

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Research Horticulture Fellow

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0247

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0247

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
- A copy of an abstract or reprint of an article

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), Southeastern Fruit and Tree Nut Research Station, 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: You will have the opportunity to participate in mission-based research at the Southeastern Fruit and Tree Nut Research Station in Byron, GA. This project involves the evaluation of pecan tree and soil health following various small ruminant (goat) grazing regimes including aspects of soil compaction and fertility, leaf nutrition, nut yield and quality and soil bacterial and fungal microbiomes. This will specifically include (but is not limited to) microbiome analysis of leaves and soil, gas exchange parameters, composting, and plant nutrition, especially looking at the effect of different soil amendments for orchard soil health, including but

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not limited to composted goat manure, composted pecan shell, pecan biochar, and other waste byproducts. Innovative methods of soil amendment alternatives using orchard waste byproducts will be used as fertilization alternatives, leading to enhanced stakeholders profitably.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, you will have the opportunity to:

- Gain hands-on experience evaluating pecan tree and soil health under different small ruminant (goat) grazing regimes.
- Develop skills in assessing soil compaction, fertility, leaf nutrition, nut yield, and nut quality in orchard systems.
- Learn to perform and interpret soil and leaf microbiome analyses, including bacterial and fungal community profiling.
- Build skills in measuring plant physiological parameters such as gas exchange and nutrient status.
- Gain experience designing and evaluating composting strategies and soil amendments derived from agricultural byproducts.

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

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: September 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 \$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 have received a doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past five years.

Preferred skills:

- Horticulture, plant physiology, plant nutrition, soil biology, microbiology, and root biology.

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

Point of Contact [Sara Beth](#)

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

Requirements • **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 month(s).

• **Discipline(s):**

- **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([Z](#)👁)