

# Molecular Biologist (Plants)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Crop Improvement & Protection Research Unit

## Summary

This position is located with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Pacific West Area (PWA), Crops Improvement & Protection Research Unit in Salinas, California and will be responsible for providing research support to the Research Leader.

The initial appointment will be 13 months with ability to extend up to 10 years. Decision to extend will be up to the Hiring Manager and the needs of the unit.

## Overview

Accepting applications

### Open & closing dates

🕒 10/12/2023 to 10/17/2023

### Salary

\$57,778 - \$91,873 per year

### Pay scale & grade

GS 7 - 9

### Location

1 vacancy in the following location:

📍 Salinas, CA

### Remote job

No

### Telework eligible

Yes—as determined by the agency policy.

### Travel Required

Not required

### Relocation expenses reimbursed

No

### Appointment type

Term - 13 months

### Work schedule

Full-time -

### Service

Competitive

### Promotion potential

9

### Job family (Series)

[0401 General Natural Resources Management And Biological Sciences \(/Search/Results?i=0401\)](#)

### Supervisory status

No

### Security clearance

[Not Required \(/Help/fag/job-announcement/security-clearances/\)](#)

### Drug test

No

### Position sensitivity and risk

## Trust determination process

[Suitability/Fitness](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/fag/job-announcement/security-clearances/)  
[\(https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/fag/job-announcement/security-clearances/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/fag/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

---

## Announcement number

ARS-D23PWA-12125069-mds

## Control number

754517800

# This job is open to



### [Career transition \(CTAP, ICTAP, RPL\)](#)

Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.



### [The public](#)

U.S. Citizens, Nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.

## Clarification from the agency

US Citizens and Nationals; no prior Federal experience is required.

# Duties

- Duties listed represent the full performance level of the position.
- Performs a range of experiments involving application of molecular biology and bioinformatics and related methods with a particular emphasis on plant viruses and their interactions with host plants and insect vectors.
- Plans and carries out individual experiments within prescribed approaches.
- Performs tests and analyses by applying established analytical methods and procedures or by operating an automated analytical system according to established operating procedures.
- Maintains official laboratory notebooks recording the methods and procedures used, any modifications of methodology applied, and the results.
- Prepares results of findings from experiments conducted, including initial interpretation of significance to the overall project, for inclusion in manuscripts and technical reports.

# Requirements

## Conditions of Employment

- You must be a US Citizen or US National
- Males born after 12/31/1959 must be Selective Service registered or exempt
- Subject to satisfactory adjudication of background investigation and/or fingerprint check
- Successful completion of one-year probationary period, unless previously served.
- Direct Deposit: Per Public Law 104-134 all Federal employees are required to have federal payments made by direct deposit to their financial institution
- Successfully pass the E-Verify employment verification check. To learn more about E-Verify, including your rights and responsibilities, visit E-Verify at <https://www.e-verify.gov/>

## Qualifications

Applicants must meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements by the closing date of the announcement including specialized experience and/or education, as defined below.

### **Basic Requirements for the GS-07 & GS-09 grade levels:**

**A. Degree:** biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, chemistry, or related disciplines appropriate to the position.

**OR**

**B. Combination of education and experience:** Courses equivalent to a major, as shown above, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

**AND**

**GS-07:**

**Specialized Experience:** Specialized experience is experience directly related to the position to be filled and which provided the applicant with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the duties of the job.

**Experience:** The qualification requirements for this position at the **GS-07** grade level includes one-year specialized experience at the **GS-05** grade level, or its non-Federal equivalent, assisting in molecular biological experiments related to plant pathology, virology, and/or genetics; maintaining laboratory equipment and instrumentation; and recording experimental data.

**OR**

**Education:** Successful completion of 1 year of graduate-level education leading to a master's degree or master's or equivalent graduate degree in a field directly related to the duties of the position. Related degrees may include plant pathology, genetics, molecular biology, horticulture, plant biology, biochemistry, or other related biological sciences.

**OR**

**Superior Academic Achievement (SAA):** Completion of a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree, with Superior Academic Achievement (S.A.A.). (1) A grade point average of B (a GPA of 3.0 or higher) for all completed undergraduate courses, or those completed in the last 2 full years of undergraduate study; OR (2) A grade point average of B (a GPA of 3.5 or higher) for all courses in your major field of study, or those courses in your major completed in the last two years of undergraduate study; OR (3) Rank in the upper one-third of your class in the college, university, or major subdivision; OR (4) Membership in a national honor society (other than freshman honor societies) recognized by the Association of College Honor Societies.

**Combination of Education & Experience:** A qualifying combination of graduate education and experience as described above.

