

Job Description Form (JDF)

Position details

Position title: Plant Disease Epidemiologist
Position number: 70191217
Classification: Specified Calling Level 3
Physical location: Perth Metropolitan Area
Award: PSA 1992
Agreement: PSCSAA 2019
Pillar: Sustainability and Biosecurity
Directorate: Biosecurity
Branch: Plant Biosecurity

Reporting relationships

Reports to: Senior Development Officer (70191218), Specified Calling Level 4

This position

Direct reports: Nil

Role summary

At a broadly recognised professional level, demonstrating initiative and independent judgement, undertakes plant disease epidemiologist duties.

Utilises sound plant disease epidemiology expertise in planning, risk analysis, surveillance, monitoring and control programs; and coordinates preparedness and responses for plant pests and diseases of state and national significance.

Develops and maintains databases/information systems to support proof of freedom claims, disease trends, and other analyses as directed for plant biosecurity in Western Australia.

Provides scientific expertise, advice and research to protect Western Australia's primary industries, environment and economy from the introduction and establishment of harmful plant pests and diseases.

About us

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's (DPIRD) role is to ensure that primary industries and regions are key contributors to the Government's agenda for economic growth and diversification, job creation, strong communities and better places. Our goals are to:

- **Protect:** to manage and provide for sustainable use of our natural resources and soils, and to protect Western Australia's brand and reputation as a reliable producer of premium, clean and safe food, products and services.
- **Grow:** to enable the primary industries sector and regions to increase international competitiveness, grow in value and social amenity and become a key pillar of the State's economy.
- **Innovate:** to support a culture of scientific enquiry, innovation and adaptation across primary industries and regions to boost industry transformation, economic growth and employment.

Our values

Our values are critical in creating a healthy and dynamic culture that helps each and all of us to make our best contribution, to develop a workplace where we feel excited about our work and results and where other people will increasingly want to join our team. Our values underpin how we operate:

- We value **relationships** - Our relationships with our clients, colleagues and stakeholders are at the heart of everything we do
- We are **resilient** - We recover from setbacks, embracing and adapting to change because we have a clear focus on the big picture and long term impact
- We are **responsive** - We understand the needs of our clients, colleagues and stakeholders and add value by tailoring our solutions accordingly
- We focus on **results** - We strive to develop and provide excellent services that delivers meaningful results to the community we serve.

Key responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the role include, but are not limited to, the following:

Epidemiology

- Provides expertise in interpretation of plant pest and disease biology and behaviour.
- Plans and undertakes analytics for claims of area freedom, preparedness activities, and during emergency responses.
- Reviews national and state surveillance and control programs and provides advice in relation to surveillance design and statistical analysis.
- Supports inter-disciplinary development of internal and external analytic and reporting tools for management of priority pests and diseases.
- Coordinates collation, analysis and evaluation of data and preparation of reports on the biosecurity status of WA plant industries.
- Coordinates analytical and modelling related to experimental, survey, and sampling tasks within the plant biosecurity program.

- Assists in the development and implementation of projects by conducting project work, meeting milestones, agreed outputs and internal and external reporting requirements.
- Develops and maintains an up-to-date knowledge and awareness of relevant research, development findings, issues and trends.
- Develops and maintains effective relationships with relevant staff members and stakeholders; actively promote technology, services and resources that are available; collaborate and remain aware of relevant projects and trends.

Strategic Planning and Policy Development

- Researches, analyses and evaluates epidemiology input into strategic planning and other planning processes regarding plant health.
- Plans and conducts pest analytics for plant diseases to inform development of plant health policy.
- Provides practical assistance to operational areas in translating strategic plant health policy into relevant local policy and strategies.
- Provides scientifically based advice on plant industry matters to the Chief Plant Biosecurity Officer, Executive Director Biosecurity, and other key internal and external stakeholders.

General

- Prepares reports, summaries and general correspondence as required.
- Represents the Directorate and Department on inter-departmental committees and peak industry groups as required.
- Provides supervision and direction of technical and casual staff as required.
- Supports preparedness and responses to emergency plant pests, including working in responses and emergencies as required.
- Performs other duties as required.

Work related requirements

In the context of the role:

Essential criteria

Role specific

1. Demonstrated knowledge and experience in plant epidemiology, pathology and/or entomology; including experience in analytics, biostatistics and modelling to support biosecurity risk management.
2. Demonstrated knowledge of plant pest ecology and biology and/or plant disease epidemiology principles and methods, including patterns of epidemics, data management, surveillance, diagnostic testing, and risk assessment.

Core capabilities

3. Build effective relationships: Strong verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills, including the ability to confidently liaise, collaborate with and communicate scientific information to departmental staff, industry and the community.

4. *Challenge for innovation:* Well developed abilities to establish clear plans and timeframes, evaluate performance, identify the need for change, determine action and see tasks and projects through to completion.
5. *Think strategically:* Well developed research, conceptual and analytical skills including the ability to provide innovative solutions to complex and challenging issues and problems.
6. *Deliver in a changing environment:* Strong project, time management and organisational skills including the ability to effectively contribute to the management of change and the ability to develop and apply complex plant disease epidemiology techniques to enable the generation of specialist input into plant health and laboratory practice.
7. *Lead and empower others:* Proven ability to lead teams and work collaboratively in a team environment contributing to the achievement of departmental level outcomes.

Desirable criteria

1. Knowledge of state, national and international legislation, agreements and guidelines relating to plant biosecurity and surveillance.
2. Demonstrated experience in the design and implementation of systems for collection and analysis and reporting of plant health data.
3. Post graduate training in plant pathology, plant disease epidemiology and/or plant biosecurity.

Special requirements/equipment

- A degree in Agricultural science, or approved equivalent with undergraduate training in plant disease epidemiology.
- An acceptable National Police Certificate (police clearance) is required. If not currently held, must be acquired prior to commencement at applicant's expense.
- Occasional travel to and from metropolitan and regional offices may be required.
- The contract of employment specifies terms and conditions relating to this position.

Certification

The details contained in this document are an accurate statement of the duties, responsibilities and requirements of this position.

Delegated authority

Endorsed by: Heather Brayford

Position title: Deputy Director General, Sustainability and Biosecurity

Endorsement Date: 12 February 2020