

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Controlling Agricultural Pests and Diseases Fellowship
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-MWA-2025-0068

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-MWA-2025-0068

How to Apply *To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click **APPLY**.*

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.

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Application Deadline 9/12/2025 3:00:00 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), National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research located in Peoria, Illinois.

The National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research (NCAUR) is among the largest agricultural research centers in the United States. The center has an interdisciplinary team of scientists dedicated to research on improving agricultural production, food safety and public health, economic development, and environmental quality.

Research project: The research project focuses on the discovery and development of novel strategies for controlling agricultural pests and diseases.

Under the guidance of a mentor, the research activities will include: sampling of insects and soil samples from diverse environments; identification and characterization soil- and insect-borne fungal and bacterial communities; isolation and purification of plant compounds with insecticidal properties; bioassays to evaluate the insecticidal activities of microbial and plant based agents against a variety of agricultural pests; morphological and molecular identification of insect communities associated with different cover crop species; maintenance of insect colonies; and maintenance of greenhouse and laboratory experiments.



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Learning Objectives: The participant will learn a variety of skills including designing and conducting field and laboratory experiments, isolation and characterization of microbes using morphological and molecular techniques, isolation and purification of plant compounds, data collection and management, and development of standard operating procedures.

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

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: August 2025. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for 11 months but may be extended 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. **The anticipated stipend range is \$45,000 – \$74,000 annually.**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

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.Midwest@ornl.gov and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a master's or doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields (Entomology, Biology, molecular biology or related field).



Preferred skills:

- Experience and interest in designing and conducting experiments under controlled (laboratory and greenhouse) and field conditions.
- Hands-on experience in some of the following skills: isolation and identification of bioactive compounds, microbial cultures, microbial fermentation, and molecular biology skills such as PCR, RT-qPCR, RNAi, cloning, and sequencing.

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Point of Contact [Janeen](#)

- Eligibility**
- Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([14](#) )
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([51](#) )