

TITLE: PLANT PATHOLOGIST

CLASSIFICATION: LSO 3 (AGRL)

MINISTRY: AGRICULTURE

WORK UNIT: PLANT AND ANIMAL HEALTH BRANCH

SUPERVISOR TITLE: MANAGER, PLANT HEALTH UNIT

SUPERVISOR POSITION #: 00093376

CONTEXT

The Plant and Animal Health Branch supports the sustainability of animal and plant agriculture, while serving to protect the well-being of the people of the province of British Columbia through surveillance, regulatory compliance, risk assessment, and the development of strategies to address identified risks. The Plant and Animal Health Branch consists of three key program areas: The Animal Health Centre, the Livestock Management and Regulatory Unit, and the Plant Health Unit.

JOB OVERVIEW

The Plant Pathologist is part of the Plant Health Unit which is responsible for protecting B.C.'s agricultural land resource from the adverse impacts of plant pests through the delivery of the Plant Health Strategy. This position provides professional and technical support and advisory services to agri-food industries in the BC Interior on plant disease issues, including facilitating training, research and extension initiatives that foster effective and safe plant disease control methods for sustainable agri-food systems. This position works in close association with other areas in the Unit including the Plant Diagnostic Laboratory, minor use pesticide and pesticide applications specialists, Ministry crop specialists as well as others in relevant ministry Branches.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Facilitate the development, implementation and maintenance of management strategies to mitigate known, potential and new plant diseases, including regulated diseases, that impact or threaten crop production in British Columbia.
- Prepare and communicate relevant information resources on plant diseases and best practices in plant disease management appropriate for the target audience, including web pages, production guides, factsheets, instructional materials, and presentations.
- Lead or facilitate the development and implementation of plant disease related applied research projects and plant disease surveys that advance industry competitiveness and the production of safe foods and healthy agricultural crops.
- Represent the Ministry at provincial, national, international and inter-governmental meetings, committees, working groups and forums and on appropriate industry initiatives to ensure provincial interests are protected.
- Liaise with Ministry staff and representatives of other ministries, government agencies and industry organizations on plant pathology issues, policies, programs and initiatives.

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- Provide analysis, direction and guidance on plant pathology issues and initiatives to internal and external clients, including preparing Ministry correspondence and briefing notes as required.
- Fulfill administrative requirements of the provincial Plant Protection Act and Regulations.
- Support the development, implementation and maintenance of provincial and national industry-led programs for disease management or market access.
- Maintain expertise and technical credibility by developing and maintaining communication links with other plant health professionals, attending meetings, conferences and training courses, and reviewing relevant literature.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- Master's degree in plant pathology from a recognized university.
- Registered as a Professional Agrologist, or immediately eligible* for registration as a Professional Agrologist, with the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists.
 - * Note: immediately eligible is defined as being registered as a professional Agrologist in another Canadian jurisdiction and able to transfer that membership to the BCIA. It is the responsibility of the applicant to have the BCIA review their qualifications to ensure they have the necessary requirements for registration.
- Minimum five years' experience in industry, university or government as a plant pathologist.
- Experience in research and analysis.
- Experience in project management.
- Successful completion of security screening requirements of the BC Public Service, which may include a criminal records check, and/or Criminal Records Review Act (CRRRA) check, and/or enhanced security screening checks as required by the ministry (**Note: It is important that you read the job posting carefully to understand the specific security screening requirements pertaining to the position**).

PROVISOS/WILLINGNESS STATEMENTS:

- Valid BC drivers license or equivalent.
- Overnight travel may be required to attend industry meetings.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Broad understanding of integrated pest management concepts and programs.
- General knowledge of horticultural and field crop production in the BC Interior, crop diseases and control methods.
- Thorough knowledge of plant pathology with a background knowledge of botany, plant physiology, ecology, plant nutrition and research methodology.
- Knowledge of extension practices and principles.
- General knowledge of relevant legislation--i.e. Plant Protection Act, Pesticide Control Act, Plant Protection Act (federal) and Pest Control Act (federal).
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to interact and communicate successfully with a wide variety of people.

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- Ability to establish strong liaisons with representatives of government agencies, industry organizations and agri-business.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally (including presentations) and in writing
- Good facilitation skills.
- Excellent organization and time management skills.
- Demonstrated ability in analyzing problems, and recommending and affecting solutions.
- Ability to exercise initiative, tact and sound judgment.
- Ability to work meticulously and independently with minimum supervision.
- Excellent computer skills.

BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES

- **Conceptual Thinking** is the ability to identify patterns or connections between situations that are not obviously related, and to identify key or underlying issues in complex situations. It includes using creative, conceptual or inductive reasoning or thought processes that are not necessarily categorized by linear thinking.
- **Teamwork and Cooperation** is the ability to work co-operatively within diverse teams, work groups and across the organization to achieve group and organizational goals. It includes the desire and ability to understand and respond effectively to other people from diverse backgrounds with diverse views.
- **Flexibility** is the ability and willingness to adapt to and work effectively within a variety of diverse situations, and with diverse individuals or groups. Flexibility entails understanding and appreciating different and opposing perspectives on an issue, adapting one's approach as situations change and accepting changes within one's own job or organization.
- **Expertise** includes the motivation to expand and use technical knowledge or to distribute work-related knowledge to others. Expertise includes the ability to speak knowledgeably and answer questions about relevant issues and considerations around the area of technical expertise.
- **Planning, Organizing and Co-ordinating** involves proactively planning, establishing priorities and allocating resources. It is expressed by developing and implementing increasingly complex plans. It also involves monitoring and adjusting work to accomplish goals and deliver to the organization's mandate.
- **Results Orientation** is a concern for surpassing a standard of excellence. The standard may be one's own past performance (striving for improvement); an objective measure (achievement orientation); challenging goals that one has set; or even improving or surpassing what has already been done (continuous improvement). Thus, a unique accomplishment also indicates a Results Orientation.
- **Service Orientation** implies a desire to identify and serve customers/clients, who may include the public, co-workers, other branches/divisions, other ministries/agencies, other government organizations, and non-government organizations. It means focusing one's efforts on discovering and meeting the needs of the customer/client.