

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Defining Agricultural Productivity for Nutritional Sustainability

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-HQ-2026-0050

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-HQ-2026-0050

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 3/27/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

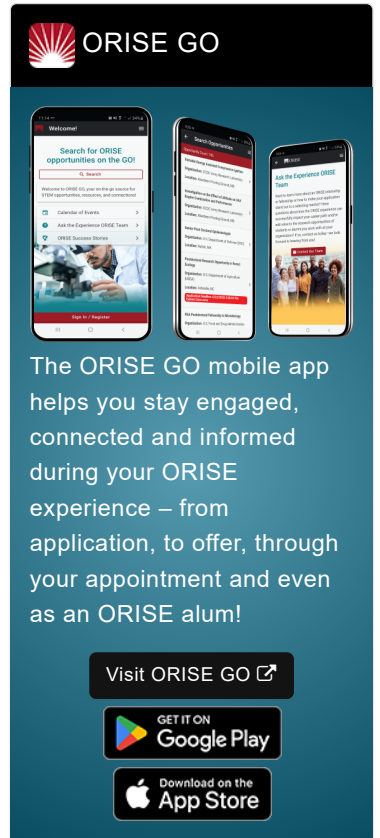
Description *Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.

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.


The Food Systems Research Unit addresses how local, regional and global food systems can provide nutritious and culturally appropriate food, regardless of individual life circumstances. It is co-located on the University of Vermont (UVM) Campus in Burlington and it manages the 550-acre, Northeast Crop and Livestock Research Station at Nordic Farm in collaboration with the UVM Food Systems Research Institute.


Research Project: This project engages with the question, “what is a productive agricultural system?” Usually, agricultural production is


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measured as the yield of single products. However, humans consume many crops, ranging from fresh fruits and vegetables to forages processed through animals. Likewise, farms rarely produce just one crop. Comparing the value of disparate crops to farms and human nutrition remains a challenge. The participant will learn from and collaborate with a transdisciplinary team on developing answers to this question using quantitative and qualitative methods, for example, secondary data analysis and expert elicitation. Results are expected to help with USDA research priorities of a) improving farmer and rancher profitability and b) improving human health. The participant will also be a part of field studies related to food production systems in the northeast and nationally that align with their interests and professional goals.

Learning Objectives: While the primary mentor will be an agronomist, the participant will collaborate closely with social scientists, food systems modelers, nutritionists, and animal scientists to engage with this question. Participants with a complementary disciplinary background who wish to advance their training in transdisciplinary research will gain the most from this opportunity. Among other professional development activities, the participant will be able to attend conferences and trainings, interface with stakeholders for research and outreach, coauthor peer-reviewed articles, and pursue external funding.

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

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: May 1, 2026. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will be for two years.

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 is \$76,203 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.HQPostdoc@orau.org and include the reference code

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for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past four years, or anticipated to be received by 6/1/2027.

Preferred skills:

- A background in agricultural sciences or closely related disciplines with a demonstrated interest in developing a quantitative social science skillset, or;
- a background in social science with experience in quantitative methods and a demonstrated interest in developing an agricultural field research skillset.

Stipend \$76,203.00 Yearly

Point of Contact [Janeen](#)

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Doctoral Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Communications and Graphics Design** ([1](#))
 - **Earth and Geosciences** ([1](#))
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([2](#))
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([14](#))
 - **Social and Behavioral Sciences** ([6](#))