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Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Research Fellowship in Post-Harvest Microbial Safety
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-NE-2024-0185

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-NE-2024-0185

How to Apply ***Connect with ORISE...on the GO!*** Download the new ORISE GO mobile app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store to help you stay engaged, connected, and informed during your ORISE experience and beyond!

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. Click here for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

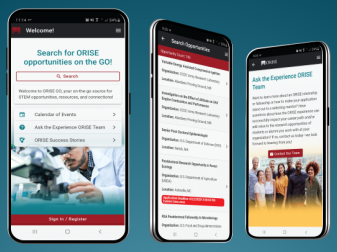
Application Deadline 7/5/2024 11:59:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

ARS Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), located in Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania.

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency with a mission to find solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans every day from field to table. ARS will deliver cutting-edge, scientific tools and innovative solutions for American farmers, producers, industry, and communities to support the nourishment and well-being of all people; sustain our nation's agroecosystems and natural resources; and ensure the economic competitiveness and excellence of our agriculture. The vision of the agency is to provide global leadership in agricultural discoveries through scientific excellence.

Research Project: The participant will help examine issues related to post-harvest microbial safety of fresh-cut produce. Specifically, under the guidance of a mentor, the participant will study the survival of Listeria monocytogenes, Escherichia coli O157:H7 and Salmonella spp. on work-in-process (WIP) fresh-cut produce ingredients during holding time, and pathogen transference potential onto containers. This research will be conducted at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Northeast Area, Eastern Regional Research Center, Microbial and Chemical Food Safety Research Unit (MCFS). The mission of the research unit is to improve microbial and chemical food safety and reduce foodborne illness and chemical contaminants by developing effective and environment-friendly intervention technologies and treatments.

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The participant will help design and conduct all aspects of the experiment under guidance of the mentor, and in consultation with ARS and project collaborators. This includes evaluation of the survival of various foodborne pathogens on selected WIP ingredients during holding time, as well as pathogen transference potential onto containers. The impact of WIP type, storage container, and native microflora will be investigated. Furthermore, possible endogenous antimicrobials will be determined and correlated with the survival of pathogens. The relationship among all the factors will be analyzed using statistical tools and mathematical models.

The USDA ARS MCFS research unit is located in Eastern Regional Research Center (ERRC) in the suburb of Philadelphia, PA. A wide variety of research projects intended for enhancing the quality and safety of various food products are being conducted at ERRC. The participant will benefit from contacts and interactions with the scientists on these projects. ERRC has a strong history of collaborating with many different academic institutions and U.S. federal government agencies. ORISE fellows, postdoctoral research associates, and interns who have previously been stationed at ERRC have had success in using their experience to gain different opportunities at the state and federal government levels, and with trade associations and in private industry.

Learning Objectives: The participant will learn methods to inoculate and isolate bacterial pathogens from various fresh produce items, estimation of bacterial injury and survival, and contribution of native antimicrobials to the survival of pathogens. The participant will have the opportunity to learn more in-depth statistical analysis techniques through various trainings and workshops if desired, and also through research on interdisciplinary project within ARS. This is an integrated produce safety research project, and the participant will have opportunities to learn at each stage of the continuum.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Xuetong Fan (Xuetong.Fan@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: July 1, 2024. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year, but may be renewed upon recommendation of ARS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience.

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and foreign nationals. Non-U.S. citizen applicants should refer to the Guidelines for Non-U.S. Citizens Details page of the program website for information about the valid immigration statuses that are acceptable for program participation.

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ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and ARS. Participants do not become employees of USDA, ARS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

Questions: Please visit our Program Website. After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process, please email ORISE.ARS.Northeast@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications

The qualified candidate should have received a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields prior to the appointment start date.

Eligibility Requirements

- **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (12 👁)

Affirmation

I affirm that:

- I am a US Citizen, OR
- I am a non-US Citizen currently living in the United States