



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES
ENTOMOLOGY
VIRGINIA TECH.

Entomology
170 Drillfield Drive
Price Hall, Room 216
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
(540) 231-6341
timkring@vt.edu

Position Announcement, Virginia Tech
Director and Entomologist, Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center
Winchester, VA

The [College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#) (CALs) at [Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University](#) (Virginia Tech) is seeking a Director for the [Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center](#) (AHSAREC). This is a tenure-track position at the Associate or Professor rank with tenure home in the [Department of Entomology](#). The Director is expected to maintain a highly productive research and Extension program in entomology with relevance to the vision and mission of AHSAREC.

AHSAREC pursues a vision of excellence in the land grant mission, including discovery, development, evaluation, and dissemination of technical information critical to Virginia's commercial fruit and value-added horticultural food crop industries. Through research and Extension educational programs, the development of research-based solutions for sustainable production systems and technologies are translated to increase public knowledge of horticultural opportunities and benefits, train new leaders and expand workforce capacity, and the economic value of fruit production and practices in Virginia.

The primary responsibility of the Director, who serves as the administrative head of AHSAREC, is to provide unit leadership and support for regional, national and international excellence in integrated research and Extension programs appropriate for AHSAREC's vision and mission. The Director has the unique opportunity to envision new directions and initiatives of relevance to the national and global funding priorities in support of regional stakeholders and Virginia's agricultural economy. The Director will be instrumental in identifying new research and Extension program opportunities, expanding faculty involvement and leadership, and garnering stakeholder support and engagement in pursuit of the vision. Leadership activities include, but are not limited to, recruiting new faculty and facilitating the professional development of faculty, staff, and graduate students; developing and implementing short- and long-term strategic plans for the Center; managing the Center's human, physical, and financial resources; and facilitating intra- and inter-departmental/AREC teamwork among faculty and staff and collaboration with other units on campus. The Director is responsible for providing or coordinating mentoring and professional development opportunities as well as providing annual evaluation of AHSAREC faculty and staff members, in pursuance of enriching the AHSAREC community and promoting collaboration, programmatic, and unit excellence. The Director will expand AHSAREC's capacity in digital and precision agriculture in support of the [VT SmartFarm Innovation Network](#)[®].

The Director will maintain a liaison with agricultural leaders and producers in accordance with AHSAREC's mission and goals and in support and alignment with CALs strategic plan and the

mission and vision for both [Virginia Cooperative Extension](#) (VCE) and [Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station](#). VCE operates with leadership in two land grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, with four district directors, VCE Extension program teams, and 107 offices throughout the state. The Director facilitates AHSAREC involvement in interdisciplinary and multi-institutional research through the [Virginia Tech Destination Areas](#) and involvement of federal and state initiatives and priorities, such as the CALS [Center for Advanced Innovation in Agriculture](#) (CAIA), [Commonwealth CyberInitiative](#) (CCI), [Growth Opportunities in Virginia](#) (GO Virginia) and [Vibrant Virginia](#), consistent with the AHSAREC vision and mission. The Director will collaborate with appropriate academic department heads on tenure and promotion actions for faculty positions.

The successful candidate's extension and research focus should be relevant to **fruit entomology as it relates to the ecology and management of arthropod pests of horticultural crops, including fruit crops, the green industry, and others**. The diversity of natural and agricultural fruit cropping systems across the Commonwealth and throughout the mid-Atlantic region requires an ecological approach in managing the pests that move freely among habitats. The AHSAREC entomology research and Extension programs will engage with the SmartFarm Innovation Network[®], effectively collaborating across the AREC and Blacksburg campus faculty through CAIA and through other initiatives as appropriate. **Examples of possible research and Extension areas include (not limited to):**

