



Job Description

Job title	Weed management specialist	Location - base	NIAB, Park Farm, Histon, Cambridge
Team	N/A	Job group	Specialist or senior specialist
Department	Farming Systems	Post ref.	SVA1378
Reports to	Head of Farming Systems and Agronomy Research	Line manages	N/A

1. Team overview

The role is part of the Farming Systems and Agronomy Research team. This team generates, collates and provides specialist technical and scientific knowledge, internally to NIAB and externally to a range of clients, on the agronomy of combinable crops and for arable rotations involving other crops such as potatoes, sugar beet, maize, short-term leys and field vegetables.

2. Role purpose

This role will generate and share specialist technical and scientific knowledge on the biology and management of key weed species within (primarily) combinable crops and for arable rotations including other crops such as potatoes, sugar beet, maize, short-term leys and field vegetables.

This role will develop and submit proposals and manage agronomy research projects and contract research/consultancy, delivering knowledge, internally and externally to NIAB to support effective weed management in combinable crops and arable rotations, as part of a group comprising Research Agronomists and Crop Specialists.

3. Financial authority/responsibility

This role will submit or contribute to proposals, and deliver or support agronomy research projects and services, with a value of £200K+ p.a.

4. Key relationships

Internal Other staff within the crop and agronomy specialist team, regional agronomy and trials coordination and delivery teams, other NIAB research teams. Close liaison with Agronomy Services team and the NIAB communications and events team.

External: Research funders, commercial companies, NIAB members (farmers, agronomists, and corporate). Other researchers and organisations involved in weed, crop and ecology research

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5. Key tasks/responsibilities

	Approx. % of time
Lead and contract-manage research projects and commercial contract services, working with other NIAB teams as appropriate, and support other NIAB specialists with development / delivery of projects or trials. Work as part of the crop and agronomy specialist team and with the statisticians and trials coordinators, with a particular focus on weed biology, crop/weed interactions and weed management strategies, providing data interpretation and technical advice.	50%
Prepare and submit proposals to develop new areas of research that bring value to NIAB's mission, with particular attention to farmer-focussed research and contract business studying weed management (direct and cultural control options), crop/weed interactions and farmland ecology.	20%
As part of the crop and agronomy specialist team, and working with the wider NIAB agronomy team, develop and deliver knowledge exchange through publications or initiatives targeted at NIAB members, the wider industry or for academic publications; and present technical information in engaging and accessible ways at meetings, demonstrations & events.	20%
Support the delivery of internal and external training on crop/weed interactions and weed management and be a representative of NIAB externally for these areas, as required.	10%

Note that the postholder may also undertake other duties, as required.

6. Working conditions

Mainly office based, using a range of IT systems, but with some field and/or glasshouse work and frequent travel by car for indoor meetings or outdoor events, or visits to farms / trials sites across Great Britain. There will be occasions when the job holder will need to attend distant meetings or sites, occasionally overseas, which may involve an overnight stay. Flexibility in working hours will be required, for early morning starts, late finishes and evening meetings.

This will include:

- Regular Visual Display Unit usage.
- Driving vehicles and operation of equipment (following safe operating procedures).
- Regular physical activity – walking, standing, bending and occasional manual handling of items up to 25 kg.
- Occasional requirement to work in the field on farm or at trials sites for sampling and monitoring, in all weathers.
- Regular exposure to plant material, pathogens and pollen, limited exposure to bees and other insects.
- Managed exposure to chemicals e.g. those used to fertilise and treat plants.
- Regular lone working in field/glasshouse or for off-site visits.

Due to peaks in workload, it may not be possible to take holiday at certain times unless pre-arranged with sufficient notice.

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Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Degree in a crop-focused applied biological or agricultural subject or equivalent qualifications/experience	x	
Postgraduate qualification related to crops, weeds or ecology		x
BASIS Crop Protection (Arable)		x
Knowledge and skills		
Good, practical knowledge of agricultural systems and arable crop production/agronomy in the UK, including crop/weed interactions and weed management	x	
Sound knowledge of arable crop/agronomy field trialling and experimentation including trials design, analysis and reporting of experimental results and familiarity with statistics	x	
Good verbal and written communication skills	x	
Ability to talk to, listen to and understand farmers, agronomists, and technical specialists, with a range of requirements and at different technical levels	x	
Good IT skills – email, word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software, document sharing, ideally Microsoft Office 365 applications	x	
Good organisational and planning skills, able to prioritise and organise time and work tasks	x	
Able to assimilate complex datasets, present sound technical arguments, and make impartial recommendations		x
Experience		
Practical experience of agricultural systems/inputs R&D, particularly weed biology/ecology, crop/weed interactions and weed management	x	
Significant involvement in the undertaking of crop and agro-chemical product evaluation and trialling including experimental design and data analysis	x	
Delivering technical materials (presentations and field demonstrations) at indoor and outdoor events	x	
Contract negotiation and business development		x
Project and financial management		x
Attributes		
Able to work with a high level of technical accuracy and attention to detail	x	
Flexibility – able to work independently and as part of diverse teams	x	
Proactive and self-motivated; confident about working without direct supervision	x	
Able to assimilate complex datasets and make impartial and independent recommendations	x	
Diplomatic, able to handle sensitive situations and confidential information		x
Able to build relationships both internally and externally to deliver the aims and requirements of NIAB.		x
Other		
Driving licence or access to independent means of travelling, to support regular travel to NIAB field sites and/or customer sites elsewhere in Great Britain. A pool of vehicles is maintained for use on NIAB business.	x	