

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellowship on Genetic and Metabolic Resistance to Sweetcorn and Maize Pests and Pathogens
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0236

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0236

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 8/14/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description *Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.

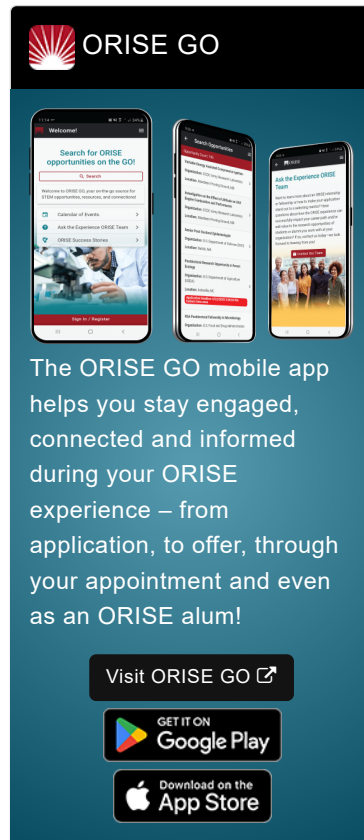
ARS Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), located in Gainesville, Florida.

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 postdoc will identify genes and metabolites associated with resistance against pathogens or insect pest of sweetcorn and maize. They will plan and conduct experiments, evaluate and interpret data, and disseminate research findings in peer-reviewed journals. This project is about developing new ways to control agricultural pests and diseases that will help increase profitability of farmers by reducing crop loss and input costs.


Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of their mentor, the participant


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will learn how to:

- Identify genes and metabolites associated with resistance to pathogens and insect pests in sweetcorn and maize.
- Design and conduct experiments investigating plant defense mechanisms.
- Analyze, evaluate, and interpret biological, molecular, and chemical data related to plant–insect and plant–pathogen interactions.
- Measure plant metabolites using gas or liquid chromatography–mass spectrometry (GC-MS or LC-MS).
- Identify and characterize gene-edited loss-of-function mutants in maize.
- Disseminate research findings through peer-reviewed scientific publications.

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

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: **September 1, 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: 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 \$4,500 - \$5,100 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.

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 9/14/2026.

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Preferred skills:



- Experience with plant molecular biology, analytical chemistry, plant-insect interactions, plant genetics, plant-abiotic stress biology, metabolite profiling by liquid-chromatography mass spectrometry (LC-MS), and gene expression analysis (RNAseq) and multiomics

Stipend \$4,500.00 – \$5,100.00 Monthly

Point of Contact [Sara Beth](#)

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

Requirements • **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 48 months or anticipated to be received by 9/14/2026 12:00:00 AM.

- **Discipline(s):**
 - **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** ([2](#) )
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([8](#) )