

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Human Dimensions of Sustainable Agricultural Production Fellowship

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-NEA-2025-0126

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

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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 11/21/2025 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), located in Burlington, Vermont.

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 USDA Agricultural Research Service has an opportunity for a fellow with an interest in motivations and behavioral drivers of sustainable agricultural production systems in the Northeastern, United States to participate with the Food Systems Research Unit in Burlington, VT. The unit's research focuses on the contribution of regional food systems to environmental sustainability, economic viability, and improved nutrition. The fellow will have the opportunity to be involved in research that aims to characterize producer cognitive and behavioral factors, including motivations, attitudes, and perceptions, that drive the adoption of, or



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participation in, more resilient forms of agricultural production. The project will examine this through multiple case studies, including the investigation of subjective perceptions and beliefs on the adoption of soil health practices and the role carbon market incentives in enabling practice change.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, the fellow will gain experience in the application of social science methods to food systems, including collecting and recording qualitative and quantitative data, such as survey and interview approaches with other parties (e.g., farmers and other personnel). Additionally, the fellow will have the opportunity to wrangle, clean, summarize and analyze qualitative and quantitative data using data analysis software, such as excel, R, and NVivo. The fellow will also gain experience in literature reviews, writing results, and contributing to peer-reviewed manuscripts.

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

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

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for nine months, 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 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.Northeast@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a master's degree or higher in one of the relevant fields (Environmental Studies, Environmental Science, Environmental Sustainability or related

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field to food systems and sustainability). Degree(s) must have been
received within the past three years.

Preferred skills:

- Experience with environmental/food systems social science research, including mixed methods data collection and analysis skills (i.e., both quantitative and qualitative data collection, and the merging of the two)
- Proficiency in R and excel.

Point of Contact [Janeen](#)

- Eligibility**

Requirements
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([3](#) 👁)
 - **Social and Behavioral Sciences** ([3](#) 👁)