UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Title: Agent
Working Title: Extension Specialist – Precision Agriculture in Crop and Livestock Systems
Position Number: 103471
Category Status: Faculty Non-Tenured, On Track, Full-Time
Unit: AGNR-UME-Field Operations
Location: Lower Eastern Shore Research and Education Center or Western Maryland Research and Education Center

Position Purpose:
University of Maryland Extension (UME) invites applications for a 12-month tenure-track position of Agent to conduct applied research, provide educational programming, and offer expertise in precision agriculture to growers, agricultural service providers, and UME personnel throughout Maryland. The candidate will have training in the principles of precision agriculture and familiarity with agricultural production systems in the state. The incumbent will also serve as the Maryland representative for regional precision agriculture information and training efforts. The position will be based at the Lower Eastern Shore Research and Education Center in Salisbury, Maryland or Western Maryland Research and Education Center near Keedysville, Maryland.

Position Responsibilities:

The Specialist is part of a diverse team (College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, UME, and key stakeholder groups) working on applied research and extension education for precision agriculture. The individual will provide leadership for relevant precision agriculture programming within the Agriculture and Food Systems Program, one of four UME program areas.

The incumbent will conduct needs assessments to identify research and education program priorities. The Specialist is expected to develop an extramurally-funded applied research program focused on the use of precision agriculture strategies in agricultural production in Maryland and the region. Applied research can include, but is not limited to, the application of information technologies to provide, process, and analyze high resolution, multisource data for decision making and management in agricultural production and sustainable food systems. The Specialist will develop scholarly works, and educate the public on research related to the discipline of precision agriculture technologies. Support for the program is available through numerous commodity groups. Excellent farm, greenhouse, and laboratory facilities are available to carry out the research program.

The Specialist will contribute to the development of precision agriculture recommendations for production systems; present information using websites, journals, mass media, social media, webcasts, and at research and education meetings; gather and communicate research information to UME personnel; and contribute to agricultural management demonstrations at university research and education centers. The individual will collaborate closely with producers, field and campus Extension colleagues, state and federal agencies, industry representatives, agricultural leaders, and other stakeholders to address management issues in diverse cropping and livestock systems.

The Specialist will use entrepreneurial practices to secure grants, contracts, program fees, partnerships, and sponsorships to develop a robust Extension program that delivers, measures, and interprets the impacts of programs and engagements regarding crop and livestock production systems in Maryland and beyond. Innovative strategies and cutting-edge teaching and learning methods will be used to design, develop, deliver and evaluate programs for a robust Extension education program that engages participants in a collaborative-learning environment and encourages adoption of research-based information in decision-making. The Specialist will support youth development programs related to precision agriculture.

The individual works to ensure that Extension priorities and initiatives are addressed for target audiences. The Specialist will participate in professional development to enhance and maintain professional expertise in precision agriculture and extension pedagogy. The incumbent will also serve on department, college, and university committees as assigned, and as opportunity and expertise permits. The Specialist is responsible to work intentionally and collaboratively to increase the visibility and reach of Extension programs through education designed to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

The incumbent represents UME and the University of Maryland, College Park. The Specialist ensures that educational programming is in alignment with UME's current strategic plan and plan of work, especially as it relates to the United States Department of Agriculture. The faculty member will be on track for tenure and promotion to a higher rank in accordance with university policy and UME tenure guidelines within a defined timeframe.

In carrying out these duties, the individual reports to the Assistant Director, Agriculture and Food Systems Program.

Qualifications:
Required –
- M.S. degree in agricultural or biological engineering, agronomy, horticulture, animal science, agricultural mechanization, agricultural technology, or closely related field of study with a strong background in one or more aspects of precision agriculture.
- Demonstrated clear understanding of the practice of extension education.
- Experience conducting applied research to improve agricultural productivity, health and resilience through the development and use of precision and digital agriculture technologies for crop and animal systems management.
- Demonstrated leadership and management abilities along with evidence of ability to work with colleagues, students, industry, and other clientele. Evidence of the ability to work effectively as a team member
- Knowledge and use of computer technology for educational programming and management.
- Evidence of excellent teaching and communication skills; possess excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Personal transportation and valid driver's license required. Must be willing to travel throughout the state of Maryland. Out of state travel may also be required.
- Flexible work schedule required for delivering evening and weekend educational programs and activities as determined by clientele availability and need.
- Evidence of capacity to build UME Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Respect capacity through the Extension program model.
- This position is subject to a Criminal History Record Check and University of Maryland Background check. Employment is contingent upon successful completion and clearance of the Criminal History Record Check.

Preferred –
- Ph.D. in agricultural or biological engineering, agronomy, horticulture, animal science, agricultural mechanization, agricultural technology, or closely related field of study.
- Demonstrated ability to develop outreach programming that assists stakeholders in making research-based decisions.
- Evidence of peer-reviewed journal articles and Extension publications.
- Demonstrated experience in grant writing and obtaining extramural funding.
- Demonstrated skills to effectively use electronic and social media to communicate technical information.
- Experience working with graduate students is desirable.

- Preference will be given to individuals with experience working with diverse audiences and all socioeconomic levels.

Physical Demands of the Position:
The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.
- This position frequently presents information through vocal and written communication to individuals of various ages, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds.
- A routine part of this position's responsibilities would be to transport materials to and from field research plots and teaching/event locations, including loading and unloading the vehicle. The employee will frequently lift and/or move items weighing up to 20 pounds. Set up and teardown of research machinery, project displays, tables, and chairs will be necessary at many teaching sites.
- This position requires the employee to work outdoors conducting field research, delivering programs, and teaching at events. This may occur during very hot and/or inclement weather.
- Visual acuity is required for preparing and analyzing written or computer data and presentations.

Salary and Benefits: Salary will be calculated based on experience and education start at: Master's Base: $61,035; Ph.D. Base: $72,896. The University of Maryland offers an extensive benefits package.

Applications: All candidates must apply online at https://ejobs.umd.edu. A complete application packet includes a cover letter, resume or CV, copies of transcripts, and three professional references, including name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

Closing Date: For best consideration, complete the application by 12/4/2022. The position will remain open until a suitable candidate has been identified.

Vaccine Protocol
The University of Maryland has made the safety of our students, faculty and staff, and our surrounding communities a top priority. As part of that commitment, the University System of Maryland (USM) recently announced that students, faculty, and staff on USM campuses this fall, including UMD, are required to be vaccinated against COVID. As a prospective and/or a new employee at UMD, you will be required to comply with the University's vaccination protocol. Proof of full vaccination will be required before the start of employment in order to work at any University of Maryland location. Prospective or new employees may seek a medical or religious exemption to the vaccination requirement at return.umd.edu and must have an approved exemption prior to the start of their employment. Failure to provide proof of vaccination or to obtain approval for a medical or religious exemption will result in the offer of employment being rescinded.