

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellow in Postharvest Pathology

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-PWA-2026-0355

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

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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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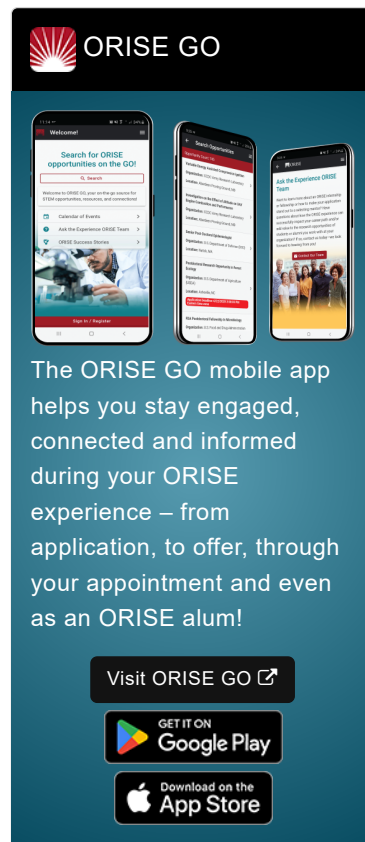
Application Deadline 11/6/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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), San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Sciences Center, in Parlier, California.

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.

The San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Sciences Center conducts research to support the sustainability, quality, and productivity of specialty crops industries across California's Central Valley. The Commodity Protection and Quality Research Unit focuses on improving postharvest quality and reducing losses of horticultural specialty crops caused by fungal pathogens, physiological disorders, and the control of quarantine insect pests that threaten market access and export opportunities.



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Research Project: We are seeking a highly motivated postdoctoral fellow to be a part of research focused on postharvest disease management and quality of fresh fruits. The fellowship has two primary learning experiences. You will examine the susceptibility of table grape breeding lines to gray mold caused by *Botrytis cinerea*, including developing and conducting scalable, high-throughput phenotyping methods to assess susceptibility and evaluate established or newly developed screening approaches. This also includes developing and evaluating preharvest and postharvest treatments aimed at controlling postharvest diseases of fresh fruits. This offers opportunities to contribute to high-value research that directly supports industry resilience and helps strengthen postharvest disease control.

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

- Learn to conduct research focused on postharvest disease management and quality in fresh fruits.
- Gain experience evaluating the susceptibility of table grape breeding lines to gray mold caused by *Botrytis cinerea*.
- Develop skills in designing and implementing scalable, high-throughput phenotyping methods to assess disease susceptibility.
- Learn to evaluate and refine established and newly developed screening approaches for postharvest disease resistance.
- Build experience in developing and assessing preharvest and postharvest treatments to control postharvest diseases in fresh fruit.

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

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. **The anticipated stipend is \$75,000 annually.**

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

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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 or be currently pursuing a doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past five years, or be currently pursuing.

Please select "Plant Science" as your discipline if your degree is Plant Pathology; Plant Science encompasses Plant Pathology.

Preferred skills:

- Experience in plant pathology — Demonstrated hands-on experience in research on fungal diseases, or a closely related field.
- Experience with Botrytis species or other fungal pathogens such as Alternaria, Cladosporium, Mucor, or Penicillium is a plus.
- Applied research skills — Strong understanding of applied research, including experimental design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of results.
- Sample management — Experience managing, organizing, and archiving biological samples.
- Independent and collaborative research — Ability to conduct research independently and act effectively as part of a diverse research team.

Stipend \$75,000.00 Yearly

Point of Contact [Janeen](#)

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

- Requirements**
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or currently pursuing.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (3 )
 - **Veteran Status:** Veterans Preference, degree received within the last 120 month(s).