- UAV-assisted and remote sensing of pests and pathogens for developing pest presence/prevalence and/or injury symptoms, predictive models and pest and disease management strategies
- Development/refinement and validation of IPM tools and tactics for established and invasive insect pests of horticultural crops, including fruit crops, the green industry, and others, based on pest ecology and behavior
- Refinement and validation of predictive insect pest phenology models under changing climatic conditions
- Insecticide resistance monitoring and management for key pests of horticultural crops, including fruit crops, the green industry, and others
- Evaluation of novel insecticide chemistries
- Organic alternatives for arthropod pest management
- Biological control of arthropod pests in tree fruits and wine grapes
- IPM of arthropod pests in protected horticultural systems such as high-tunnels and indoor farm systems

Expectations include successful recruiting and mentoring of diverse graduate students to degree completion, contributing to undergraduate experiential learning opportunities, working collaboratively with Virginia Cooperative Extension agents and specialists, and developing cooperative partnerships with external stakeholders. Extension programming will include delivery of research-based educational programs via contemporary training and teaching materials that will serve relevant commodity and agribusiness industries of Virginia, the region, nationally, and globally. This position will also support the mission of the land-grant university by participating in outreach activities and engaging local, state, and regional stakeholders.

Participation in institutional and professional service activities that align with the candidate's strengths will also be expected. In combination, the successful candidate's career will contribute to the national and global recognition of AHSAREC and expansion of Virginia Tech's reputation in this domain.

The Director reports administratively to the Director of VAES. Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. This position is 50% research and 50% Extension.

Required Qualifications:

- An earned Ph.D. in entomology, agriculture or related discipline that will support a highly competitive research and Extension program in entomology;
- Demonstrated effective professional leadership, interpersonal skills, and administrative experience, including personnel and fiscal management;
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively (oral, written) with individuals at all levels and from diverse backgrounds within the university, industry, and public sectors;
- Familiarity with working in a farm-based research facility;
- Strong commitment to applied research, Extension programming, and long-term sustainability of agriculture;
- Agricultural research and/or Extension program experience or equivalent industry experience;
- Demonstrated record of scholarly achievement in entomology, through industry and/or academic research and outreach/Extension, warranting appointment at the rank of a tenured associate professor or professor; applicants are not required to have attained full professor status prior to applying. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, scholarship, experience in obtaining extramural support from commodity and industry groups, governmental agencies, and/or foundations.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Research and Extension accomplishments and impacts in insect ecology and/or pest management experience with horticultural crops, including fruit crops, the green industry, and others;
- Demonstrated research and/or Extension programming that contributes to the growth of digital agriculture and the SmartFarm Innovation Network®
- Demonstrated creativity in developing and implementing programmatic vision of relevance to research and Extension programs;
- Experience in developing and implementing strategic plans;
- Capacity for advancing innovation for applied agriculture research and Extension programming;
- Evidence of effective faculty, staff, and graduate student recruitment and mentoring.

Physical and Environmental Demands and Conditional Terms

- Working or traversing uneven terrain
- Hand/finger dexterity
- The successful candidate will be required to have a criminal conviction check
- Must have a driver's license check
- Must have an acceptable and safe driving record

The Director of AHSAREC is responsible for ensuring that facilities and research plots are cared for and maintained by appropriate scheduling of responsible staff. Some seasons require longer times in the field and some travel and coordination of programming and field days will be required. Travel to other meetings (Blacksburg (campus), other ARECs, professional meetings) is a part of this role.

The AHSAREC is located in a rural setting near the town of Winchester, Virginia (Frederick County) in the northern region of the Shenandoah Valley, and is centrally located among major cities including Washington, DC (90 miles), Baltimore, MD (110 miles), and Richmond, VA (145 miles), the capital of Virginia. AHSAREC has the opportunity to influence Virginia's and the Mid-Atlantic agricultural and food economy and agricultural tourism through creative visioning and strategic implementation. In the U.S., Virginia ranks 8th in wine production, 6th in number of wineries, and 9th in economic impact by state at \$5B. With farm cash receipts value of \$28.6M for apples, \$19M for grapes, and \$9.2M for peaches, these commodities rank 12th and 18th and 19th among farm commodities in Virginia. AHSAREC provides significant research and Extension support to these industries, contributing to the bioeconomy of Virginia.

