

CAREER OPPORTUNITY: The USDA-ARS Office of National Programs (ONP) is searching for a National Program Leader (NPL) in Plant Health to provide national and international leadership in coordinating agricultural research programs relating to diseases of agronomic and horticultural crops. This position is within the Crop Production and Protection (CPP) division at ONP at the George Washington Carver Center in Beltsville, MD. The CPP team includes 9 of the 22 ARS NPLs and has the largest research portfolio in ARS in terms of research funding (\$618M/year) and projects (287 of the 690 research projects in ARS).



THE MISSION: The four ARS National Programs in CPP deliver science-based information, genetic resources, and technologies for increased crop productivity, economically and environmentally sustainable methods of crop production, and protection from plant diseases and pests. This National

Program Leader (NPL) position is focused on plant health and diseases affecting the diversity of crops in ARS research. ARS conducts research on more than 60 different crop commodities grown by U.S. farmers using many different production systems and environments. The Plant Disease NPL oversees research projects in National Program 303 (Plant Diseases) includes 53 projects and 134 scientists with a \$98 million budget. Major Duties include providing technical leadership to ARS in the area of plant health, coordinating ARS research on plant disease at the national and international levels, serving as spokesperson and subject matter expert for ARS on matters of plant health, and providing fiscal planning and budget initiatives for high priority research areas.



- The position is located in Beltsville, MD. Remote work is not available.
- Top Secret security clearance is required.
- Travel to visit ARS locations to meet scientists and stakeholders, and travel to national and international meetings is encouraged and supported.
- Teamwork with other NPLs, ARS administrators, and ARS line-management is critical for success.
- Expected to serve on advisory boards and scientific working groups at the agency and departmental level and work collaboratively with government agencies such as EPA, APHIS, and NIFA.
- Ability to respond accurately and quickly to requests from USDA, congress, and White House inquiries.
- Need strong communication skills with stakeholders (farmers, growers, producers, and the general public).
- Desired expertise in plant pathology includes:
 - National Biodefense Strategies for emerging pests and disease from around the world, especially with regards to the impacts of climate change and global trade.
 - Biocontrol, gene editing, and other innovative strategies to improve plant health.
 - Integrated crop protection strategies for advanced production systems with automation and new plant varieties.



For more details and to apply, please visit USAJOBS.gov, Announcement Number ARS-S24Y-12486847-ST (control number 800897600). The announcement closes on August 9, 2024.