

Two Postdoctoral Scholar Positions

Two positions are available at University of Florida (UF) to work on disruption of Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) vectoring of the causative agent of citrus greening. This disease has devastated citrus production in Florida and now threatens citrus production in Texas and California. The bacterium presumed to cause this disease, *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLAs), is transmitted by ACP. The goal of this project is to prevent ACP transmission of CLAs by disrupting CLAs interaction with the ACP gut. This project is funded by the USDA for collaborative research in the labs of Dr. Kirsten Pelz-Stelinski, Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC), Lake Alfred, FL and Dr. Bryony C. Bonning, Department of Entomology & Nematology, Gainesville, FL.

Responsibilities: Position

1. Hemipteran gut physiology (Gainesville, FL)

- Characterize interaction between gut binding peptides with the ACP gut epithelium
- Assess the impact of gene silencing of target gut genes on survival, behavior and fecundity
- Liaise with personnel at CREC for testing impacts on CLAs

2. Insect biotechnology (Lake Alfred, FL)

- Develop delivery system for gut binding peptides in ACP
- Assess the fitness of paratransgenic insects
- Evaluate impacts of gene silencing on CLAs acquisition
- Liaise with personnel in Gainesville for testing impacts on CLAs

Required Qualifications:

- PhD, in entomology, microbiology, biochemistry or a related area

Preferred qualifications:

- Research experience with insect physiology and / or gene silencing (Position #1)
- Solid molecular biology and biochemistry skills
- Strong communication and organizational skills.

These positions are based in the [Department of Entomology and Nematology](#) at University of Florida. The Bonning lab provides outstanding infrastructure for cutting edge research and has a strong record of innovation and trainee placement within the agricultural biotechnology industry sector, USDA and academia. The Pelz-Stelinski lab specializes in vector biology, insect immune systems, and microbial ecology and works extensively with the citrus industry to address research priorities related to ACP biology and management, including investigation of CLAs transmission and evaluation of biotechnological tools for CLAs management in commercial citrus.

University of Florida has the largest Entomology and Nematology department in the nation, with outstanding facilities. The diverse faculty has strengths in both basic and applied research, and strong collaborative and interdepartmental interactions. Gainesville, Florida is consistently ranked among the [Top 10 Best College Towns](#) in the U.S.

Candidates should apply by emailing a single pdf file with “PD Application – ACP” in the subject line containing 1) a statement of research experience, interests and career goals, 2) curriculum vitae including complete publication list, 3) names, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers for three references to: Dr. Bryony C. Bonning, E-mail: bbonning@ufl.edu for position #1, or to Dr. Kirsten Pelz Stelinski, E-mail: pelzstelinski@ufl.edu for position #2.

Review of applications will begin on **Monday, November 1st, 2021** and continue until the positions have been filled.