

# Career Intern Opportunities in the Plant Materials Program

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## USDA Career Intern Programs

The Department of Agriculture Career Intern Programs will prepare exceptional men and women who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies for careers in public service. Interns will participate in a 2-year program that is designed to fine tune their skills and abilities. USDA is a nationwide and world employer. It has employees located in 58 states and territories, and 57 foreign countries.

## NRCS and the Plant Materials Program

Since 1935, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (originally called the Soil Conservation Service) has provided leadership in a partnership effort to help America's private land owners and managers conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources. NRCS employees provide technical assistance based on sound science and suited to a customer's specific needs.

The Plant Materials Program supports the mission of NRCS by selecting conservation plants and developing innovative planting technology to solve the nation's most important resource concerns. The Program includes a network of 27 Plant Materials Centers (PMCs) and associated Plant Materials Specialists serving all 50 states and territories. To date, the program has released over 600 conservation plants, most being grown by commercial growers. For over 70 years, PMCs and Specialists have provide essential and effective plant solutions for critical habitats, environmental concerns, management practices, and key farm and ranch programs. For more information on the Plant Materials Program: <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>.

## What is the Career Intern Program?

The Career Intern Program involves two years participation in a formal training program, including on-the-job training, to provide the skills needed for careers in the sciences and in administration/professional areas. Career Interns within the Plant Materials Program will be stationed at a Plant Materials Center and work day-to-day with the staff of that center to learn about the operation of a PMC, how the program selects plants and conducts studies, and how the products of PMC work are incorporated into mainstream NRCS activities and conservation programs. There will be opportunities to travel to other Plant Materials Centers, interact with NRCS field offices and professional staff, attend formal training sessions and professional meetings, and interact with other Federal and state agencies as well as landowners. After two years the career intern will be required to move to another Plant Materials Center and after that will have opportunities to apply for positions throughout the Plant Materials Program and NRCS.

## Internship Availability

The number of internships filled each year and the locations will depend on the needs of Plant Materials Program.

## General Eligibility

- U.S. citizenship
- Bachelor's or Graduate Degree with an overall college GPA of 3.0 or better if applying based on education
- Diverse professional experiences, training, and competencies
- Demonstrated leadership potential, and community service

## What Kind of Education or Experience Do I Need?

Education or experience that would prepare you for positions in the Plant Materials Program include those related to the following careers or disciplines:

- Plant Sciences
- Agriculture
- Natural Resources Management
- Forestry
- Biology
- Agronomy
- Soil Conservation
- Horticulture
- Range Management

## Salary and Benefits

Professional pay will be at the GS-7 and 9 levels. Pay will be dependent on education, experience and location. The 2009 pay rate for GS-7 is \$38,117/year and for GS-9 is \$46,625/year. The actual rate may be higher in certain parts of the country. Employees hired at the GS-7 rate have the opportunity to be promoted to a GS-9 after one year.

Benefits consist of:

- Vacation and Sick Leave
- Health Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Federal Employees Retirement System
- Investment and Savings Plan
- Promotion
- Flexible Work Hours
- Family Leave
- Family Friendly Programs

## Mobility Requirement

After 2 years the career intern will be converted to a career-conditional appointment and be required to move to another Plant Materials Center. The employee may have some input as to which region of the US they are moved to.

## Contact for More Information

To find out about current opportunities and internship locations, contact:

John Englert  
National Program Leader-Plant Materials  
Washington, D.C.  
phone: 202-720-0536  
email: [John.Englert@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:John.Englert@wdc.usda.gov)

## How to Apply

Submit the following to John Englert at [John.Englert@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:John.Englert@wdc.usda.gov):

- USDA Career Intern Program Application
- A Resume or Option Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment)
- College/University transcripts (unofficial is acceptable)

Please indicate what area of the country you are interested in working.