**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellowship in Guayule Latex Extraction and Purification
**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-PWA-2026-0299

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

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-PWA-2026-0299

**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** 11/6/2026 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 Maricopa, Arizona.

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 be involved in research and development activities aimed to guide the build out of a guayule latex extraction pilot plant in support of the Agency's mission to reduce dependence on imported natural rubber and latex and to provide a new industrial desert crop to farmers in the south western US as an alternative to high water requiring crops such as as cotton and alfalfa. Current methods will be optimized and new methods may be invented and optimized. You will receive training in crop monitoring and sampling, harvesting methods, post-harvest processing, latex extraction, latex purification and concentration, and equipment operation. You will also receive training in use of

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Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint, Visio, and plotting and statistical analysis using various software platforms.

**Learning Objectives**: Under the guidance of a mentor you will:

- Develop an understanding of sustainable natural rubber and latex production systems using guayule as an alternative industrial crop;
- Explain the agricultural and environmental factors that influence guayule cultivation, harvesting, and post-harvest quality;
- Apply principles of crop monitoring and sampling to support agricultural research and process development;
- Analyze how harvesting and post-harvest handling practices affect latex yield and quality;
- Demonstrate knowledge of latex extraction, purification, and concentration processes used in pilot-scale operations;
- Evaluate and optimize processing methods to improve efficiency, product quality, and scalability;
- Interpret experimental data to support research and operational decision-making;
- Develop proficiency in the use of data analysis, visualization, and statistical software tools for scientific research;
- Communicate technical concepts, research findings, and process outcomes through written, visual, and oral formats;
- Collaborate effectively within multidisciplinary research and development teams focused on agricultural and industrial innovation.

**Mentor(s):** The mentor for this opportunity is Katrina Cornish (katrina.cornish@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: Fall 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.

**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.PacificWest@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications**

The qualified candidate should have received a Ph.D. degree in Agricultural Engineering or a related field. Degree must have been received within the past four years.

**Preferred skills:**

Experience in standard laboratory practices including making aqueous solutions of known composition; Experience with operating agricultural and/or processing equipment and analytical equipment; Computer skills and experience using multiple software packages.

**Point of Contact**

Janeen

**Eligibility Requirements**

- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 48 month(s).
- **Minimum Overall GPA:** 3.00
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Engineering** (4 👁)