Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Plant Pathology Research Intern
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-NEA-2026-0154

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-NEA-2026-0154

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 6/5/2026 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 Frederick, Maryland.

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 Foreign Disease/Weed Science Research Unit in Frederick, Maryland provides responsive high-containment research that secures the nation's food supply, agricultural economy, and environmental health against the threat of invasive foreign plant diseases and weeds.

Research Project: You will join a team focused on foreign plant pathogens. The team's goals are to understand their biology, host range, and develop strategies to rapidly identify those causing foreign and emerging plant diseases and/or weeds. You will be part of the research effort in the laboratory, greenhouse, and field environment, and will be involved in creating experimental designs and treatments, collecting experimental data, and analyzing and

interpreting results.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, you will be given the opportunity to participate in research aimed at protecting United States agriculture, timber and forest products, and the environment from foreign fungal pathogens. This research opportunity will teach you skills necessary for a future in the field of biological science.

During the appointment, you will gain skills in and hands-on experience in areas such as:

- Basic laboratory techniques such as pipetting, preparation of solutions, nucleic acid extractions, recording and compiling data, etc.;
- How to use standard laboratory equipment (e.g., centrifuge, lyopholizer, heat block, pipettes, biological safety cabinet, chemical fume hood, TissueLyser III homogenizer, analytical balance, incubators, growth chambers, thermocycler, etc.);
- Live plant inoculations including preparing inoculum, care for seedlings, and curating and preserve fungal cultures;
- General lab protocols, safety, biosafety, upkeep, and maintenance;
- Observation and participation in genome sequencing using Oxford Nanopore platforms (PromethION2 Solo and MinION Mk1D).
- How to properly evaluate and collect data for scientific experiments.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Jo Anne Crouch (joanne.crouch@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: June 15, 2026. 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: This opportunity offers flexible scheduling and can accommodate either part-time or full-time. For eligible participants, arrangements can be made for full-time participation during summer months and part-time during the academic year, based on mutual agreement and project needs.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated stipend range is $3,844 monthly.**

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,

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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 an associate's or bachelor's degree in the one of the relevant fields.

Preferred Skills (Favorable for Participation): While prior experience is not required, it can be helpful. What is most important is a strong sense of motivation, accountability, and a willingness to learn and engage. Favorable candidates will ideally possess:

- **Relevant Coursework**: Strong academic performance in Biology and agricultural sciences is highly valued.
- **Microbiology/Molecular Biology**: An understanding of microorganisms, particularly fungal cultures, and/or molecular biology concepts is valued.
- **Practical Application**: A strong willingness to actively participate in and conduct experiments in diverse settings (primarily laboratory, greenhouse).
- **Communication**: Strong communication skills for effective collaboration in experimental design, execution, and reporting of results.
- **Attention to Detail:** The ability to meticulously collect, analyze, and interpret experimental data, ensuring accuracy and reliability.

Stipend $3,844.00 Monthly

Point of Contact Janeen

Eligibility Requirements

- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- **Degree:** Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (51 👁)
- **Age:** Must be 18 years of age