

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellowship to Study Hormone Signaling in Maize Defense

**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0240

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

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0240

**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** 9/11/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

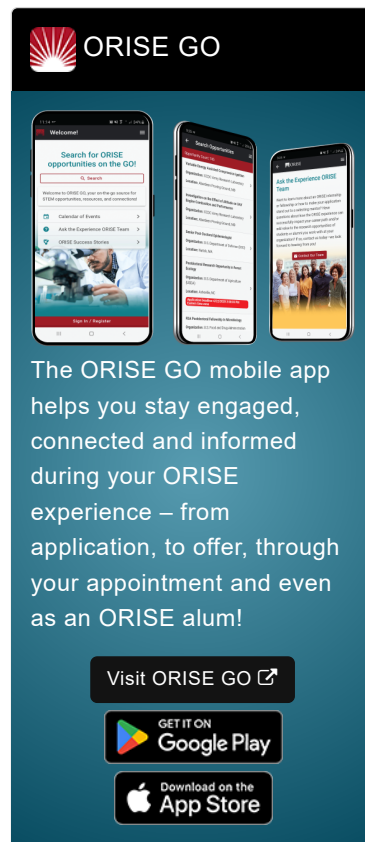
**Description** **\*Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

**ARS Office/Lab and Location:** A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Center for Medical, Agricultural and Veterinary Entomology ARS research center, Chemistry Research Unit, 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:** This project will focus on determining the roles of abscisic acid (ABA) in modulating responses of maize to biotic and abiotic stresses. The Hunter lab has engineered maize lines with increased and decreased levels of ABA and molecular characterization of these lines will be a major component of the project. Under the guidance of a mentor, you will have the opportunity to design and conduct experiments, interpret results, and publish findings in peer-reviewed journals.

**Learning Objectives:** This Postdoctoral fellowship offers extensive training and skill



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enhancement in plant genetics, molecular biology, and analytical chemistry for research on hormone signaling in maize defense. **YOU** will gain hands-on experience designing experiments with gene-edited maize, utilizing techniques such as insect/fungal bioassays, LC-MS for metabolomics, PCR-based genotyping, qPCR, and transcriptomic analysis. This comprehensive experience will provide valuable hands-on training and lead to peer-reviewed publications, fostering beneficial professional development.

**Mentor(s):** The mentor for this opportunity is Charles Hunter ([charles.hunter@usda.gov](mailto:charles.hunter@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: November 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 part time.

**Participant Stipend:** The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated stipend range is \$4,800 - \$5,300 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](mailto:ORISE.ARS.Southeast@orau.org) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should have received or be currently pursuing a doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past four years or is anticipated to be received by end of 2026.

**Preferred skills:**

- Experience with plant molecular biology, analytical chemistry, plant genetics, RNA-seq data analysis, plant-abiotic stress biology
- Experience using liquid-chromatography mass spectrometry (LC-MS), gene sequence analysis using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and

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detection, characterization, and quantification of nucleic acids using  
qPCR techniques.

**Stipend** \$4,800.00 – \$5,300.00 Monthly

**Point of Contact** [Sara Beth](#)

- Eligibility**
- Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
  - **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 48 months or currently pursuing.
  - **Discipline(s):**
    - **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** ([2](#) )
    - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([6](#) )