

## Assistant Professor of Extension in Food Safety

The University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) in collaboration with the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (CNAS), UC-Riverside, invites applicants for a full-time Assistant Professor of Cooperative Extension in the area of Food Safety, with an emphasis on microbial contamination of crops. At UC-Riverside, this title corresponds to the "Cooperative Extension Specialist" title used elsewhere within the UC System.

The position is 80% Extension and 20% Research with an academic career-track, 11-month appointment in the Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology at UC Riverside (<https://microplantpath.ucr.edu/>). The position will become available after January 1, 2023. Salary is competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

The position will be filled by an individual holding a Ph.D. degree and postdoctoral experience in Food Safety, Microbiology, Horticulture, or another relevant discipline (this needs to be completed at time of application).

Required qualifications at time of hire for this position include:

1. Documented experience in food safety research involving crop production and/or food-borne human pathogens.
2. Demonstrated expertise or appropriate training in food safety
3. Evidence of or potential for leading a nationally-recognized program that extends applied research to growers, government agencies, and other stakeholders regionally and statewide
4. Demonstrated ability or potential to develop an applied research program in one or more aspects of food safety and record of scientific publication productivity
5. Record of acquisition of extramural funding or the potential to do so
6. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills and a demonstrated ability to work with others in a collegial team atmosphere
7. Evidence of or potential for leadership and initiative

As demand for nutritional, fresh produce increases, it is essential to ensure that the supply is consistently safe. Mitigating food-borne pathogens and microbial toxins is critical for improving the overall health of Californians and the value of food produced in California, both for domestic markets and for export. A major driver for this position is increased demand for local and home-grown produce, which is more challenging to produce within the strict food safety regulatory requirements of large-scale agriculture. There is also interest in reducing waste in the food production chain by, for example, marketing lower quality produce previously considered unmarketable, which may increase food safety challenges.

Regulatory pressure on the safe production of food has increased dramatically in recent years. Domestically, implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) has brought a wave

of new regulations. Internationally, the stringent limits the European Union places on contaminants such as aflatoxin present a persistent challenge for California agriculture. Concurrently, increasing awareness of foodborne illness has reduced tolerance for and increased the costs of outbreaks. Extension and research are needed to assist stakeholders in meeting regulations. This position is at the core of the UC ANR's mission to ensure safe and secure food supplies and to enhance the health of Californians and California's agricultural economy, and it supports the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) mission at UC Riverside, and builds capacity within the UC ANR Food System Resilience Network.

## **Responsibilities**

**Extension and Outreach.** Provide leadership for statewide extension activities on food safety by: 1) developing and educating stakeholders about methods for identifying, tracing, and reducing contaminants or sources of food spoilage in the food production chain through extension of science-based information through the network of UC ANR Advisors and Cooperative Extension personnel; 2) developing and holding workshops or other trainings to convey best practices, and dissemination of research information through written, oral or other means; 3) interacting in a two-way manner with growers, commodity groups, diagnostic and surveillance personnel, allied professionals and agricultural organizations, environmental and other state and federal agencies, non-government organizations, and academic clientele such as UC ANR Advisors and AES faculty to identify and be responsive to their needs; 4) acting as a liaison between industry organizations, the public, the University of California, and state and federal agencies; and 5) developing web-based resources, training courses, and publications of lay and peer-reviewed literature.

**Research.** The successful candidate will develop a creative and productive applied research program on food safety that will complement the extension program and lead to scholarly contributions. This research will address questions such as: How to best detect pathogens? How can water sources with bacterial or other types of contamination be disinfected or otherwise purified? How can solutions be adapted to both conventional (high- and low-input) and organic growers? What types or physical forms of microbial contamination are most damaging to the human gut? More specifically, this could include developing pathogen detection methods for large food samples, especially those that do not require enrichment, and developing innovative technologies to control pathogen populations, their reservoirs, or their toxins. The incumbent will provide leadership in directing research projects of professional researchers, graduate students, or postdoctoral scholars, and publish results in peer-reviewed professional and scientific journals and appropriate UCCE outlets. Collaborations within the UC ANR network (e.g., County-based Advisors, Cooperative Extension Specialists, AES faculty), state (California Department of Food and Agriculture, CDFG) and federal partners (USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Agricultural Research Service) and funding from extramural sources, is a fundamental and indispensable requirement of the position.

