Practical Farmers of Iowa is hiring a Research Associate

For over 30 years, Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) has equipped farmers all over the state (and beyond) to build resilient farms and communities. Throughout that time, on-farm research has been a guiding principle and a core part of our success. We are seeking an outgoing and driven professional to join our staff as a research associate to help us expand on this success. This is a new position, added to increase the capacity of PFI’s Cooperators’ Program as the desire for relevant, farmer-led research grows among both our farmer members and stakeholders across the Midwest.

Research done through PFI’s Cooperators’ Program is entirely farmer-led; our participating farmers decide the research priorities, and Practical Farmers staff help participants set up rigorous on-farm research projects exploring topics that matter to them. Current on-farm research priorities include, but are not limited to:

- cover crops
- diversified cropping systems
- organic cropping systems
- integrated crop and livestock systems
- grazing
- CSA fruit and vegetable production systems
- small- or large-scale vegetable production.

The research associate will play a major role in strengthening our on-farm research process and approach. This will include amplifying our reporting and dispersing of on-farm research trial results, as well as improving internal data management. We are looking for a self-motivated individual capable of engaging with farmers and other partners on multiple, diverse research projects. The research associate will be immediately involved in upcoming multi-location projects that will explore cereal rye cover crop seeding dates; seeding rates and termination dates; and their effects on crop yield and weed suppression in both conventional and organic corn-soybean systems.

**Duties:**

- Coordinate and implement on-farm research trials
- Lead field sampling for some on-farm trials
- Statistical analyses
- Create reports from on-farm trial results
- Explore opportunities for publication in refereed journals
- Present results at events
• Improve PFI’s on-farm trial data management (e.g., database management)
• Edit and review research reports drafted by fellow staff
• Interact with numerous cooperating farmers and partners
• Fundraise for the Cooperators’ Program, including writing grant proposals and grant reports
• Plan and staff events (field days, conference sessions, workshops, etc.)
• Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

• Master’s or doctoral degree in agronomy or related field is highly recommended
• Demonstrated ability to conduct, analyze and interpret research results
• Experience with JMP, SAS and/or R statistical software
• Experience with Microsoft Access or other database software
• Comfortable working with a diverse audience of farmers and research partners
• Excellent communication skills; ability to effectively present in oral and written form to farmers and stakeholders
• Experience writing grant proposals and grant reports
• Open to a diversity of agricultural systems
• Ability to work well with others and build partnerships
• Ability to manage several concurrently active projects
• Ability to stay on task and meet deadlines
• Valid driver’s license
• Ability to lift 50 pounds and walk long distances
• Motivated and a self-starter

This is a full-time position based in our Ames office with some travel (mostly in Iowa) expected. Salary is competitive, based on experience and qualifications. Practical Farmers offers a flexible, fast-paced work environment with opportunities for independent initiative and professional development.

The position reports to Stefan Gailans, research and field crops director. Practical Farmers is a family-friendly employer. The position includes full health care benefits, a flex plan, short- and long-term disability, life insurance and generous paid time off. Employer contribution to a 401k retirement plan is offered after one year of employment.

Please apply by sending cover letter, resume or CV, and references to Stefan Gailans at stefan@practicalfarmers.org by Sept. 7, 2018.