



DEPARTMENT OF
**ENTOMOLOGY AND
PLANT PATHOLOGY**

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Extension Assistant

Insect Diagnostician

**Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University**

Description:

The Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at Oklahoma State University is seeking an Extension Associate for arthropod diagnostics (100% Extension). To identify all types of arthropods from structures, landscapes, nurseries, trees, orchards, etc.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Provide regular identification of ant species in support of the imported fire ant survey.
- Answer questions about arthropod biology and integrated pest management options for control.
- Identify and report invasive arthropods as needed to appropriate state and federal agencies.
- Create and develop presentations for Master Gardeners, plant professionals, commodity groups and other audiences as needed regarding arthropods and management.
- Receive plant disease and arthropod samples and enter data in the Plant Diagnostic Information System (PDIS), an online laboratory information management system. Scan and upload diagnostic data and associated documents into a database.
- Develop educational materials including fact sheets, handouts, website content, pest e-alert articles and presentations. Receive phone calls and emails. Contact and collect additional information from clients by phone or email.
- Occasional plot maintenance.

This position is directly associated with the Plant Disease Insect Diagnostic Laboratory (PDIDL) a service laboratory within the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. This position will be expected to:

- Assist in managing lab accounts and ordering supplies.
- Provide additional administrative support for the lab, as needed.

- Assist in daily maintenance of the laboratory including cleaning and general maintenance of the lab space.
- Receive and restock supplies as needed.
- Dispose of biohazardous material by steam sterilization.
- Prepare media and pour Petri dishes.
- Aid in supervision of hourly employees.
- Occasional field work including weed control, pruning, and irrigation.

Qualifications:

Required: Bachelor of Science in Entomology, Agriculture, Biology or a related field, with 1-2 years of laboratory experience working with arthropods. Valid driver's license.

Expectations include:

- Ability to identify all types of insects from all sources (gardens, home, landscape, orchards, tree farms, nursery, etc.).
- Knowledge of pesticides and ability to provide recommendations of insecticides for pest management.
- Ability to multi-task and prioritize job responsibilities. Attention to detail, accuracy, and organization.
- Capable of reading all types of research articles, publications from other universities, and developing the content into useful handouts, factsheets or other resources.
- The ability to use molecular diagnostic methods (PCR, sequencing) as part of arthropod identification is preferred.
- Ability to prepare written diagnostic reports with diagnostic results and management recommendations.
- Ability to develop and present educational content including presentations, fact sheets and handouts about arthropods.
- Occasional field work may be required to collect arthropods or to assist with maintaining research plots.

Preferred: Master's degree in Entomology, Agriculture, Biology, or a related field and with 1 year laboratory experience working with arthropods.

Working Conditions:

May require working before 8 am or after 5 pm, with periodic weekend duties for Extension activities. Travel around the state of Oklahoma to deliver presentations. Some evening and weekend presentations are expected. Travel in Oklahoma to collect or pick-up plant disease or insect samples. Ability to lift/carry 40 pounds. Work with live plants and cultures may require occasional work outside of normal working hours.

Exposure risks include:

- Use ethanol and bleach for cleaning.
- Gel electrophoresis equipment using ethidium bromide.
- Some insects may contain bloodborne pathogens.

- Caution to prevent bites and stings when live specimens are submitted to the lab.
- Proper PPE is provided to work with laboratory samples, chemicals and equipment.

Application Procedures:

Applications must be submitted online at:

<https://jobs.okstate.edu> (search by keyword Requisition ID: req19171 or Position Number: BS9548)

Applications should include the following: (1) a letter of application stating interest in this position and qualifications, (2) a curriculum vita, (3) a personal statement of Extension, (4) experiences working with Extension clientele, and (5) list of three references to contact.

Review of applications will begin on February 28, 2025, and the position will remain open until a suitable candidate accepts the position. For questions, contact Jen Olson, Chair, Search and Screen Committee 405-744-9961 (jennifer.olson@okstate.edu)

For more information about the department go to <http://epp.okstate.edu>.

Oklahoma State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity/E-verify employer committed to diversity and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment and will not be discriminated against based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or protected veteran status. OSU is a VEVRAA Federal Contractor and desires priority referrals of protected veterans for its openings. For more information, please visit <http://eeo.okstate.edu>.