Post-Doctoral Scholar Opportunity
Dept. of Entomology and Nematology
University of California, Davis

Small Fruit Insect IPM Post-Doctoral Position

A post-doctoral position to study the biology and management of insect pest populations in California's small fruit agricultural systems is available at UC Davis. This work will be based in the laboratory of Dr. Frank Zalom, Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616.

This post-doctoral position is currently vacant and available for a term of two years focusing on spotted wing drosophila (SWD) population biology, management, and insecticide resistance in California. The first spotted wing drosophila field infestation in the western hemisphere was found in the Monterey Bay area of California in 2008, and the insect has since become widespread throughout North America and Canada as well as Europe. It is a major pest of California berry and cherry crops. Ongoing collaborative laboratory and field studies at UC Davis by Professors Joanna Chiu, Frank Zalom, and several of their graduate students and post-doctoral scholars have led to publication of over two dozen journal articles to date. Laboratory studies will include research on insecticide resistant lines established from field collections, and application of entomopathogenic nematodes used as part of an IPM program. Field studies on these and other management approaches will be conducted in California's major berry production regions, especially in the Monterey Bay area, and in the northern San Joaquin Valley where SWD is also a major pest of sweet cherries. The Zalom lab also works on insect pests of many other fruit pests and crops including grapes, almonds, olives, and stone fruit with emphasis changing among them from time to time depending on available funding, presenting an outstanding opportunity for additional research and extension experiences.

The successful candidate is expected to hold a recent (received within the last four years) Ph.D. in Entomology or related research area from a U.S. university with field research experience and an interest in working in a diverse and intensive specialty crops agricultural landscape. The candidate is expected to work independently, but as part of a team that includes students, other researchers, county Cooperative Extension Advisors, and professionals involved in production of these crops. Ability to plan and execute hypothesis-driven research projects that lead to publications in peer-reviewed journals is essential. Since the candidate will join a vibrant ongoing research program the opportunity to author journal articles is excellent. Data analysis skills are desirable as is experience with insect colony maintenance. Knowledge of biological control using entomopathogens and/or use of and safe handling of insecticides is also desirable. Some experience in using molecular techniques within a research project is desirable, but not required.

Excellent oral and written communications in English are required, as is the ability to communicate in nontechnical terms to growers and crop consultants. The successful candidate is expected to obtain a California driver license to drive to study sites throughout California. Interested candidates should send a letter of interest, CV, and names and contact information for three references to fgzalom@ucdavis.edu. Please include "SWD Postdoc Application" in the subject line of the email.

Salary is commensurate with experience, consistent with University of California policy. The position carries benefits, including healthcare, applicable to postdoctoral positions at the University of California, Davis. The University of California is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

Closing Date: The position is currently available, and applications will be reviewed after October 6, 2023. The recruitment will remain open, and applications accepted until a suitable candidate is identified.