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NEMATOLOGIST

This is advanced professional, technical and administrative work involving the development, design, and direction of the statewide service program of nematode identification and management in the Agronomic Services Division in the Department of Agriculture.
Employee provides advanced technical support for the program, reviews nematode assays, interprets the results, and renders recommendations to the growers on management practices and the type and amount of nematicides for profitable crop production, taking into consideration the cropping history, time of sampling, field size, soil type, area of state, nematode population composition, and other relevant information provided by grower. Employee conducts field investigations and participates cooperatively with other specialists in their research efforts. Work requires the employee to stay current in research literature, and regional and national problems. Work includes developing program objectives, goals, and priorities; developing requests for program funding; and evaluating, interpreting, selecting and applying guides and references from a variety of generally established methodologies and procedures. Employee makes deviations or modifications to established procedures as necessary, or adopts new methodology for the nematology laboratory. Employee is supervised by the Agronomic Services Division Director and is evaluated through periodic conferences and observation of work for program effectiveness. Employee performs related work as assigned.

I. SUPERVISORY/MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS:

Planning - Employee develops program goals, objectives, operational procedures, and plans and develops budget requests 'for personnel, equipment, and supplies.

Organizing and Directing - Employee assigns special projects to the laboratory supervisor and assists in assigning work to laboratory personnel and determining priorities. Employee may assign special projects to the field personnel. Changes in methods, procedures, workflow, and assignments occur infrequently.

Budgeting - Employee determines the materials, supplies, equipment and personnel needed to carry out program operations and submits request to the Director. Work may include the management of a grant or special project budget.

Training - Employee develops an on-the-job training program, provides the necessary theoretical training, and evaluates the training needs of technicians based on the input provided by the laboratory supervisor. Employee presents workshops and programs to county grower or commodity group meetings to inform users of the service or methods for maximum utilization of the service, and provides technical training as appropriate to the field personnel.

Setting Work Standards - Employee researches and establishes program policies, work standards, and procedures, and implements, or assists the laboratory supervisor with the implementation. Employee also establishes related work standards and procedures for nematology program areas for the field personnel.

Reviewing Work - Employee monitors the work of staff through reports and direct observation of work-in-progress. Employee evaluates the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the program activities and makes modifications.

Counseling and Disciplining - Employee counsels staff regarding work performance, issues oral warnings, and recommends more serious disciplinary actions to the Director.

Performing Other Personnel Functions - Employee interviews applicants, recommends selection of permanent staff to the Director, assigns and reassigns work, conducts performance appraisals, and recommends salary increases and promotions.

II. SCOPE AND NATURE OF WORK SUPERVISED:

Dynamics of Work Supervised - The work environment is relatively stable with only occasional changes in methods, procedures, or equipment. Employee is responsible for recognizing the need for change and implementing the same.

Variety of Work Supervised - Employee is responsible for supervising the statewide nematology identification and control program.

Number of Employees Responsible For - Employee is immediately responsible for the Nematology Laboratory Supervisor and an office support position and assists with the direction and supervision of the five Nematology Technicians, a Laboratory Helper, and three temporary-seasonal employees.

III. EXTENT OF SUPERVISION RECEIVED: Employee discusses new programs and changes in procedures and workload in existing programs with the Director. Employee independently researches, plans, and develops 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 principals and practices of nematology, nematode morphology and taxonomy, plant pathology, and crop and soil management. Thorough knowledge of methodology, techniques, and procedures used in identifying and quantifying plant parasitic nematodes in soil and root samples. Considerable knowledge of environmental conditions and agricultural practices in the State. Ability to plan, direct, and supervise a nematode assay and control program. Ability to analyze and draw valid and applicable conclusions from conditions observed in the field and research data. 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 plant pathology, nematology or a related field including extensive coursework in phytonematology, taxonomy, diseases and biology from an appropriately accredited institution and one year of experience in experimental or educational work in nematology; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

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.