

March 10, 2016

**U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

USDA will be announcing four job openings at USAJOBS.gov in the next few weeks where international experience and a strong foundation in agricultural and biological sciences are desirable. Because applying for federal jobs can be complex and the advertisement period is short (one week), we are doing some “pre-recruitment” to provide additional time for interested individuals to set up accounts with USAJOBS.gov and prepare their resume and transcripts. Well-qualified candidates often don’t realize there’s a job opening until the deadline is near, and are unable to prepare their application to best represent their qualifications for the job. Please distribute this information as appropriate.

These vacancies are with the USDA, APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) and are located in Riverdale, Maryland. These positions are assigned to the Phytosanitary Issues Management (PIM) staff and information about the group can be found [here](#). PIM has the primary responsibility for resolving scientific and technical plant health issues that impede international trade, imports and exports, of agricultural products using science-based decision making.

The first two positions are for Trade Directors (GS 0401 and GS 0301) and would be appropriate for less-recent graduates, Bachelor’s degree minimum, with professional experience in plant health sciences that affect safe import and export of plants and plant products. Familiarity with the plant health aspects of World Trade Organization, Sanitary/Phytosanitary Agreements, International Plant Protection Convention, or other trade initiatives is desirable. Starting salary is around \$92,000 plus benefits. The second two positions are for Assistant Trade Directors and would be appropriate for new PhDs in Biology or Agricultural Sciences, or a Bachelor’s/Master’s Degree with relevant education and work experience. Starting salary is around \$64,650 plus benefits. These are developmental positions with advancement potential and will be advertised as GS 0401. Excellent communication skills, political savvy and team building are essential to success for all of these positions.

These positions play important roles in planning, coordinating, and directing the resolution of plant health issues involving agricultural import and export trade in plants and plant products. The employee may serve as the principal negotiator for plant health and quarantine issues. They may lead, participate in, or support intensive pre-negotiation preparation and strategy development. During technical negotiations with foreign countries, the employee plays a major role in establishing and maintaining the tenor of discussions on scientific and technical matters. The employee may also provide technical advice to others in USDA, ensuring that phytosanitary policies conform to the international standards of the International Plant Protection Convention and North American Plant Protection Organization. The employee serves as a resource person to the agency in identifying emerging scientific issues and modern technical capabilities to be applied to phytosanitary trade issue management. They participate in identifying what disciplines and multi-disciplinary mixes are needed to perform risk assessment of plant pest mitigation measures in order to have a proactive approach to meeting U.S. commitments in international trade agreements.

These are fast-paced jobs and suited for someone who likes plant pathology, entomology and international trade. If you think of anyone who might be interested, please direct them to the USAJOBS.gov website to look for these 0301 and 0401 positions during the coming weeks. Additional information about PPQ can be found at our [website](#), and in this [brochure](#).