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| **JOB DESCRIPTION** |
| **SPECIFIC JOB TITLE** | FIELD TECHNICIAN - AGROECOLOGY |
| **LEVEL/BAND** | C |
| **JOB FAMILY** | SCIENCE CAPABILITIES  |
| **GENERIC ROLE TITLE** | SCIENTIFIC TECHNICIAN |
| **CONTRACT TYPE** | 5 YEAR FIXED TERM |
| **HOURS** | 37 |
| **REPORTS TO** | PRINCIPAL RESEARCH SCIENTIST - AGROECOLOGY |
| **DEPARTMENT** | PROTECTING CROPS AND THE ENVIRONMENT |
| **LOCATION** | HARPENDEN |
| **DATE**  | 28/8/2024 |
| **OVERVIEW OF ROLE/JOB PURPOSE** |
| We are looking for a field ecologist to work on an exciting new project, called ‘One Crop Health’, that aims to find more sustainable ways of controlling pests, weeds and diseases in crop fields. This post will be part of a team monitoring the pest weeds and diseases, beneficial invertebrates and soil health in commercial fields and experimental platforms to identify options for reducing the reliance on chemical pesticides. While the post is based in the UK, One Crop Health is an international project with partners in Denmark doing parallel assessments and there will be opportunities to visit Denmark to learn from the experience in the two countries.As we are taking an agroecological approach to sustainable crop protection, a background in either field agronomy (with knowledge of pests, weeds and diseases) or field ecology (plant, insect and/or disease surveys) would be suitable for this role. The most important requirements for the role are experience of plant and / or invertebrate sampling methodologies, a willingness to travel to field sites (with overnight stays) as part of a team and to spend extended periods in the field collecting samples. A full UK driving license is, therefore, essential. Taxonomical identification skills would be highly advantageous for this role, but full training will be given on unfamiliar taxa.During the crop growing season, most days will be spent in the field but there will also be periods in the lab processing samples or entering data. Some competence in Excel, Word and PowerPoint is, therefore required to help the team compile, analyse and present the results from the field work. Experience of using field surveying software (e.g. ArcSurvey, QField, Mergin Maps) would be advantageous, but all necessary training will be provided.As well as being part of the One Crop Health team, the successful candidate will also benefit from being part of a large research section, next generation Integrated Pest management and Agroecology, with exciting opportunities for professional growth and career progression. |
| **MAIN DUTIES OF ROLE** |
| **Generic Outputs** | **Weighting** | **Description of Outputs**  | **Description of Job Specific Outputs** |
| **SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT TO PROJECTS/ RESEARCH GROUPS OR SERVICE USERS** | 60% | Design of methods/software/ models/experiments and preparation and testing of data | * Survey and sample plants, invertebrates, soils and crop disease on commercial farms around the UK and on experimental platforms on site following a variety of protocols.
* Help to identify and process samples (for example separation of species caught in pit fall traps).
* Collect and enter data into databases following data management protocols.
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| **FINANCE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** | 10% | Stock control and ordering within predetermined budgetary constraints | * To order and manage consumables in communication with budget holder and project team.
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| **WORKING WITH OTHERS** | 15% | Customer relations and interactions with others | * Maintain good communication and working relations with project team and attend project and group meetings in the UK and in Denmark.
* Liaise with managers of commercial farm sites to coordinate visits.
* Liaise with Rothamsted Farm staff to coordinate sampling on field experiment sites.
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| **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF STAFF AND/OR OF A SCIENTIFIC SERVICE OR FACILITY**  | 5% | Supervising and developing more junior staff and taking responsibility for quality of work within the workshop/laboratory/ work environment | * Supervise occasional casual workers and students.
* Contribute to adaptation of protocols to improve efficiency.
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| **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE, COMMERCIALISATION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**  | 5% | Promoting the work of the Institute and/or that of the role-holder | * Help promote the One Crop Health project by attending farmer meetings and events as part of the team.
* Contribute to Rothamsted outreach events such as open days or demonstrations for schools.
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| **CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | 5% | Identification and actioning of learning objectives and the opportunities and resources available to achieve these | * Identify knowledge gaps and complete relevant training courses to build skill set required by the One Crop Health project and for professional development.
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| **PERSON SPECIFICATION AND SHORTLISTING CRITERIA\*** |
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| **LOCATION** | PROTECTING CROPS AND THE ENVIRONMENT |
| **EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS** | Essential | Desirable | How Tested?\*\* |
| 1. | Technical or scientific education to NVQ Level 3 or AS/A-Level (or equivalent). A degree or equivalent professional qualification in a relevant academic/research area would be advantageous but practical skills in field survey methodologies are equally valuable. | 🗸 |  | AF |
| 2. |  |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |  |
| **EXPERIENCE/KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS** | Essential | Desirable | How Tested?\*\* |
| 1. | Experience of surveying and sampling plants and / or invertebrates and / or crop diseases in the field.  | 🗸 |  | AF/IV |
| 2. | Willingness to travel (with overnight stays) and work for extended periods in the field.  | 🗸 |  | IV |
| 3. | Taxonomical identification skills for plants and / or invertebrates and experience of processing vegetation or invertebrate trap samples. |  | 🗸 | AF/IV |
| 4. | Knowledge of good data management practice and attention to detail. Experience of data entry and management in Excel.  |  | 🗸 | AF/IV |
| 5. | Ability to follow clearly prescribed protocols and relevant health and safety procedures.  | 🗸 |  | AF/IV |
| **BEHAVIOURS/COMPETENCIES** | How Tested?\*\* |
| 1. | **Drive for Quality**: Is motivated and committed to doing their job to the best of their ability | IV |
| 2. | **Strategic Thinking**: Aligns actions with wider goals and models | IV |
| 3. | **Creativity and Innovation**: Accepts and adapts to change; makes connections and encourages a creative environment | IV |
| 4. | **Developing Self and Others**: Identifies learning and development needs | IV |
| 5. | **Professional Conduct**: Demonstrates honesty and respect | IV |
| 6. | **Productive Relationships**: Cooperates with and supports colleagues | IV |
| 7. | **Effective Communication**: Listens and communicates clearly to others | IV |
| **GENUINE OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENTS** | Essential | Desirable | How Tested?\* |
| 1. | Full UK Driving license | 🗸 |  | AF |
| 2. | Willingness and ability to work in the field, possible in inclement weather, with occasional overnight stays. | 🗸 |  | IV |