



**CONFIDENTIAL**

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**TITLE:** Research Associate

**DEPARTMENT:** Applied Research and Agronomy

**REPORTS TO:** Regional Applied Research Manager, Southern Region

**LOCATION:** Santa Maria, CA

**CLASSIFICATION:** Year round; full-time

**PAY STATUS:** Exempt

**DATE:** May 10th, 2017

**JOB SUMMARY:** Driscoll's produces the finest berries in the world. Executing our research priorities through detailed trials at Testplot and Grower's fields, reporting findings and monitoring advance genetic selections are the key responsibilities of this role.

As a Research Associate you will work directly with Plant Breeding, Nursery and Testplot crew assisting the Agronomy department implementing and executing various research projects for Strawberries, Raspberries, Blackberries and Blueberries. The position will spend a large percentage of time in the field, working directly with growers and ranch managers while collecting data from various research projects, including field sampling, counting, scouting pest/diseases, evaluating and monitoring cultivar performance and assist extending cultural practices and new technologies. This position will also be essential for the commercialization of new cultivars and improving overall grower performance.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**

1. Identify farming challenges and opportunities, brainstorm propose and discuss solutions through implementing and planning research projects and coordinating trial execution.
2. Coordinate the recording of applied research test plot data and field pick plots.
3. Monitor and evaluate farming techniques of new cultivars at late stages prior to general farming release, assist Berry Agronomist with documenting all relevant information and BMPs (Best Management Practices) in Production Guide.
4. Responsible for collecting field data for ranch and variety evaluation. Perform regular visits to field experiments to take observations, and ensure that data collection is complete and accurate, and processes are implemented.

5. Work closely with ranch supervisors and growers at all test plots and ranches to determine the proper execution for field experiments and data management. Regularly visit production fields to understand production methods, cycles, and support growers with technical advice.
6. Responsible for farming the existing substrate testplot area (blueberry), including monitoring, irrigation, fertilization, pest & disease scouting and management, weeding, tunneling, pruning, etc... and designing/coordinating expansion.
7. Write research reports and document best production practices, develop a communication and education plan to share findings with growers and key stakeholders.
8. Regular interaction with key team members and stakeholders.
9. Follow Company policies and practices while representing Driscoll's in an ethical and business-like manner in all interactions with employees, government agencies, growers, customers, etc.
10. Ensures the safe keeping of Driscoll's confidential and proprietary information and materials.
11. Perform other duties as instructed by supervisor.

#### **JOB QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Bachelors of Science Degree in Agronomy or Horticulture is required.
- 1-3+ years of research experience/experimental design (RCBD) is required. Research and analytical skills sufficient to analyze problems in a multi-faceted way and to develop and participate in implementing solutions
- Knowledge in Statistical data treatment, JMP, SPSS or equivalent software.
- 0-2+ years extension work (or skills) with production crops is desired. Berry farming experience is a plus.
- Proficient internet and Microsoft Office computer experience.
- Bi-lingual (Spanish/English) with particular emphasis on reading and writing in a bilingual environment.
- Demonstrate effective verbal and written communication and math skills.
- Strong organizational skills with ability to do multiple tasks and solve problems with a sense of urgency with minimal supervision.
- Needs to be detail-oriented, proactive, dependable, reliable, Self-starter, critical and strategic thinker and able to work independently as well as a member of a team.
- Able to lift 40 pounds, ability to work in field conditions.
- Travel to local and regional farms will be required on a daily basis, with occasional longer distance domestic and international.
- California driver's license and the ability to be covered under company-sponsored vehicle insurance program are also required.
- A valid passport and the ability to travel internationally without restrictions are also required.

\*This job description is intended to describe the general nature of the work performed by employees in this job. It is not an exhaustive list of all the job's responsibilities. At Driscoll's, all of our jobs include broad responsibilities for continually improving the processes we use to develop our products.