

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Alfalfa Protease Activity and Amino Acid Content Postdoctoral Opportunity  
**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0350

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

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0350

**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** 11/6/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

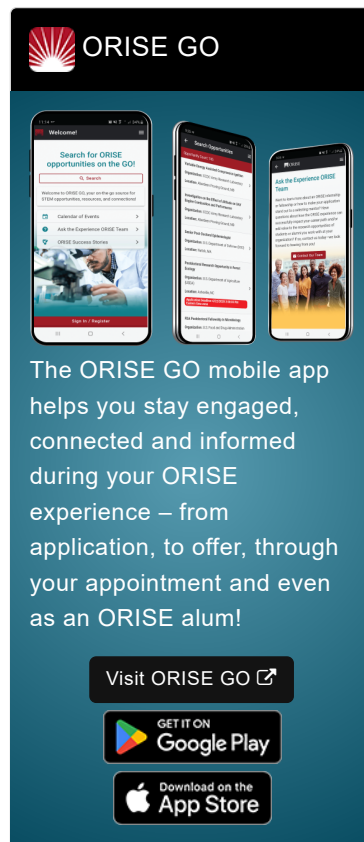
**Description** **\*Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

**ARS Office/Lab and Location:** A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Christina Arther's lab at the Dairy Forage Research Center, located in Madison, Wisconsin.

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:** The Arther lab researches alfalfa as both a dairy forage and a potential new food for humans. We implement various tools to understand and improve alfalfa nutrition for both humans and animals. Two current projects center around elucidating proteases and protease activity in order to reduce protein breakdown after harvest and improving the amino acid profile of protein in the leaves. You will participate in a subset of these projects, will have opportunities to collaborate with other researchers, and possibly develop projects of your own.

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



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learn to: (a) execute experimental design; and (b) apply biochemistry and molecular biology techniques, long-read sequencing, plant growth and maintenance, common forage quality measurements, plant-microbe interaction, and ion-exchange chromatography.

**Mentor(s):** The mentor for this opportunity is

Christina Arther ([christina.arther@usda.gov](mailto:christina.arther@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.

**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.Midwest@orau.org](mailto:ORISE.ARS.Midwest@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. Degree must have been received within the past five years, or be currently pursuing.

**Stipend** \$6,000.00 – \$7,000.00 Monthly

**Point of Contact** [Michele](#)

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
  - **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or currently pursuing.
  - **Discipline(s):**
    - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([8](#) )