

M.S. student opportunity working on Integrated Pest and Pollinator Management in alfalfa seed production



Where: The student will be co-advised by [Dr. Kelsey Graham](#), Research Entomologist at the USDA ARS Pollinating Insects Research Unit and [Dr. Subodh Adhikari](#), Assistant Professor in the Biology Department at Utah State University, Logan, UT. Student will be enrolled as a graduate student at Utah State University.



When: Enrollment for Spring Semester 2026 (January 2026).

Project Details: You will be working on a USDA NIFA funded project developing and testing Integrated Pest and Pollinator Management strategies for alfalfa seed production. The student will specifically be testing if an IPPM pesticide program can increase the abundance of natural enemies and protect wild and managed bees critical for commercial seed production. Additional projects may include working with an agricultural economist to evaluate the cost-benefits of implementing IPPM strategies, and/or monitoring for Lygus bug (primary pest of concern) parasitism through use of molecular methods.

The majority of this fieldwork will be conducted in eastern Washington, a nine-hour drive from Logan, UT. Therefore, frequent overnight travel will be required throughout the summer, and comfort with driving long distances.

Support: The student will be supported through a Graduate Research Assistantship. This provides a stipend (~\$27,000/year), healthcare benefits, and covers graduate school tuition. Travel and research supplies costs will also be covered. Student will be hired as a Biological Science Technician through the USDA ARS during the summer months.

Preferred experience:

- Fieldwork experience, especially on commercial farms
- Experience working independently and in unfavorable weather conditions
- Experience with coordinating projects, especially with the public/growers
- Prior experience working with insects
- Valid state driver's license
- Experience or interest in working with growers and participating in Extension education
- **Required** Must be a US citizen to meet USDA employment requirements.

How to apply: Please email Dr. Graham (kelsey.graham@usda.gov) and Dr. Adhikari (subodh.adhikari@usu.edu) expressing your interest in this position, along with your current CV/resume. Please reach out prior to Sept. 30, 2025 for full consideration. If we determine it is a good match, we will then have you submit a formal application through the Utah State University Graduate School.