

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Opportunity in Cotton and Oilseed

Genetics Research

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0298

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0298

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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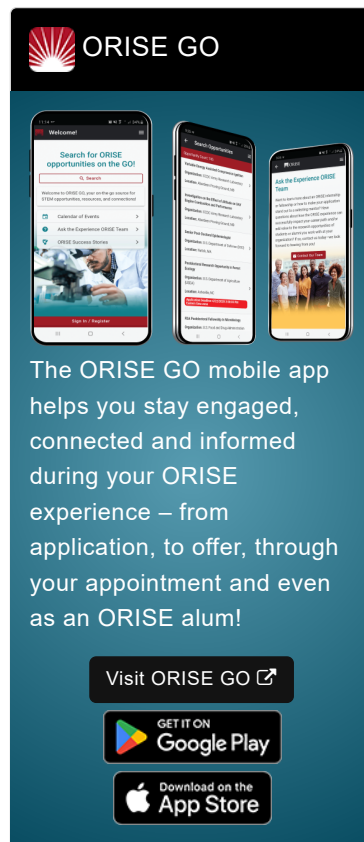
Application Deadline 9/25/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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 New Orleans, Louisiana.

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: Under the guidance of mentor, you will engage in research focused on traditional and molecular breeding of value-added traits in oilseeds, primarily cotton, and analysis of lipids, DNA, RNA, and other metabolites produced by such plants. The research will combine experiments conducted in a laboratory setting with greenhouse research and field trials. Successful experimentation will rely on combinations of biology, chemistry, biochemistry, molecular biology, plant physiology and plant breeding. The two primary goals will be to investigate mechanisms that contribute to successful seed germination, especially at cool temperatures, and to use genome editing tools to modify lipid flux in developing oilseeds. The research will also include extraction and analysis of cottonseed processing products (primarily



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cottonseed oil and protein). Successful outcomes will enhance the profitability and global competitiveness of the U.S. cotton industry through creation of enhanced cotton genetic resources.

Learning Objectives: You will gain valuable experiences and skills in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary research program that includes chemists, geneticists, and plant physiologists. Over the course of this opportunity, you will develop a thorough understanding of cotton breeding, oilseed engineering, genome editing and other molecular genetic techniques. You will be provided with opportunities to present research findings to stakeholders and academic conferences. This experience will provide hands-on learning in a team environment and exposure to research objectives aimed at solving various challenges unique to cotton, or common to other commodity oilseed industries.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Jay Shockey (Jay.Shockey@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 is \$6,223.17 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 (e.g. Agronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Plant Sciences or closely related field).

Preferred skills:

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- Understanding of the central dogma of DNA describes the unidirectional flow of genetic information within living organisms.
- Experience with DNA extractions, PCR, and agarose gel electrophoresis.
- Experience with lipid extraction and analysis by gas chromatography.
- Experience with plant breeding and plant genetics is considered a plus.
- Proficient with Microsoft Office Software.
- Experience in multidisciplinary research teams, excellent communication skills, and a creative, solution-oriented approach to troubleshooting technical or analytical challenges is highly desirable.

Stipend \$6,223.17 Monthly

Point of Contact [Sara Beth](#)

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| Eligibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Citizenship: U.S. Citizen Only |
| Requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Degree: Doctoral Degree.• Minimum Overall GPA: 3.00• Discipline(s):<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Chemistry and Materials Sciences (1👁)◦ Engineering (2👁)◦ Life Health and Medical Sciences (11👁)• Age: Must be 18 years of age |