Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellowship in Poultry Meat Quality
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0327

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0327

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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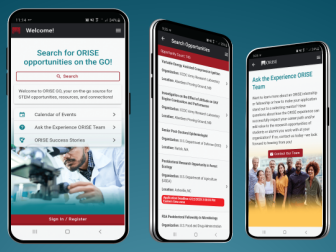
Application Deadline 12/18/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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 Athens, 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 join and learn from a community of scientists and researchers in the Quality & Safety Assessment Research Unit (QSARU) at the U.S. National Poultry Research Center, Athens, GA. The mission of QSARU is to provide scientific knowledge, technologies, and strategies to address critical product quality and safety issues in various agricultural commodities. Your educational research activities will involve the mission and goals of ARS National Program 306, Product Quality and New Uses. You will participate in research to understand biological factors that control meat quality attributes in poultry. Through genetic selection and advancements in nutrition and management practices, the poultry industry has achieved substantial improvements in broiler production efficiencies. Unfortunately, along with the improvements in bird growth and yield, there has also been an increase in breast meat quality defects associated with myopathies. Under the guidance of a mentor, you will investigate the underlying biological mechanisms and develop strategies to reduce the incidence and severity of chicken breast myopathies.

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You will receive training in animal & poultry science, molecular biology, genomics, biochemistry, food science, poultry nutrition, and poultry processing. You will participate in all phases of the research including experimental design, planning, conducting trials, data analysis, and reporting results.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of your mentor, you will:

- Gain knowledge of biological factors influencing poultry meat quality and the development of breast muscle myopathies in broiler chickens.
- Learn strategies for reducing the incidence and severity of poultry breast myopathies through research-based approaches.
- Learn experimental design principles and apply them to poultry and meat quality research studies.
- Acquire hands-on experience conducting poultry research trials, including sample collection, processing, and data management.
- Develop technical skills in molecular biology, genomics, biochemistry, food science, poultry nutrition, and poultry processing techniques.
- Understand how to apply laboratory and analytical methods to investigate the underlying mechanisms associated with poultry breast meat quality defects.
- Strengthen data analysis and interpretation skills using scientific research methodologies.
- Build scientific communication skills through preparation of reports, presentations, and discussion of research findings.
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills related to product quality and food safety challenges in agricultural commodities.
- Gain exposure to career pathways and professional practices in agricultural, food, and poultry science research.

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

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: 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.Southeast@orau.org and include the reference

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Qualifications

The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields (e.g. animal science, muscle and meat science, molecular biology, nutrition, genomics, biochemistry, chemistry, food science/technology, or a closely related field). Degree must have been received within the past five years or anticipated to be received by 12/31/2026.

Preferred Skills:

- Knowledge of molecular biology and associated techniques
- Knowledge of poultry science
- Knowledge of muscle biology/meat science and/or animal physiology, growth, and nutrition
- Experience handling biological samples

Stipend

$79,000.00 Yearly

Point of Contact

Janeen

Eligibility Requirements

- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or anticipated to be received by 12/31/2026 12:00:00 AM.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** (1 👁)
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (19 👁)
- **Veteran Status:** Veterans Preference, degree received within the last 120 month(s).