



Job Description

Job title	Centre Manager	Location - base	Hereford
Team	Trials Delivery Team	Job group	Specialist
Department	HE	Post ref.	SVA1380
Reports to	West Regional Manager	Line manages	1 x Arable Operator plus casual staff

1. Team overview

The primary role of the West Regional trials team is to conduct trials and evaluations on a range of agricultural and horticultural crops. The dedication of the team combining with experience and local knowledge to manage a range of crops to enable the team to offer services across a range of environments, soil types and as part of commercial crop rotations. Good team and inter-departmental working are key to our successful operations.

The West Regional team carries out work on over 20,000 plots, covering an area including Herefordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Wales.

2. Role purpose

Leading the trials team responsible for the NIAB field trials operations based at or run from the Hereford centre. The role will focus on the delivery of high-quality field trials and demonstration plots across a broad range of crop species including combinable crops, root, herbage and forage crops to evaluate varietal performance, disease resistance and agrochemical efficacy. The team carry out trials for a wide range of commercial and levy board customers as well as trials carried out for the NIAB Network. The role also involves working with other centres across the regions to support the delivery of our national trials programme and helping to manage and share resources when workload requires.

Deliver results according to set protocols and to pre-determined timetables. Ensure that health and safety guidelines are followed.

To deputise for the Regional Manager as required.

3. Financial authority/responsibility

Delegated day-to-day spending is under the control of the post holder who also assists the Regional Manager in the preparation of an annual budget and planning for capital expenditure.

Authority to approve purchase orders within defined limits.

Manage budgets for consumables, equipment repairs, maintenance contracts and temporary staff.

4. Key relationships

- Internal** Reports to Regional Manager.
Responsible for line management, functional management and team leadership of staff at the centre.
Required to build strong working relationship with Regional Agronomist and relevant Crop Specialists and Contract Managers within the business.
- External:** Required to liaise with host growers; especially Monkhall Farm and their staff to ensure that field operations are carried out in a timely manner and to fit into the host's work schedules.
Liaison with customers to deliver their trials according to protocol.

Date issued	10.01.2025	Page	1
Author	MIP	Filename	Centre Manager Hereford 10.01.2025

5. Key tasks/responsibilities

	Approx. % of time
<p>Leading a team to establish and run field trials of various crops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduling trials programme; including interpretation of technical protocols and preparing field layouts to allow efficient, cost-effective management by Niab and/or host. Planning and carrying out drilling, pesticide & fertiliser applications and harvesting of a range of crops. Assessing trials/plots for a range of agronomic characteristics Appropriate data collection and record keeping of all operations to meet industry standards and contract protocols (COSHH, ISO, GEP etc) with trial data/results being delivered to protocol deadlines. Preparation of reports as required by contract managers. 	70%
<p>To carry out centre management activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel management and performance reporting. Responsibility for day-to-day spending at the centre and assisting the Regional Manager with budgets and cost management. 	10%
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To liaise with hosts at trials sites and be the key contact for Regional Agronomists, Contract Managers and customers. Liaising with internal staff (e.g. trials co-ordinators, contract managers, researchers, Seed Handling Unit, stats) and/or external customers to ensure correct seed and plans are used, correct treatments applied. 	10%
<p>To maintain a range of equipment and facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all machinery, equipment and buildings are serviced, maintained and ready for use when needed. Keeping maintenance records up to date, arranging contractors (engineers) to carry out work. Ensuring NIAB Health and Safety policy is adhered to at all times. 	10%

1. Working conditions

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

Work is split between office and field, which varies according to the season.

Manual handling – occasional handling items of up to 25kg.

Physically demanding work. Walking, standing, bending and manual handling of items up to 25 kg.

Working outdoors in any weather condition at all times of the year, meaning exposure to sunlight and rain.

Regular exposure to plant material, pathogens, pollen, bees and other insects.

Managed exposure to chemicals e.g. seeds treated with pesticide and fertiliser.

Expected to work additional hours and at weekends as workload and season dictates.

Some periods of lone working both indoors and out.

Date issued	10.01.2025	Page	2
Author	MIP	Filename	Centre Manager Hereford 10.01.2025

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Higher education	x	
Qualifications in agriculture, applied science or land-based industry	x	
Degree or equivalent		x
Knowledge and skills		
Knowledge of arable or horticultural production systems and experimental procedures	x	
Good organisational skills with the ability to prioritise and work to deadlines, even when under pressure	x	
Good IT skills - competency in Microsoft Office 365 applications – Outlook, Word, Excel, SharePoint, Powerpoint	x	
Good numeracy and data handling skills	x	
Good verbal and written communication skills	x	
Pesticide application certification PA1, PA6	x	
Pesticide application certification PA2 (Mounted/Trailed Boom Sprayer)		x
Ability to operate and carry out routine maintenance of farm machinery and equipment.		x
Forklift/Telehandler certification		x
BASIS and FACTS qualifications		x
Experience		
Experience of running field trials	x	
Experience of managing staff and teams	x	
Attributes		
Accuracy and attention to detail	x	
Proactive and self-motivated; confident about working without direct supervision	x	
Ability to make critical decisions and react to a changing environment	x	
Flexibility – able to work alone and as part of a small team		x
Other		
Driving licence, enabling travel to Cambridge HQ and other UK trial sites and Centres	x	