

Graduate Research Assistant – Nebraska Urban Soil Health Initiative

An M.S. or Ph.D. research assistantship is available in the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln for a **student interested in urban agriculture and soil health**. The graduate research assistant will work as part of Dr. Sam Wortman’s research team to develop bio-based, renewable management strategies for local, urban, and organic specialty crop farmers that increase and stabilize crop yield and quality and reduce labor without jeopardizing environmental quality.

The graduate research assistant will help manage and **provide leadership for the Nebraska Urban Soil Health Initiative**, a new citizen science project focused on implementing soil health management practices (cover crops, no-till, and soil amendment with compost and biochar) on over 200 gardens and small farms throughout Nebraska. The graduate research assistant will: 1) recruit and retain project participants, 2) coordinate soil sampling and analysis logistics, 3) assist participants with implementation of soil health management practices and data collection, 4) work with Dr. Michael Kaiser at UNL to collect and analyze soil health and ecosystem service data from gardens and farms, and 5) assist with publication and outreach efforts in collaboration with USDA NRCS personnel. The graduate research assistant will also be expected to: 1) conduct related scientific literature reviews, 2) design and execute research protocols, 3) publish in refereed scientific journals, 4) present at grower and academic conferences, and 5) contribute to other field research projects as needed.

Qualifications: 1) Bachelor’s degree in horticulture, agronomy, crop sciences, agroecology, soil science, biology, chemistry, biochemistry, ecology, environmental sciences, or a related field; 2) excellent written and oral communication skills; 3) self-motivated and ability to work independently and as part of a team; 4) previous research or project management experience; and 5) M.S. degree is preferred for Ph.D. applicants.

Graduate Research Assistantship annual stipend for M.S. Students is \$26,535 and Ph.D. students is \$28,368

Tuition waiver: A tuition waiver of up to 12 credit hours per semester and 12 credit hours during summer sessions is provided with the graduate research assistantship.

Health insurance: Students on assistantships are provided health insurance at a reduced rate.

Applications: Review of applications will begin September 1, 2022, and continue until the position is filled. The anticipated start date is January 9, 2023 (spring semester). Interested students should send the following application materials to Dr. Sam Wortman (swortman@unl.edu): 1) one-page statement of interest that includes qualifications and career goals, 2) most recent academic transcripts (unofficial), 3) resume or C.V., and 4) contact information for three professional references. The successful applicant will be contacted and encouraged to formally apply for graduate studies in the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture. Admission instructions can be found at: <http://agronomy.unl.edu/futuregraduate>

Questions about graduate studies in the department or the admissions process can be directed to Dr. Keenan Amundsen, the Graduate Chair in the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture (E-mail: AGRO_HORT_GradChair@unl.edu).

UNL is committed to a pluralistic campus community through Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. UNL does not discriminate in its employment, admissions or related service programs. Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity/Diversity questions may be directed to the Office for Affirmative Action and Diversity Programs, 127 Administration Building, P. O. Box 80437, UNL, Lincoln, NE 68588-0437, or by telephoning 402472-3417 (or TDD, 402/472-9522). Employment eligibility verification is required for all new hires pursuant to the Immigration and Control Act of 1986. We assure reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.