

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Appalachian Fruit Research Biological Sciences  
High School/GED Internship

**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-NEA-2026-0144

**Organization** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-NEA-2026-0144

**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** 5/22/2026 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 Kearneysville, West Virginia.

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 Appalachian Fruit Research Station is devoted to developing sustainable production practices and breeding novel fruit varieties. Research areas include topics that encompass biology, ecology, entomology, soil science, plant pathology, plant physiology, horticulture, genetics and breeding. The research facility has 500 acres of land with experimental orchards and vineyards, 14,000 square feet of greenhouse space, and state of the art laboratories. You will have the opportunity to train with scientists on projects such as: developing biological control tools to reduce the impacts of the invasive spotted

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lanternfly, exploring mechanisms behind the emergence of plant diseases in orchards and vineyards, regenerative agriculture soil sampling, and improving fruit quality through development of specific horticultural practices, understanding how plant architecture can improve overall fruit production systems. Hands-on experience will be daily part of your experience.

**Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, you will learn:**

- Chemical ecology of invasive insect pests like spotted lanternfly
- Experimental Design and data curation
- Management of temperate fruit trees and grapevines
- Sustainable management strategies for invasive and persistent insect pests of temperate fruit

**Mentor(s):** The mentor for this opportunity is Tracy Leskey ([tracy.leskey@usda.gov](mailto:tracy.leskey@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: May 18, 2026.** Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

**Appointment Length:** The appointment will initially be for six 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. **The anticipated stipend range is \$600 - \$650 weekly.**

**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](mailto:ORISE.ARS.Northeast@orau.org) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing a high school diploma or GED and be enrolled in the one of the relevant fields.

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**Preferred skills:**

- A strong interest in being in a research environment that may involve both laboratory and field studies is preferred.

**Stipend** \$600.00 – \$650.00 Weekly

**Point of Contact** [Janeen](#)

**Eligibility** • **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only

**Requirements** • **Degree:** Currently pursuing a High School Diploma/GED.

• **Discipline(s):**

- **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** ([1](#))
- **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([4](#))
- **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([11](#))