



Special Projects Coordinator

Description and Responsibilities

The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission (WTFRC; www.treefruitresearch.com) seeks qualified candidates to serve as a member of its staff to creatively assist with unique assignments to ensure that the broader mission and goals of the WTFRC are met. This position is initially a one-year appointment with yearly extensions possible depending on progress and performance, and/or available funding.

Scope of Work

To support the WTFRC Manager by working on designated special projects which are central to the goals of the organization and integrally connected to the broader general activities for which the commission was formed. The scope of work will likely change/expand depending on the skill set of the successful applicant and the varying needs of the tree fruit industry during the period of employment.

Initial Technical and Policy Responsibilities

- Work closely with growers, WSU faculty/staff and industry partners to develop and produce a revised Technology Roadmap for orchard automation research and development. This will require the individual to develop a broad understanding of the state of orchard automation research in the U.S. and beyond.
- Develop a pilot external peer review process to assist WTFRC volunteers and board members in identifying the high-quality research proposals particularly in the areas of orchard automation and genetics/genomics.
- Work with WSU extension faculty in developing an industry research priority needs assessment process across multiple commodities to ensure that the WTFRC successfully identifies and communicates the most important technical/scientific challenges facing tree fruit growers and packers.
- Work with appropriate internal staff and external partners and other outside entities to develop a comprehensive web/social media strategy. This would include gaining a thorough understanding of how best to position the WTFRC to provide research outcomes to the Pacific Northwest tree fruit industry, including the design and implementation of an upgraded web presence, considering existing web-based and traditional media outreach efforts currently in place.
- Take the lead in determining and implementing a long-term management strategy for WTFRC-owned orchard property in the Yakima Valley.

General Administration/Operations

- Develop and maintain an understanding and enthusiasm for the WTFRC mission.
- Manage and/or support WTFRC research reviews, workshops, webinars, seminars, and short courses. Schedule, and coordinate research-related activities. Attend similar events as needed and provide support as necessary.
- Identify funding and project opportunities and assist with the development and submission of grant applications.
- Provide outreach to industry stakeholders and keeps them informed of WTFRC activities.
- Prepare project reports and communication materials for the manager and board.
- Manage special communications projects to fulfill those aspects of the organization's objectives.
- Prepare and distribute fact sheets, news releases, photographs, or scripts to media and others interested in learning about or publicizing organization's activities or services.
- Generate internal and external publications, including gathering data, writing articles, taking photographs, selecting graphics, designing format of publication, and determining distribution methods.
- Provides secretarial and/or executive services for organizational committees.

- Officially represents WTFRC at public, social, and business gatherings.

Qualifications and job requirements

- Minimum requirements include a B.A. or B.S. degree, with demonstrated work or job experience in managing complex activities, and the names of four professional references.
- Preferred candidate has an advanced degree in biological science, agriculture or agriculture-related field.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a capacity and willingness to engage diverse constituents in concept and prototype development, validation, and commercialization
- Demonstrated skills in verbal and written communication, current computer technology and MS-Office software, distance-bridging technologies and a familiarity with web design software.
- Demonstrated ability to: identify and resolve problems in a timely manner; gather and analyze information skillfully; develop alternative solutions; and work well in group problem solving situations.
- Evening and weekend work required.
- Regional and possibly national travel required. Valid driver's license required.

Compensation and benefits

- Weekly hours of service: Part time or full time
- Work location: Negotiable within in eastern Washington. The WTFRC has offices in Wenatchee and Yakima.
- Salary and benefits: Salary will be commensurate with experience. A complete benefits package is available through the State of Washington.

Application instructions

Apply for this position by emailing: 1) a cover letter addressing why your previous experiences qualify you for this position; 2) a current resume; 3) four references and their contact information and; 5) compensation requirements to: kathy@treefruitresearch.com. Please indicate "Special Projects Coordinator" in the email subject line. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

About the organization

The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission was established by the Washington legislature in 1969 to "promote and carry on research and administer specific industry service programs, . . . which will or may benefit the planting, production, harvesting, handling, processing or shipment of tree fruit of this state . . . " The WTFRC is a state agency under the umbrella of the Department of Agriculture with its operational revenue derived from grower assessments. The WTFRC is governed by a Board of Commissioners which is comprised of nine members: three are appointed by the Washington State Fruit Commission; five are appointed by the Washington Apple Commission; and one is appointed by the Washington Director of Agriculture and represents the pear industry. Commissioners are active fruit growers or have a substantial interest in the production of tree fruit. The Washington State Director of Agriculture or his or her duly authorized representative is an ex-officio member with a vote, to represent all assessed commodities. In fiscal year 2016-2017, over \$4,000,000 was collected to advance knowledge, improve practices, and address the problems facing the Washington tree fruit industry. Of this, over \$3,000,000 was awarded in the form of competitive grants to scientists at Washington State University, Oregon State University, USDA/ARS and other land grant universities across the U.S.

The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission, a state agency, is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

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