The Department of Entomology at Washington State University invites applicants for a Postdoctoral Research Associate position to conduct research on enhancing biological control in tree fruit by developing tactics to improve releases of commercially available natural enemies. The postdoctoral researcher will be based at the USDA-ARS Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research Unit in Wapato, WA which is part of the greater Yakima Valley area. The postdoctoral researcher will be supervised by Rebecca Schmidt-Jeffris, Research Entomologist with the USDA and Louis Nottingham, Assistant Research Professor, WSU.

The successful applicant will be part of a dynamic team of researchers and technicians responsible for designing, conducting, analyzing, and reporting on field and laboratory research activities with the goal of creating evidence-based best practices for releasing natural enemies in apples and pears to control key pests. The main pests of interest are aphids, pear psylla, and mealybugs. The postdoctoral researcher is expected to work with the technical staff and grower cooperators to test tactics for releasing and retaining natural enemies. This will include testing the use of lures and supplementary food products, conducting field trials evaluating different species and release rates of natural enemies, working with a drone pilot to examine efficacy of releases by drone, and performing molecular gut content analysis to determine what resources are used by natural enemies in the field. Because this position will lead field research activities, the successful candidate must be able to work independently and lead teams in summer conditions and to drive project vehicles to distant field sites.

The research activities include field experiment design, collecting data on abundance of pest and beneficial insects, PCR, supervising technician teams, and statistical analysis. The successful applicant will be expected to prepare manuscripts, project reports, and extension documents and present research at scientific conferences and grower meetings. The incumbent will also be expected to help train graduate and undergraduate students in research whenever such opportunities occur.

**Required Education and Experience:**

- Ph.D. degree in entomology or a related discipline
- Research experience in field-based agricultural entomology, tree fruit, and/or PCR methods
- Experience with statistical analysis of field experiments with software such as R or SAS
- Excellent organizational, and written and interpersonal communication skills

**Other requirements:**

- Proof of U.S. citizenship
- Have, or be able to obtain at the time of hire, a valid driver’s license.

**Application:**

Follow the instructions to submit application materials mentioned below at https://wsu.wd5.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/WSU_Jobs/job/GENERAL-CAMPUS---WENATCHEE/Postdoctoral-Research-Associate_R-2745:

- Cover letter of application elaborating qualifications and research experience
- Detailed curriculum vitae
• Copies of university transcripts (M.S. and Ph.D.)
• Two recommendation letters directly submitted by the referees

Applicants who submit their complete applications by October 15, 2021 will be given first consideration.

Washington State University is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing equal opportunity in education, employment, membership and contracts without regard to race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, religion, age, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, physical, mental or sensory disability, marital status, genetic information, and/or status as a veteran.

In connection with the application for employment, Washington State University will procure a background screen on applicant as part of the process of considering the candidacy as an employee. An additional background check will be conducted to clear the candidate to work in a federal facility. As part of this process, applicants must be U.S. citizens to apply for the position.

**Timeline and Support:**

Preferred start date for this position is February 1, 2021. Funding is available for two years and is renewable dependent upon the performance. Salary is approximately $51,000/year plus the State of Washington employee benefits.