



Position Description

Research Scientist – Phytopathology (RD5)

Biological Crop Protection

Research and Development

Overview

Reporting to the Director, the Research Scientist – Phytopathology is Vineland’s subject matter expert responsible for leading phytopathology research, with a focus on disease resistance, biosecurity, and biological crop protection. This role provides scientific leadership, drives innovation, and ensures the highest standards in research and laboratory operations, including oversight of the Advanced Pathology Laboratory.

Principal Accountabilities

- Lead research activities to
 - identify and evaluate sources of disease resistance for use in Vineland’s horticultural breeding programs.
 - Evaluate and develop sustainable disease management products and practices in horticultural crops.
- Provide strategic leadership for all pathology-related biosecurity initiatives at Vineland. Oversee planning, usage, and day-to-day operations of the Advanced Pathology Lab and associated facilities.
- Collaborate closely with other scientists at Vineland and external stakeholders to enable a multidisciplinary approach to research and project delivery, integrating breeding, pathology, consumer and sensory sciences, entomology, production systems, bioinformatics, and biochemistry.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

- Develop and conduct disease assays for key pathogens affecting horticultural crops.
- Collect and maintain a collection of bacterial, fungal, and viral pathogens.
- Lead and manage pathology-related biosecurity protocols and compliance.
- Plan, allocate resources, and oversee operations of the Advanced Pathology Laboratory, including equipment, safety, and scheduling.
- Collaborate with scientists of different disciplines to develop new plant varieties with demonstrated disease resistance.
- Work across Vineland teams to contribute pathology expertise to projects.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with partners and stakeholders, particularly growers and their representative associations.
- Stay current with advances in molecular pathology and biosecurity, and apply new techniques in research.
- Work with the Vineland business development team to develop and prepare project proposals and grant applications to attract public and private sector investment.
- Prepare reports, presentations, and other communications materials to communicate results to internal and external audiences.

- Represent Vineland at industry meetings, conferences, and professional development events.
- Provide effective leadership and strategic direction to the technical team.
- Responsible for staff selection, training, professional development, and performance management.
- Make decisions guided by policies in non-standard situations; impacts efficiencies, outcomes, and reputation beyond work unit.
- Develop and implement approved strategy for area under responsibility.
- Set objectives and deliver results that have direct impact aligned with the Vineland Innovation Strategy.

Other:

- Work safely in accordance with the Occupational Health & Safety Act and related regulations.
- Participate in corporate training and professional development.
- Other duties as may reasonably be required.

Qualifications

- Post-secondary degree (B.Sc. or M.Sc.) in plant pathology or related field.
- PhD in plant pathology or related field is preferred.
- Minimum 3–5 years of relevant experience in plant pathology, disease assay development, and molecular tools.

Knowledge and Experience

- Proven experience in effective project management.
- Demonstrated supervisory experience and leadership capability.
- Publications in peer-reviewed journals and/or patents.
- Experience in developing innovative solutions and managing complex research projects.
- Advanced knowledge of biosecurity and laboratory management.
- Knowledge of genetics, genomics, and bioinformatics is an asset.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills for diverse audiences.
- Critical thinking, problem-solving, and independent decision-making.
- Ability to manage budgets, resources, and facility operations.

Scope of Authority

- 2+ direct reports.
- Position will require minimal supervision.