

# Recruiter's News

Recruiting for the ARS Future!

Issue 3, May 2004

## Print and Online Advertisements

In order to establish a consistent and implied corporate image for ARS, guidance has been established on what must be included in print and online employment advertisements (whether free or for a fee).

In determining when you should place a print or online employment advertisement, you should consider:

- Who your intended pool of candidates are, and
- How to reach your intended pool of candidates with your employment advertisement.

To increase the likelihood that your vacancy announcement will reach the type of candidates you are seeking, you should consider advertising your position:

- In local newspapers
- In college or university newspapers
- In major scientific and technical publications
- On job boards hosted by professional societies
- On job boards hosted by colleges and universities
- With disability and veterans organizations
- With minority-serving organizations

Simply having your job announcement posted on USAJOBS and the ARS web site may not get you the types of candidates you are seeking.

When placing employment advertisements, your ad should provide enough information so that the reader will want to learn more about your job opportunity. Your goal should be to get the reader interested and to the web site where they can read the entire vacancy announcement. Employment advertisements should be short and to the point – too many words may be a turnoff.

*Remember, before placing any employment advertisements (either paid or free), you must obtain approval from your servicing Human Resources Specialist.*

All employment advertisements must include:

- USDA/ARS logo, unless a publication prohibits its use
- Position title and grade
- Salary range for the position
- Location of the position
- Type of position (e.g., permanent full-time, permanent part-time, etc.)

- Brief statements describing the job
- Information telling where to find or get a copy of the announcement
- Citizenship requirement statement – “U.S. Citizenship is required.”
- Closing date of the announcement
- EEO Statement – “USDA/ARS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.”

Following is a sample employment advertisement:



### **Agricultural Engineer**

GS-11/12/13

Salary Range of \$47,240 to \$87,289

The Poultry Research Unit, Mississippi State, Mississippi, is seeking a permanent full-time scientist to: plan, conduct, and report research on improving methods and equipment for environmental control, reduction of stress, and control of disease in poultry production; design poultry house systems for optimal environments and develop improved locations of air inlets, fans, and evaporative cooling systems for improved poultry health and productivity; improve or develop instrumentation to effectively monitor broiler chicken facilities; develop computerized control systems that can be adapted to a poultry production unit; and measure relevant production and disease parameters of birds in the various test systems. For details and application directions, see:

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/hrd/vacancy/resjobs/X3S-3318.HTM>

To have a printed copy mailed, call 301-504-1482. U.S. citizenship is required.

Announcement closes April 30, 2004. PhD is desired. Federal benefits package available for qualifying positions. *USDA/ARS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*

## Hiring the Best: On-Target KSAs Make All The Difference

(Reprinted from the February 2004, Volume 9, MSPB Newsletter, Issues of Merit)

Did you lose your chance to hire the best employee because of a poorly written job announcement? If the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) do not seem to match a job hunter's skill set, he/she never becomes an applicant. Here are three guidelines for writing on-target KSAs when you create your next job announcement.

Broaden your horizons. Write general KSAs rather than targeting specific job tasks. When a job requires technical writing, some managers only consider applicants who have written technical reports. This tactic screens out authors of well-written college papers or marketing reports. A better strategy looks for applicants who have developed writing abilities in various ways. Recent college graduates or market analysts can fine-tune their technical writing on the job if they already have strong, general writing skills.

Choose your words with care. Write KSAs that applicants will understand. Suppose a job requires an employee to "Conduct relationships with direct reports with consideration of multi-party reciprocal interests and according to standardized procedures for appropriate exercise of workplace authority." A qualified job seeker might conclude that he/she could not do this; the real problem is that he/she cannot understand it. You will not see an application from this person, but you might if the KSA read "Manages others in a fair and ethical manner."

What makes a difference? Focus on what your best employees do better than the rest. Spend a few minutes with last year's performance appraisals and note the strengths of each employee. Everyone on your team may write well. But your best employees may be more flexible or work better in groups. Attract another top employee by focusing on KSAs that high performers have and others lack.

By writing better KSAs, you help the most skilled applicants find you, so that you can hire the best.

## Upcoming Events

The Recruitment Office, Office of Technology Transfer, and Human Nutrition Research Program will host exhibit booths at the following events. Information on

careers with ARS will be available at all exhibits. Consider keeping your vacancy announcements open to allow time for potential candidates to apply.

American Society of Microbiology Annual Meeting  
May 24-26, 2004

International Congress of Dietetics  
May 28-31, 2004

Institute of Food Technologists Annual Meeting  
July 12-16, 2004

Society for Nutrition Education Annual Conference  
July 17-21, 2004

American Dairy Science Association-American Society of Animal Science-Poultry Science Association Joint Meeting  
July 25-29, 2004

## Useful Web Sites

ARS Careers  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers>

Recruiters Resources  
<http://arsnet.usda.gov/HR/recruiters/index.html>

Bulletin 03-401  
ARS Print and Online Employment Advertisements  
<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/03-401.htm>

USDA Living Science  
<http://www.agriculture.purdue.edu/USDA/careers/index.html>

Just Garcia Hill – A Virtual Community for Minorities in Science  
<http://www.justgarciahill.org/>

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