



NOTICE OF VACANCY
Postdoctoral Research Associate (Social Scientist)
Department of Crop of Soil Sciences
Washington State University

Position Title: Postdoctoral Research Associate (Social Scientist)

Position Summary: Neonicotinoids (a class of systemic insecticides) have been a critical component of insect management in potato production in the United States since the mid-1990s. However, neonicotinoids have come under increasing scrutiny because of their unintended effects on non-target organisms, especially pollinators. Given possible restrictions of neonicotinoids for U.S. potato production, understanding how growers make decisions during times of regulatory uncertainty is key to designing effective, environmentally sustainable alternatives. The Postdoctoral Research Associate (Social Scientist) will explore the factors that affect U.S. potato growers' pest management decisions, the barriers and bridges to transitioning from seed-applied neonicotinoids to alternative (often information-intensive) practices, and the impacts of such transitions on growers, the potato industry, and society in general. The Postdoctoral Research Associate (Social Scientist) will focus primarily on the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. This work is part of a large, multi-institutional, multidisciplinary project ("Enhancing Integrated Insect Pest Management Strategies for U.S. Potato Production Systems") funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). The Postdoctoral Research Associate (Social Scientist) will work as part of the Socioeconomic Working Group headed by Dr. Jessica Goldberger (Rural Sociologist) in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences (<http://css.wsu.edu>) in the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (<http://cahnrs.wsu.edu>). The Socioeconomic Working Group also includes Dr. Katherine Dentzman (Rural Sociologist, Iowa State University) who will be hiring a Postdoctoral Research Associate to focus on potato grower decision-making in the Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States. Dr. Goldberger, Dr. Dentzman, and the two Postdoctoral Research Associates will collaborate extensively throughout the project. The Washington State University position is a temporary, 12-month, full-time position with the ability to renew annually, pending funding and successful review and progress.

Responsibilities Include:

- Conduct in-depth qualitative data collection (interviews, focus groups, site visits, participant observation, etc.) with commercial potato growers, pest control advisors, crop consultants, Extension specialists, and other stakeholders
- Develop and implement surveys of potato growers and intermediaries (pest control advisors, crop consultants, Extension specialists, etc.)
- Analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data
- Prepare project reports and manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals
- Prepare and deliver oral presentations to diverse audiences
- Collaborate with other members of the Socioeconomic Working Group

Required Qualifications:

- Earned Ph.D. in rural sociology, sociology, or closely related social science field within the last five years
- Experience with qualitative research methods
- Experience with survey design, management, and data analysis
- Strong analytical and statistical skills
- Willingness to travel within the U.S. Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, Idaho)
- Ability to work independently as well as with a multidisciplinary team of researchers, Extension specialists, and other project participants
- Interest in agriculture, farmer decision-making, insect management, diffusion of innovations, environmental impacts of agriculture, and/or sustainability
- Excellent organizational and collaboration skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills

Preferred Qualifications:

- Evidence of high-quality publications and presentations
- Experience working in large, multidisciplinary research/outreach teams
- Familiarity with specialty crop production and/or insect management decision-making

Location: The primary location of the position is the Washington State University (WSU) Pullman campus (<http://www.wsu.edu>). With a population of approximately 34,000, Pullman offers a friendly, small-town atmosphere. Located 75 miles south of metropolitan Spokane, Pullman is a short drive away from the scenic Idaho Panhandle and Wallowa Mountains of northeastern Oregon. The rolling hills of the Palouse offer a wide range of outdoor activities. The area provides ample opportunity to enjoy the cultural and academic hubs of both WSU and the University of Idaho (located nine miles away in Moscow, ID). To learn more about the Pullman community, visit: <http://www.pullmanchamber.com>.

Start Date: Negotiable

Salary and Benefits: Salary range: \$60,000-\$64,000. Benefits include health/dental insurance, vacation/sick leave, retirement plans, and access to all WSU facilities.

Application Procedures: Please submit a cover letter, current curriculum vitae, copies of academic transcripts (submit as one PDF document), writing sample (e.g., journal article or dissertation chapter), and names, mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers for three professional references to <https://hrs.wsu.edu/jobs/> (position #R-10543) by January 15, 2024 (closing date). For more information about this position, please contact Dr. Jessica Goldberger, Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, at (509) 335-8540 or jgoldberger@wsu.edu. WSU is an EEO/AA/ADD employer.