

Principal Plant Pathologist

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Flexible employment arrangements are available with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The Job

The role provides leadership, management and technical direction to the department's Plant Pathology and Botany Section (PPaBS) team, across its laboratories in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, Mickleham and Perth. As an Assistant Director, the Principal Plant Pathologist will have a high level of leadership skills, and knowledge and working experience in plant pathology, be self-motivated, and be able to work independently and collaboratively with minimal supervision.

Under the general direction of the Director, the Assistant Director will undertake duties that include, but are not limited to:

- Leading and managing recruitment, performance, professional development of scientific staff in specific teams within PPaBS, as required.
- Providing leadership, oversight and technical support to teams within PPaBS, as required, for identification and management of samples submitted to the laboratories for identification, disease diagnosis, and provision of associated operational advice on biosecurity risk and biosecurity measures, including management of plant health issues in imported plants under post-entry quarantine.
- Leading engagement with internal and external stakeholders to resolve complex plant health issues for goods under biosecurity control and associated Approved Arrangement facilities.
- Providing leadership, reporting and strategic contributions for PPaBS nationally, including: development and implementation of data and quality management systems; building and maintaining conventional and innovative diagnostics capability and capacity; effective and compliant financial management, including cost recovery; and business planning and monitoring of key performance indicators.
- Fostering WHS in PPaBS, including building and fostering a positive WHS culture, and contributing to WHS management in PPaBS and SSG nationally.
- Contributing to development and delivery of technical training to internal and external stakeholders.
- Leading and contributing to operational and strategic initiatives in SSG, the division and the department, as required.
- Leading, promoting and ensuring effective implementation of Australian Public Sector (APS) Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct.

The successful applicant may be required to periodically undertake field surveillance and travel to other locations in Australia and, if required, offshore.

The position requires that the applicant has:

- Demonstrated experience in managing and motivating a team, undertaking complex tasks, to prioritise effort to meet changing operational needs, to negotiate resolution of issues or conflicting points of view and to harness the skills and knowledge of the team.
- Demonstrated experience in leading delivery of plant health diagnostics for a diverse range of plant pathogenic taxa, utilising traditional and innovative diagnostic technologies, and experience in troubleshooting and transferring skills to technical staff.
- Demonstrated experience in interrogation, analysis and reporting on statistical and diagnostic data, utilising workplace information systems.
- Demonstrated ability to think laterally and harness information and opportunities to support the needs of a diagnostic laboratory, including marshalling professional expertise and contributing own expertise to achieve policy, innovation, WHS and laboratory quality assurance outcomes.
- Demonstrated ability to provide impartial and forthright advice with effective and concise communication of relevant information (orally and in writing) to a broad range of audiences, within a regulatory context.
- Demonstrated initiative, self-motivation and ability to commit energy and drive to see that personal and team goals are achieved in an efficient and timely manner.
- Demonstrated ability to build and sustain productive, positive, respectful relationships with other members of a team, and with professionals external to the Section and the department, including contributing and facilitating regular, constructive feedback and communication, while fostering a positive culture of innovation and change.

Mandatory Qualifications

Post-graduate qualifications in agriculture or biological science, with specialisation in plant pathology and diagnostics, or equivalent based on extensive demonstrated experience with at least graduate qualifications.

The successful candidate must:

- Hold and maintain a valid Australian motor vehicle driver's licence.
- Note that the physical requirements of the role (s) involve a combination of outdoor and office based work.
- Note that you may be required to perform occasional out-of-hours and weekend work.
- Note that you will be required, from time to time, to work in difficult, remote and harsh environments (possibly for extended periods) under limited supervision or in teams.
- Wear an official uniform supplied by the department, including during field operations (as applicable), in accordance with the department's uniform policy.
- Wear appropriate protective personal equipment and clothing to comply with departmental Work Health & Safety policies and procedures.
- Note that you must satisfactorily complete the department's Biosecurity Foundation Program and meet the minimum requirements in order to be appointed as a Biosecurity Officer under the Biosecurity Act 2015

Apply by 21 February 2024 at <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/jobs/apply>