**Service.** Perform university and public service through committee work at the department, college, campus, or system wide level and participation in professional organizations, continuing education, and other appropriate means is required.

**Relationships.** This position is responsible to the Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology for program direction, job performance, administrative matters, and operational methods. The incumbent will serve as the contact person for communications with/among USDA, CDFA, and UC ANR Advisors and other governmental and industrial experts. The incumbent will act in an advisory capacity to farm advisors and other specialists in crop production for technical advice on food safety.

**Affirmative Action.** Comply with all applicable federal, state laws and regulations, University, Campus, and Division policies and procedures related to civil rights, affirmative action, and equal employment opportunity. Promote in all ways consistent with the other responsibilities of this position accomplishment of Campus and Division affirmative action and equal opportunity goals. Collaborate with County Cooperative Extension staff to meet affirmative action and equal opportunity goals.

**Advancement through the Professional Ranks at the University of California** is through a series of structured, merit-based evaluations, occurring every 2-3 years, each of which includes substantial peer input.

**To Apply Submit the Following** at <https://aprecruit.ucr.edu/JPF01681>:

1. Cover Letter – A letter of intent outlining the candidate's interest in the position, relevant qualifications and experience, and career goals
2. Curriculum Vitae showing education, employment history, publications, and other items relevant to the position
3. Statement of Extension and Outreach Vision
4. Statement of Research Vision Supported by Previous Accomplishments
5. Statement of Past and/or Planned Future Contributions to Advancing Diversity and Inclusive Excellence – Applicants should summarize their past and/or potential future contributions to promoting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment, which can be reflected through research, teaching, supervision, mentoring, community engagement, service, and any of the other varied activities that are a part of an academic career
6. Letters of Recommendation: Applicants should provide a minimum of three professional letters of recommendation

**Review of Applications** will commence on January 23, 2023. For full consideration, applicants should submit their complete applications by this date.

**For More Information about this Position**, please contact Professor James Borneman, Chair of the Search Committee, Department of Microbiology & Plant Pathology, at [borneman@ucr.edu](mailto:borneman@ucr.edu). For questions on application procedures and requirements, please contact Mrs. Kendall Dunmore-Balderrama, Academic Personnel, at [kendall.dunmore@ucr.edu](mailto:kendall.dunmore@ucr.edu).

UCR is a world-class research university with an exceptionally diverse undergraduate student body. Its mission is explicitly linked to providing routes to educational success for underrepresented and first-generation college students. A commitment to this mission is a preferred qualification.

**UCR is a Land-Grant World-Class Research University** with an exceptionally diverse undergraduate and graduate student body. UCR's Agricultural Experiment Station has provided over 110 years of service to California's and U.S.A.'s agriculture. Its mission is explicitly linked to providing educational success for underrepresented and first-generation college students as well as promote the wellbeing and advancement of all Californians.

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer with a strong institutional commitment to the achievement of excellence and diversity among its faculty and staff. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

~~**The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.** All qualified candidates will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.~~

**University of California COVID-19 Vaccination Program Policy.** As a condition of employment, you will be required to comply with the University of California SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Vaccination Program Policy. All Covered Individuals under the policy must provide proof of Full Vaccination or, if applicable, submit a request for Exception (based on Medical Exemption, Disability, and/or Religious Objection) or Deferral (based on pregnancy) no later than the applicable deadline. New University of California employees should refer to Appendix F, Section II.C. of the policy for applicable deadlines. (Capitalized terms in this paragraph are defined in the policy.) Federal, state, or local public health directives may impose additional requirements.~~As a condition of employment, you will be required to comply with the University of California SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Vaccination Program Policy. All Covered Individuals under the policy must provide proof of Full Vaccination or, if applicable, submit a request for Exception (based on Medical Exemption, Disability, and/or Religious Objection) or Deferral (based on pregnancy) no later than the applicable deadline. New University of California employees must (a) provide proof of receiving at least one dose of a COVID-19 Vaccine no later than 14 calendar days after their first date of employment and provide proof of full vaccination no later than eight weeks after their first date of employment; or (b) if applicable, submit a request for Exception or Deferral no later than 14 calendar days after their first date of employment. Federal, state, or local public health directives may impose additional requirements.~~