

**M.S. Graduate Research Assistantship in Plant Science | Sustainable Vegetable Production
South Dakota State University | May 2024
Co-advised by Kristine Lang, Assistant Professor & Thandiwe Nleya, Professor**

We are seeking a M.S. graduate student research assistant to advance sustainable vegetable production in South Dakota. The successful candidate will be advised by a multi-disciplinary team of faculty and will be based in the Agronomy, Horticulture, and Plant Science Department. The applied field research project will examine the impact of 2nd and 3rd year clover living mulch systems in suppressing weeds, reducing tillage, and improving soil health for cabbage and sweet corn production. The trial site is in transition to USDA certified organic production and is located at the SDSU Southeast Research Farm near Beresford, SD (approx. 90 minutes from the SDSU campus). We also collaborate with two nearby commercial vegetable farms.

Project duties include: designing and managing field, greenhouse, and laboratory experiments, collecting and analyzing data, training and overseeing work by undergraduate research assistants, communicating and coordinating field activities with staff of the SDSU Southeast Research Farm, writing Extension and peer-review journal articles, delivering Extension and scientific conference presentations, traveling to multiple research sites across South Dakota and other duties within the research lab as assigned.

You MUST have a valid driver's license at time of application as driving is critical to this role. Experience with equipment is preferred, but those with a willingness to learn should also apply.

This M.S. assistantship includes a stipend and full tuition waiver for two years. Graduate research assistants are responsible for SDSU course fees (typically \$400 or less per semester). This position does not include health insurance benefits.

We are seeking a candidate who can begin May 2024. Current SDSU students who are graduating in May 2024 are encouraged to apply as they may be able to begin hourly employment in March and transition to the graduate program in May.

Your coursework and winter off-season office location will be in Brookings. Expect at least 75% of summer research time to be based in Beresford. Sioux Falls, which has many housing options, is located approx. 30 minutes from the SDSU Southeast Research Farm and 60 minutes from the SDSU campus.

We are looking for a student who is:

- willing to travel on a weekly basis during the growing season
- comfortable working independently and has demonstrated leadership skills
- eager to join an ongoing project and maintain current research protocols and data collection
- willing to work with a large volume agronomic and environmental data
- excited to develop new protocols and dig deeper into produce quality
- eager to join a growing team of students, staff, and faculty who are passionate about cover crops, soil health, and local food farming in SD!

For priority consideration, please send an email to Kristine Lang, Ph.D. (kristine.lang@sdstate.edu) with the following materials by February 29, 2024:

- 1) a cover letter detailing your interest in and qualifications for the position
- 2) resume or CV
- 3) a list of three references and their contact information.