

AGRONOMIST II

This is advanced professional, technical and administrative work involving the development, design, and direction of a statewide service program in Soil Testing or Plant, Waste, and Solution Analysis in the Agronomic Services Division in the Department of Agriculture.

Employees provide advanced technical support for the respective programs by establishing a scientific database used to interpret analytical results of soil samples or plant, waste, and solution samples. These analyses are used to make recommendations on management strategy, the utilization of farm, municipal and industrial waste, irrigation water and hydroponic solutions for profitable crop production. Work includes responsibility for research in plant nutrition, soil chemistry and fertilizers, and continuing public education. Employees supervise and direct chemistry laboratories for their respective programs. Employees have the authority to make deviations or modifications to established procedures as necessary, or to adopt new methodology for the laboratories. Work includes developing program objectives, goals, and priorities, and developing requests for program funding. Work requires employees to stay current in research literature and regional and national problems. Employees supervise the respective laboratory supervisor and share in the supervision of a professional agronomist. Employees are supervised by the Agronomic Services Division Director and are evaluated through periodic conferences, observation of work and overall program effectiveness. Employees perform related work as required.

I. SUPERVISORY/MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS:

Planning - Employees develop program goals, objectives, operational procedures, and plan and develop budget requests for personnel, equipment, and supplies.

Organizing and Directing - Employees assign special projects to subordinates and assist the laboratory supervisor in assigning work to laboratory personnel and in determining priorities in the rush season. Employees may assign special projects to field personnel. Changes in methods, procedures, workflow, and assignments in the occur infrequently; however, the Plant, Waste, and Solution Analysis Program is experiencing more frequent change due to the increasing emphasis on environmental quality.

Budgeting - Employees determine the materials, supplies, equipment and personnel needed to carry out program operations and submit requests to the Director. Work may include the management of a grant or special project budget.

Training - Employees approve on-the-job training programs, provide the necessary theoretical support to the laboratory supervisors, and evaluate the training needs of staff based on direct review and input from the laboratory supervisors. Employees present workshops and programs to county grower or commodity group meetings to inform users of the services or methods to obtain maximum utilization of the services, and provide technical training as appropriate to the field personnel.

Setting Work Standards - Employees research and establish program policies, work standards, and procedures, and implement or assist the laboratory supervisor with the implementation. Employees also establish related work standards and procedures for respective program areas for the field personnel.

Reviewing Work - Employees monitor the work of staff through reports and direct observation of work-in-progress. Employees evaluate the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the program activities and make modifications.

Counseling and Disciplining - Employees counsel with staff regarding work performance, issue oral warnings, and recommend more serious disciplinary actions.

Performing Other Personnel Functions - Employees interview applicants, recommend selection of permanent staff to the Director, assign and reassign work, conduct performance appraisals, and recommend salary increases and promotions.

II. SCOPE AND NATURE OF WORK SUPERVISED:

Dynamics of Work Supervised - The work environment is usually stable with only occasional changes in methods, procedures, or equipment. Methodology and procedures in the Plant, Waste, and Solution Analysis Program are changing more frequently due to the evolution this program is experiencing. Employees are responsible for recognizing the need for change and implementing the same.

Variety of Work Supervised - Employees are responsible for statewide agronomic programs involving the supervision of agronomic and analytical chemistry work.

Number of Employees Responsible For - Employees responsible for varies from five to twenty professional, laboratory and office support personnel.

III. EXTENT OF SUPERVISION RECEIVED: Employees discuss new programs and changes in procedures and workload in existing programs with the Director. Employees independently research, plan, and develop new programs and special projects with the involvement of other staff. Work is reviewed informally through meetings and discussions regarding the status and effectiveness of projects.

IV. SPECIAL ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Supervision of Shift Operations - N/A

Fluctuating Work Force - There is a slight fluctuation in the work force due to the seasonal nature of the work.

Physical Dispersion of Employees - N/A

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of soil chemistry; plant, waste, and solution analysis; fertilizers; and crop and soil management. Thorough knowledge of analytical techniques involved in soil testing or plant, waste, and solution analysis. Considerable knowledge of environmental conditions and agricultural practices in the State. Ability to plan, direct, and supervise a soil testing or plant, waste, and solution analysis program. Ability to analyze and draw valid and applicable conclusions from conditions observed in the field and from research experiments. Ability to prepare analytical reports and to organize and present scientific information in a clear and concise manner. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with farmers, homeowners, and other agricultural groups.

Minimum Training and Experience Requirements - Doctoral degree in agronomy, agricultural science, horticultural science, soil science, plant nutrition, crop science or a closely related curriculum from an appropriately accredited institution and two years experience in advisory, experimental or educational aspects of soil management; or an equivalent combination of education and experience (soils role). Doctoral degree in agronomy, agricultural science, horticultural science, plant nutrition, plant physiology, crop science or soil science from an appropriately accredited institution and two years of experience in advisory, experimental or educational aspects of plant nutrition or soil management; or an equivalent combination of education and experience (plant, waste and solution role; field services role).

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Special Note - This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA. Examples of work are primarily essential functions of the majority of positions in this class, but may not be applicable to all positions.