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Graduate Student Opportunity: Aphid Vectors of Sweetpotato Viruses

The Davis lab in the Department of Entomology at Louisiana State University is seeking a MS-level graduate student to study aphid vectors of sweetpotato viruses.

Background: In Louisiana, sweetpotato is the most important horticultural crop with a gross farm value of \$44 million. However, aphid vectored plant viruses can reduce sweetpotato yields by as much as 40%. In addition, growers continue to save storage roots for multiple seed generations, leading to cultivar decline. A recent push to create a clean foundation seed program has identified a lack of information on factors that influence plant virus vector epidemiology in sweetpotato. This project will begin to address these deficiencies by identifying aphid vectors in sweetpotato fields, determining vector efficiencies of key sweetpotato viruses and their vectors, and identifying alternate hosts of vectors within and surrounding sweetpotato fields.

Qualifications: A BS degree in Biology, Entomology, or related field. Interested students should have a strong interest in field crop entomology and plant virus vector epidemiology, preferably with some undergraduate research experience in one or both subdisciplines. Students should have good organizational skills, demonstrated communication skills, experience with molecular techniques, and must be self-motivated and be willing to be a part of a dynamic lab group.

Position Details: Student will be based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and advised by Dr. Jeff Davis (field crop entomology, IPM). Tuition remission will be granted, and a competitive stipend will be provided. Preferred start date: August 2023.

How to apply: Prospective students should email a statement of interest and CV to Jeff Davis (JeffDavis@agcenter.lsu.edu). Full application details for the Department of Entomology can be found [here](#), and the LSU Graduate School [here](#).

The University: LSU includes institutions, facilities, and programs in each of Louisiana's 64 parishes, and its campuses stretch the length of the state from New Orleans to Shreveport. Each institution plays a vital role in preparing students to incorporate new knowledge and technologies into their daily lives. LSU researchers across Louisiana are developing a wide range of innovations to improve quality of life by studying issues such as disease management, advance medical treatments, obesity, coastal protection, hurricane preparedness, energy, natural resource management and agriculture, among others. Louisiana's Flagship University is a land-, sea- and space-grant institution with academic programs in all areas of science, engineering, humanities, arts, and social sciences.

EEO Statement: The LSU Agricultural Center is a statewide campus of the LSU System and provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.