#### GS-09:

**Experience:** The qualification requirements for this position at the **GS-09** grade level includes one-year specialized experience at the **GS-07** grade level, or its non-Federal equivalent, assisting in molecular biological experiments related to plant pathology, virology, and/or genetics; maintaining laboratory equipment and instrumentation; recording experimental data; and using experimental data to prepare scientific reports.

#### OR

**Education:** 2 years of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to a master's degree or master's or equivalent graduate degree, if directly related. Related degrees may include plant pathology, genetics, molecular biology, horticulture, plant biology, biochemistry, or other related biological sciences.

#### OR

**Combination of Education & Experience:** A qualifying combination of graduate education and experience as described above.

Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religious; spiritual; community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

## Education

Please see above for education qualification requirement information.

## Additional information

- Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Reemployment Priority List (RPL), or Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP): Visit the [OPM](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/employee-guide-to-career-transition/) (<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/employee-guide-to-career-transition/>) website for information on how to apply as a CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP eligible. To exercise selection priority for this vacancy, CTAP/RPL/ICTAP candidates must meet the basic eligibility requirements and all selective factors. CTAP/ICTAP candidates must be rated and determined to be well qualified (or above) based on an evaluation of the competencies listed in the How You Will Be Evaluated section. When assessed through a score-based category rating method, CTAP/ICTAP applicants must receive a rating of at least 85 out of a possible 100.
- Recruitment or Relocation Incentive may be authorized. The final determination to pay an incentive will be made by the hiring official at the time of job offer.
- If you are selected for a position with further promotion potential, you will be placed under a career development plan, and may be non-competitively promoted if you successfully complete the requirements and if recommended by management. However, promotion is neither implied nor guaranteed.
- This position may be eligible to telework up to four days per week, based upon the duties of the position. This position may also be eligible for flexible work arrangements as determined by agency policy and any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

## Benefits

A career with the U.S. government provides employees with a comprehensive benefits package. As a federal employee, you and your family will have access to a range of benefits that are designed to make your federal career very rewarding. [Learn more about federal benefits](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/benefits/) (<https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/benefits/>).

Eligibility for benefits depends on the type of position you hold and whether your position is full-time, part-time or intermittent. Contact the hiring agency for more information on the specific benefits offered.

## How You Will Be Evaluated

You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above.

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Delegated Examining Procedures and USDA policy using category rating. Applicants who meet basic minimum qualifications will be placed in one of *two or three* categories: Best Qualified, Well Qualified, or Qualified. Within these categories, applicants eligible for veteran's preference will receive selection priority over non-veterans. Category placement will be determined based on applicants' quality of experience and the extent they possess the following knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) or competencies:

- Applies Technology to Tasks, Molecular Biology, and Research
  - Applies Technology to Tasks
  - Molecular Biology
  - Research

Your application, including the online Assessment Questionnaire, will be reviewed to determine if you meet (a) minimum qualification requirements and (b) the resume supports the answers provided to the job-specific questions. Your resume must clearly support your responses to all the questions addressing experience and education relevant to this position. Those determined to be in the best qualified category will be referred to the selecting official for consideration.

Note: If, after reviewing your resume and/or supporting documentation, a determination is made that you have inflated your qualifications and or experience, your score may be adjusted to more accurately reflect your abilities, or you may be found ineligible. Please follow all instructions carefully. Errors or omissions may affect your rating. Providing inaccurate information on Federal documents could be grounds for non-selection or disciplinary action up to including removal from the Federal service.

Clicking the link below will present a preview of the application form; i.e. the online questionnaire. The application form link below will only provide a preview and does not initiate the application process. To initiate the online application process, click the "Apply" button to the right.

To view the application form, visit: <https://apply.usastaffing.gov/ViewQuestionnaire/12125069>

## Required Documents

The following documents are required for your applicant package to be complete. Our office cannot be responsible for incompatible software, your system failure, etc. Encrypted documents will not be accepted. Failure to submit required, legible documents may result in loss of consideration.

- ## How to Apply

### Agency contact information



Agricultural Research Service  
800 Buchanan Street  
Albany, CA 94710  
US

## Next steps

## Fair & Transparent

### Reasonable accommodation policy

[\(/Help/equal-employment-opportunity/\)](/Help/equal-employment-opportunity/)

[Financial suitability](#)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/financial-suitability/\)](/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/financial-suitability/)

[New employee probationary period](#)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/probationary-period/\)](/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/probationary-period/)

[Privacy Act](#)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/privacy-act/\)](/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/privacy-act/)

[\(/Help/reasonable-accommodation/\)](/Help/reasonable-accommodation/)

[Selective Service](#)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/selective-service/\)](/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/selective-service/)

[Signature and false statements](#)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/signature-false-statements/\)](/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/signature-false-statements/)

[Social security number request](#)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/social-security-number/\)](/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/social-security-number/)