

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Research Food Technology Fellow

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0229

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0229

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 1/1/2027 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

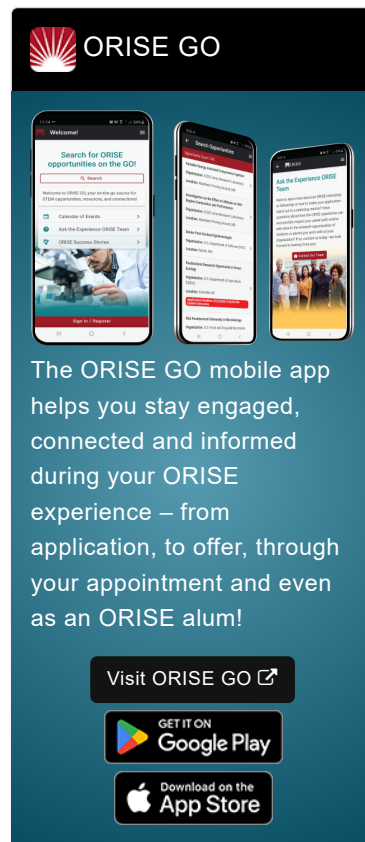
Description ***Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

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 Byron, Georgia.

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 fellow will participate in a mission-based research project geared toward developing novel methods to improve food safety in pecan production and processing. The postdoctoral fellow will help in identifying, testing, and validating novel control methods for foodborne pathogens such as *Salmonella*, pathogenic *E. coli*, and *Listeria monocytogenes* on pecan kernels. Methods will focus on novel approaches, especially end of process kill steps, to treat pecan kernels and reduce pathogen contamination; the innovative methods developed will contribute significantly to food safety and security.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, the participant will



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learn how to:

- Understand how research supports improvements in food safety within pecan production and processing systems.
- Explore major foodborne pathogens of concern, including Salmonella, pathogenic E. coli, and Listeria monocytogenes, and their relevance to low-moisture foods such as pecans.
- Design, implement, and evaluate experiments aimed at identifying and testing novel pathogen control methods.
- Develop and validate innovative intervention strategies, particularly end-of-process kill steps, to reduce pathogen contamination on pecan kernels.
- Apply principles of microbial inactivation, validation studies, and regulatory considerations in food safety research.
- Analyze and interpret microbiological data to assess treatment efficacy and practical feasibility.
- Translate research findings into applied solutions that enhance food safety, public health, and food security.

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

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: 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: 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 \$5,899 - \$7,666 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, 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.Southeast@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

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Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields.

Stipend \$5,899.00 – \$7,666.00 Monthly

Point of Contact [Sara Beth](#)

- Eligibility**
- Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Doctoral Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([5](#) )