

Extension Educator

Conservation Agronomist

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title:	Local Extension Educator- Conservation Agronomist
Full-time Position	Funded by Rural Advantage
Capacity/Program Area:	Agriculture, Food, and Environment (AFE)
Application Review Deadline:	July 28, 2008. Position will remain open until filled.
Location:	Rural Advantage Fairmont, MN 56031-3648

ABOUT EXTENSION

The University of Minnesota Extension Service is a major outreach arm of the University of Minnesota, a land grant institution with a mission to serve the public through applied research and education. The mission of the University of Minnesota Extension Service is: *"Making a difference by connecting community needs and University resources to address critical issues in Minnesota."*

ABOUT RURAL ADVANTAGE

Rural Advantage is a Nonprofit Corporation located in Fairmont MN. The Rural Advantage mission is: *"to promote connections between agriculture, the environment and rural communities in order to improve ecological health, economic viability and rural vitality."* Rural Advantage seeks to advance landscape diversification, cultivate sustainable agriculture, support agricultural 'systems' thinking, foster rural economic development and promote increased stewardship.

ABOUT THIS POSITION

This Extension Educator will focus on education and applied research around sustainable farming systems that promote higher levels of non-point source pollution mitigation practices. This position will be targeted to advance the adoption of Alternative Crops; to create sustainable systems; increase adoption of practices that build soil health; promote crop rotations of 3-5 years; educate and advance carbon sequestration and nutrient trading opportunities in the region; promote the use of integrated pest management and economics as part of sustainable systems. In addition, this position will work with local and regional educators, as well as, University of Minnesota Researchers, to conduct applied research and use demonstration of appropriate principles and practices to meet these goals. This programming will involve new and innovative ideas for crop producers for which this position will need to do program development, delivery, marketing, evaluation, coordination of logistics and applied research. This position will work across southern Minnesota with at least 75% of their effort dedicated to the Greater Blue Earth River Basin.

This position is accountable to the Area Program Leader for Local Positions in AFE for program direction, performance evaluation and personnel actions in her/his supervisory role. This position is funded through Rural Advantage and will be housed in their office in Fairmont MN.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Develop and maintain effective local, regional, university and state partnerships that further the development and delivery of this program in concert with Extension policies and guidelines. This includes coordination and cooperation with local, state and federal agencies, commodity groups, other non-profits, non-government partners and other businesses and organizations working in this area.
- Design, develop, deliver/implement and evaluate innovative educational programs based in scholarly/scientific theory and research, and appropriate to audience in the area of third crops; Precision Conservation principles; adoption of practices that build soil health; crop rotations of 3-5 years; carbon sequestration and nutrient trading or other topics as determined by the program.
- Develop field demonstrations and conduct scholarly research in collaboration with University faculty around alternative crops, soil health, sustainable agricultural practice and other topics that coincide with this program.
- Provide technical assistance and information in the areas of conservation practices, soil health, carbon sequestration and nutrient trading, as well as, other topics that are appropriate to this program.
- Use technology for program design, program delivery, reporting, communication, trend monitoring, and locating information.
- Foster and contribute to a positive work climate with colleagues, advisory groups, audiences and partnerships.
- Ensure that Extension programs, facilities, committees, and employment opportunities are accessible to new, diverse, and historically underserved audiences.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education: **Bachelor's degree is required.** Course work in agriculture production systems, environmental sciences or conservation is required. Training or education around conservation and agronomy is preferred. An MS degree is preferred.

Experience: Previous experience as an Extension professional or related educational position is preferred. Experience working directly with producers and industry personnel preferred. Experience working in the area of conservation agronomy is preferred.

Skills/Abilities: Excellent oral and written communication and ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues, partners and stakeholders is required. Ability to work with and influence producers to adopt new ideas and practices is essential. The successful candidate will have an understanding of systems thinking and how this can affect enterprise organization and development in the future. Knowledge of and basic skills with computers and Microsoft products is required. A working knowledge of project/program management, including budget development, with the ability to read and interpret project/program financial statements and plans is preferred. Ability to work with multiple

projects is essential. Commitment to ongoing professional development and ability to articulate public value of educational programming in agriculture production systems preferred.

APPOINTMENT/BENEFITS

1. The Extension Educator position has an annual University academic professional appointment. Renewal is dependent on local funding, program need, performance, and results.
2. University of Minnesota benefits package.
3. Reimbursement for travel and subsistence is available in accordance with University policy. (Must provide own means for traveling throughout the state and legally required vehicle insurance.)
4. Salary commensurate with education and experience.

TO APPLY

Requisition #: 156165

Please submit your cover letter and resume or vita at <https://employment.umn.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=73501>. Three professional letters of reference and transcripts for all college work (unofficial transcripts are acceptable) are also required to complete your application. To submit your three letters of reference on-line; you can attach them to the "references" section of the "optional document." To submit your unofficial transcripts on-line; you can attach them to the "Additional Document" section of the "optional documents."

Hard copies of three professional letters of reference and transcripts for all college work that can not be submitted online should be sent to:

Naaz Babvani
Extension Human Resources
250 Coffey Hall - 1420 Eckles Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
babva001@umn.edu
FAX: 612-624-7749
PHONE: 612-624-3717

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To check the status of your application, log-in to the University of Minnesota employment website at <https://employment.umn.edu/>. To log-in, you will need the user name and password you create when you apply for the position.

***Any offer of employment is contingent on the successful completion of a background check.

The University of Minnesota Extension Service is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status or sexual orientation.