

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION**

**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Title:** Agent

**Working Title:** Extension Specialist – Vegetable Production

**Position Number:**

**Category Status:** Faculty Non-Tenured, On Track, Full-Time

**Unit:** AGNR-UME-Field Operations

**Location:** Lower Shore Research and Education Center, Salisbury or Wye Research and Education Center, Queenstown

**Position Purpose:**

University of Maryland Extension (UME) invites applications for a 12-month tenure-track position of Agent to conduct applied research, provide educational programming, and offer expertise in vegetable production to producers, agricultural service providers, and UME personnel throughout Maryland. Specifically, the Extension Specialist will provide leadership and delivery of educational programming related to vegetable production systems. The Vegetable Specialist will be expected to respond to a broad set of subject area needs within the vegetable production field including horticultural production, integrated pest management (IPM), plant pathology, or other topics. The applicant will have access to Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station research and education facilities across the state. The Extension Specialist will facilitate partnerships with university colleagues, local and state agencies, elected officials, communities, landowners, producers, and industry groups in facilitating implementation of best practices related to vegetable production and management. The incumbent will also serve as the Maryland representative for regional vegetable production information and training efforts. The position will be based at the Lower Shore Research and Education Center, Salisbury or Wye Research and Education Center, Queenstown.

**Position Responsibilities:**

The Extension Specialist will be part of a diverse team (College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR), UME, and key stakeholder groups) that conducts applied research and educational programming to improve the production, management, and profitability of vegetable systems in Maryland. The position will provide leadership for relevant vegetable programming within the Agriculture and Food Systems Program, one of four UME programs. The individual will collaborate closely with producers, field and campus Extension colleagues, state and federal agencies, industry representatives, agricultural leaders, and other stakeholders to address important issues in vegetable production systems.

The incumbent will conduct needs assessments to identify research and education program priorities of targeted audiences. The Extension Specialist will also be responsible for working intentionally and collaboratively to increase the visibility and reach of UME programs through educational programming designed to meet the needs of diverse audiences. The position will interpret and disseminate the latest research findings using a variety of delivery and communication strategies appropriate for intended target audiences including, but not limited to, workshops, classes, demonstration projects, webcasts, social media, publications, mass media,

and community coalitions. The position will also provide occasional support for youth development programs related to horticultural production systems.

The Extension Specialist will use entrepreneurial practices to secure grants, contracts, program fees, partnerships, and sponsorships to develop a robust Extension program that delivers, measures, and interprets the impacts of programs and engagements regarding vegetable production systems in Maryland and beyond. Innovative strategies and cutting-edge teaching and learning methods will be used to design, develop, deliver, and evaluate programs for a robust Extension education program that engages participants in a collaborative-learning environment and encourages adoption of research-based information in decision-making.

The Extension Specialist represents UME; the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD); and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. The position ensures that educational programming is in alignment with UME's current strategic plan and plan of work, especially as it relates to the United States Department of Agriculture. The faculty member will be on track for tenure and promotion to a higher rank in accordance with UMD policy and UME tenure guidelines within the timeframe defined.

In carrying out these duties, the individual reports to the Assistant Director, Agriculture and Food Systems Program.

### **Qualifications:**

Required –

- Master's degree in horticulture, plant science, or a related field of study.
- Experience conducting applied research to improve agricultural productivity of vegetable production through the application of advanced agricultural technology systems.
- Demonstrated leadership and management abilities along with evidence of the ability to work with colleagues, students, industry, and other clientele. Evidence of the ability to work effectively as a team member.
- Knowledge and use of computer technology for educational programming and management.
- Demonstrated experience conducting Extension or outreach education.
- Evidence of excellent teaching and communication skills. Possess excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Personal transportation and valid driver's license required. Must be willing to travel throughout the state of Maryland. Out of state travel may also be required.
- Flexible work schedule required for delivering evening and weekend educational programs and activities as determined by clientele availability and need.
- Evidence of capacity to build UME Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Respect capacity through the Extension program model.
- This position is subject to a Criminal History Record Check and University of Maryland Background check. Employment is contingent upon successful completion and clearance of the Criminal History Record Check.

Preferred –

- Ph.D. in horticulture, plant science, or a related field of study.
- Demonstrated ability to develop outreach programming that assists stakeholders in making research-based decisions.
- Evidence of peer-reviewed journal articles and Extension publications.

- Demonstrated experience in grant writing and obtaining extramural funding.
- Demonstrated skills to effectively use electronic and social media to communicate technical information.
- Experience working with graduate students is desirable.
- Experience working with 4-H youth development programs is desirable.
- Preference will be given to individuals with experience working with diverse audiences and all socioeconomic levels.

**Physical Demands of the Position:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

- This position frequently presents information through vocal and written communication to individuals of various ages, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds.
- A routine part of this position's responsibilities would be to transport materials to and from field research plots and teaching/event locations, including loading and unloading the vehicle. The employee will frequently lift and/or move items weighing up to 20 pounds. Set up and teardown of research machinery, project displays, tables, and chairs will be necessary at many teaching sites.
- This position requires the employee to work outdoors conducting field research, delivering programs, and teaching at events. This may occur during very hot and/or inclement weather.
- Visual acuity is required for preparing and analyzing written or computer data and presentations.

**Salary and Benefits:** Salary will be commensurate with experience: Master's Base: \$62,255; Ph.D. Base: \$74,354. The University of Maryland offers an extensive benefits package.

**Applications:** All candidates must apply online at <https://ejobs.umd.edu>. A complete application packet includes a cover letter, resume or CV, copies of transcripts, and three professional references, including name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

**Closing Date:** For best consideration, complete the application by 03/30/2024. The position will remain open until a suitable candidate has been identified.

The University of Maryland, College Park, an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action; all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment. The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected veteran status, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, creed, marital status, political affiliation, personal appearance, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment, in all aspects of employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions.