is neither implied nor guaranteed.
- This position may be eligible to telework up to four days per week, based upon the duties of the position. This position may also be eligible for flexible work arrangements as determined by agency policy and any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Benefits

A career with the U.S. government provides employees with a comprehensive benefits package. As a federal employee, you and your family will have access to a range of benefits that are designed to make your federal career very rewarding. [Learn more about federal benefits](#)

Eligibility for benefits depends on the type of position you hold and whether your position is full-time, part-time or intermittent. Contact the hiring agency for more information on the specific benefits offered.

How You Will Be Evaluated

You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above.

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Delegated Examining Procedures and USDA policy using category rating. Applicants who meet basic minimum qualifications will be placed in one of *two or three* categories: Best Qualified, Well Qualified, or Qualified. Within these categories, applicants eligible for veteran's preference will receive selection priority over non-veterans. Category placement will be determined based on applicants' quality of experience and the extent they possess the following knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) or competencies:

- Applies Technology to Tasks
- Biology
- Research

Your application, including the online Assessment Questionnaire, will be reviewed to determine if you meet (a) minimum qualification requirements and (b) the resume supports the answers provided to the job-specific questions. Your resume must clearly support your responses to all the questions addressing experience and education relevant to this position. Those determined to be in the best qualified category will be referred to the selecting official for consideration.

Note: If, after reviewing your resume and/or supporting documentation, a determination is made that you have inflated your qualifications and or experience, your score may be adjusted to more accurately reflect your abilities, or you may be found ineligible. Please follow all instructions carefully. Errors or omissions may affect your rating. Providing inaccurate information on Federal documents could be grounds for non-selection or disciplinary action up to including removal from the Federal service.

Clicking the link below will present a preview of the application form; i.e. the online questionnaire. The application form link below will only provide a preview and does not initiate the application process. To initiate the online application process, click the "Apply" button to the right.

To view the application form, visit: <https://apply.usastaffing.gov/ViewQuestionnaire/12375073>

Required Documents

The following documents are required for your applicant package to be complete. Our office cannot be responsible for incompatible software, your system failure, etc. Encrypted documents will not be accepted. Failure to submit required, legible documents may result in loss of consideration.

- Resume that includes: 1) personal information such as name, address, contact information; 2) education; 3) detailed work experience related to this position as described in the major duties including work schedule, hours worked per week, dates of employment; title, series, grade (if applicable); 4) other qualifications.
- If education is required or you are using education to qualify, you must submit a copy of your college transcripts. An unofficial copy is sufficient with the application if it includes your name and the necessary course information; however, if you are selected, you will be required to submit official transcripts prior to entering on duty. Education must have been successfully obtained from an accredited school, college or university. If any education was completed at a foreign institute, you must submit with your application evidence that the institute was appropriately accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as equivalent to U.S. education standards. There are private organizations that specialize in this evaluation and a fee is normally associated with this service. For a list of private organizations that evaluate education, visit the

[NACES](#)

website. All transcripts must be in English or include an English translation.

- If claiming veteran's preference, you must submit a DD214, Certificate of Release from Active Duty, which shows dates of service and discharge under honorable conditions. If currently on active duty you must submit a certification of expected discharge or release from active duty service under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the date the certification is submitted. Veteran's preference must be verified prior to appointment. Without this documentation, you will not receive veteran's preference and your application will be evaluated based on the material(s) submitted.
- If claiming 10-point veteran's preference you must provide the DD214 or certification requirements (see above bullet), plus the proof of entitlement of this preference as listed on the SF-15 Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference. The SF-15 should be included but is not required. Failure to submit these documents could result in the determination that there is insufficient documentation to support your claim for 10-point preference. For more information on veterans' preference visit [FEDSHIREVETS](#)
- Surplus or displaced employees eligible for CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP priority must provide: proof of eligibility (RIF separation notice, notice of proposed removal for declining a transfer of function or directed reassignment to another commuting area, notice of disability annuity termination), SF-50 documenting separation (as applicable), and your most recent SF-50 noting position, grade level, and duty location with your application per 5 CFR 330.

How to Apply

Please read the entire announcement and all instructions before you begin. You must complete this application process and submit all required documents electronically by 11:59p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on the closing date of this announcement.

Applying online is highly encouraged. We are available to assist you during business hours (normally 8:00a.m. - 4:00p.m., Monday - Friday). If applying online poses a hardship, contact the Agency Contact listed below well before the closing date for an alternate method. All hardship application packages must be complete and submitted no later than noon ET on the closing date of the announcement in order to be entered into the system prior to its closing.

This agency provides reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities on a case-by-case basis; contact the Agency Contact to request this.

To begin, click "Apply" and follow the instructions to complete the Assessment Questionnaire and attach your resume and all required documents.

NOTE: Please verify that documents you are uploading from USAJOBS transfer into the Agency's staffing system as there is a limitation to the number of documents that can be transferred. However, once in the Agency's staffing system, you will have the opportunity to upload additional documents. Uploaded resumes must be less than 5MB and in one of the following document formats: GIF, JPG, JPEG, PNG, RTF, PDF, TXT or Word (DOC or DOCX). Do not upload Adobe Portfolio documents because they are not viewable.

Agency contact information

 Kayleigh Pfeiffer

Phone

[703-995-9645](tel:703-995-9645)

Address

Agricultural Research Service
800 Buchanan Street

Email

Kayleigh.pfeiffer@usda.gov

Albany, CA 94710
US

[Learn more about this agency.](#)

Next steps

Your application will be reviewed to verify that you meet the eligibility and qualification requirements for the position prior to issuing referral lists to the selecting official. If further evaluation or interviews are required, you will be contacted. Log in to your [USAJOBS](#) account to check your application status.

You must choose to turn on email notifications in your USAJOBS profile if you want to receive important email notifications that may impact your applicant experience (e.g. If you start an application and do not submit it prior to the closing date, USAJOBS will send an email reminder that the closing date is approaching and your application is in an incomplete status).

Multiple positions may be filled from this announcement.

Under the Fair Chance Act, agencies are not allowed to request information about an applicant's criminal history until a conditional offer of employment has been made, except as allowed for access to classified information; assignment to national security duties or positions; acceptance or retention in the armed forces; or recruitment of a Federal law enforcement officer. An applicant may submit a complaint or any other information related to an organization's alleged noncompliance with the Fair Chance Act. The complaint must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the alleged noncompliance. To make a Fair Chance Act inquiry or complaint, send an email with the appropriate information to lynda.smith@usda.gov, subject line: Fair Chance Act.

Fair & Transparent

The Federal hiring process is set up to be fair and transparent. Please read the following guidance.

[Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Policy](#)

[Financial suitability](#)

[New employee probationary period](#)

[Privacy Act](#)

[Reasonable accommodation policy](#)

[Selective Service](#)

[Signature and false statements](#)

[Social security number request](#)