



Postdoctoral Research Associate, Agricultural Plant-Insect Interactions

Location: Salina, KS

Department: Research

Status: Full-time, salary, two-years with the possibility of a third-year extension

Reports to: Crop Protection Ecologist

Effective Date: Negotiable, ideally 1/7/2019

Compensation: Competitive with median postdoc salary

Position Overview

The Land Institute is seeking a full-time postdoctoral research associate to work in the Crop Protection Ecology program, with Dr. Ebony Murrell. The project consists of an interdisciplinary team of Dr. Murrell at The Land Institute, Dr. Jared Ali (chemical ecologist) at Penn State, Dr. Swayamjit Ray (molecular biologist) at Penn State, and Dr. Jason Kaye (soil ecologist) at Penn State. The postdoctoral research associate will investigate effects of arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and nutrient availability on insect-induced plant defenses in annual and perennial grain crops.

About the Organization

The Land Institute, founded in 1976, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing perennial grains and increasing diversity in agroecosystems to transform agricultural from having a degenerative to a regenerative environmental impact. Located next to the Smoky Hill River outside of Salina, Kansas, our 670-acre station includes a research farm, laboratory facilities for plant genetics, pathogen, pest, and soils research, and two greenhouses. Our research staff has collaborative research projects with 14 land-grant institutions throughout the United States and collaborates with over 20 international institutions on six continents.

Job Duties

- Conducting whole-plant greenhouse assays on foliar (Lepidoptera) and root (Coleoptera) pests of corn and perennial sorghum
- Extracting RNA from plant tissue samples to test for induced plant defenses
- Disseminating research results through publications, scientific meetings, and public outreach at The Land Institute
- Assisting with insect laboratory colonies

- Assisting with field research at The Land Institute, as needed
- Participating in education and outreach programs sponsored by The Land Institute (facility tours, Prairie Festival, seminars, etc.)

Qualifications

Candidates should have successfully defended their dissertation before the start date and have a proven track record of publication in agroecology, plant-insect interactions, plant-mycorrhizal interactions, or a closely related discipline. Flexibility, good oral and written communications skills, and the ability to work with a wide variety of people (scientists and non-scientists) are required.

Desired, but not required, skills include any of the following: Conducting whole-plant insect bioassays, root staining and counting AMF colonization, RNA extraction, education or public outreach, grant writing, conducting field research or working outdoors, working with annual and perennial plants, rearing insects, growing plants in the greenhouse, and/or experience with multivariate statistics.

To Apply

Interested applicants should provide a single pdf file containing a cover letter, CV, contact information for three references, and up to three published manuscripts. Please email your application packet to Ebony Murrell at murrell@landinstitute.org. Questions about the position may be sent to the same address. Application review will begin on November 9, 2018 and will continue until the position is filled.

The Land Institute is an equal opportunity employer and actively encourages applications from women and people of all ethnic and national origins and sexual orientations.