

JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. Job title: Technical specialist - crops and farming systems

Centre: Crops and Agronomy

Grade: tbc (Fixed term – 2 years)

Location: Cambridge HQ

Reports to : Head of Farming Systems Research

Line Manages : No line management

2. Main purpose of role:

- Ensure the efficient operation of crop trials programmes by working with staff across NIAB including the crop specialists, regional trial centre managers and associated trials teams, seed handling, statistics and data handling teams, quality chemists, pathologists and trials coordinators..
- Work with the crop and agronomy specialists to develop and nurture customer relationships, negotiate and complete contracts, manage contracts once awarded and ensure delivery and billing to schedule.
- Work as part of the crop specialist team to arrange demonstrations at trial sites and national events. Prepare and deliver inputs for knowledge exchange.
- Develop research and contract business in root/pulse crops and/or other specialist areas as appropriate and ensure effective delivery of resulting work and liaison with various industry and trade organisations to develop funding options for work.

3. Financial authority/responsibility (e.g. delegated budget, authorisation level, approx value of contracts etc):

Small consumables budget (£5K)

Contract research up to around £50K value per contract pa.

4. Key relationships (external and internal):

Internal – Crop and other technical specialists, trials and co-ordination teams, including regional centres. Liaison with business development, technical services and membership teams

External –Seed merchants, breeders, agronomists, agrochemical companies, BSPB crop groups, levy bodies (AHDB, BBRO, PGRO and academic organisations.

5. Tasks/responsibilities (in order of priority)	Approx % of time
Supporting crop specialist team and working with the trials co-ordinators, with a focus on root and pulse crops, to deliver existing variety evaluation (RL/NL) programmes and to provide data interpretation, and develop technical advisory skills	30
Working with crop and agronomy specialists to deliver existing commercial contracts and support contract management, support development of new commercial contracts and delivery of services and products to meet market needs	30
Development of publications and/or other initiatives targeted at NIAB TAG members or the wider industry	15
Business development e.g. contract work for breeders, seed merchants, agrochemical companies	10
Support delivery of research outputs and development of new proposals	10
Preparation for, and attendance at, demonstrations and events	5

6. Working conditions : Office, Field, Glasshouse, Travel

The work is largely office based using a range of IT systems. There will be a lot of communication with colleagues by telephone and email. There will be significant UK travel, including road trips, with some overnight stays away from home, and potentially occasional overseas travel.

Some work will be outside in all kinds of weather conditions. It also requires outside working when pollen from plant species will be at high levels. Work outside normal hours may be necessary at peak times.

The job is office based at Cambridge, with daily attendance required when not travelling to distant sites. This is to ensure effective liaison across the team of crop specialists.

7. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Education/Qualifications:

Essential:	Desirable:
Degree in crop science or similar Valid driving licence and willingness to drive to distant sites Microsoft Office	Postgraduate qualification

Experience:

Essential:	Desirable:
Practical knowledge of agricultural systems and inputs, particularly agrochemicals and varieties. Good background in experimental design Contract negotiation and business development skills	Significant knowledge of crop trialling Events or demonstrations experience Financial management

Specialist Training:

Essential:	Desirable:
Presentation skills	BASIS/FACTS qualification

Personal Qualities (skills, behaviours and competencies)

Essential:	Desirable:
Good communication skills Good diplomacy skills, ability to handle sensitive situations Able to handle confidential information appropriately. Able to present sound technical arguments Good organisational skills Able to assimilate complex datasets Able to make impartial and independent recommendations	

Date of description 22 June 2018