AHSAREC, one of 11 ARECs in the VAES system and is the focal research and Extension center for horticultural crops, including fruit crops. In addition to the Director, AHSAREC has 4 tenure-track faculty positions (2 plant pathologists, tree fruits horticulturist, and viticulturist), an Extension enologist, 5 staff, and 4 research associates and visiting scientists. The center includes 124-acre farm with over 40 field plots. The primary facility includes research labs, offices, meeting rooms in support of formal and non-formal education and Extension programs. The facility includes a 100-person classroom and is equipped to accommodate video conferencing. AHSAREC faculty actively engage in the CALS Center for Advanced Innovation in Agriculture, in which the Virginia Tech [SmartFarm Innovation Network](#)[®] is a principal research platform.

Founded in 1872 as a land-grant college, Virginia Tech (<http://www.vt.edu/>) is the most comprehensive university in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is among the top research universities in the nation. Today, Virginia Tech's ten colleges are dedicated to quality, innovation, and results through teaching, research, and outreach activities. At its 2,600-acre main campus located in Blacksburg and other campus centers in Northern Virginia, Southwest Virginia, Hampton Roads, Richmond, Southside, and Roanoke, Virginia Tech enrolls more than 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students from all 50 states and more than 100 countries in 180 academic degree programs. Through its mission of research, teaching, and extension, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (www.cals.vt.edu) has been instrumental in helping

agriculture and other life science industries make significant strides in improving people's lives. Today's College is adapting to society's expectations and needs by focusing its resources and efforts on improving human health and nutrition, sustaining agriculture and the environment, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels, and developing cures for devastating and debilitating diseases. Nearly 3,000 students are pursuing degrees in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. CALS is administered by the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the Associate Dean and Director of the Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and Director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, the Associate Dean and Director of CALS Global Programs, and the Associate Dean of Academic Programs. The College has 9 academic units, 11 Agricultural Research and Extension Centers (ARECs) and a presence in every county in the Commonwealth through [Virginia Cooperative Extension](#). Today, in addition to two- year associate degrees, the college grants bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Virginia Tech also engages in cooperative work with Virginia State University in Petersburg. Virginia Tech has a strong commitment to the principles of diversity, and in that spirit seeks a broad spectrum of candidates including women, people of color, and people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities desiring accommodations in the application process should notify us by the review date.

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law.

Application Instructions

Individuals wishing to apply should go online to jobs.vt.edu and search for Job # 518008. Review of applications will begin on **February 7, 2022** and continue until a suitable candidate is selected.

Applications should include:

- The completed on-line application;
- A formal, concise cover letter summarizing the applicant's qualifications fitting the position;
- A statement of vision (3-pages max) for the Director role of a nationally and internationally recognized off-campus Agricultural Research and Extension Center, including leadership style and values;
- A 2- to 3-page statement of future (by 2030) research plans and Extension philosophy and programming interests, including how the applicant will complement existing Virginia Tech research and Extension programs;
- A current curriculum vitae which includes a biographical sketch, service, administrative/management experience, and a complete list of research and Extension publications, student mentored, and grants; and
- three (3) names and contact information of references who can assess the candidate's qualifications for this position.

For Questions Regarding the Search, Contact:

Susan E. Duncan, Ph.D., R.D., Co-Chair
Associate Director, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station
Professor, Food Science and Technology
Director, Center for Advanced Innovation in Agriculture
Virginia Tech
duncans@vt.edu

Contact Information:

Matthew Chappell, Ph.D., Co-Chair
Director, Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center
Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences
Virginia Tech
chappell@vt.edu

Tim Kring, Ph.D., Department Head
Department of Entomology
Virginia Tech
timkring@vt.edu