Senior Crop Development Specialist - HarvestPlus

The Organization

The Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) delivers research-based solutions that harness agricultural biodiversity and sustainably transform food systems to improve people’s lives. Alliance solutions address the global crises of malnutrition, climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.

With novel partnerships, the Alliance generates evidence and mainstreams innovations to transform food systems and landscapes so that they sustain the planet, drive prosperity, and nourish people.

The Alliance is part of CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food-secure future.

About HarvestPlus

HarvestPlus is recruiting a highly motivated and skilled Senior Crop Development Specialist. The position will preferably be based at the Americas hub of the Alliance Bioversity-CIAT in Cali, Colombia; Asian or African HarvestPlus hubs are options.

HarvestPlus is an interdisciplinary, global alliance of more than 200 scientific and implementation partners in over 40 countries that seeks to reduce hidden hunger and provide micronutrients to billions of people directly through the staple foods that they eat. We use a novel process called biofortification, based on plant breeding, to achieve higher levels of micronutrients in high-yielding, high-profit varieties of key staple foods. We are committed to reducing hunger and poverty around the world through appropriate research activities.

HarvestPlus is part of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH). CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by its 15 research centers in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. HarvestPlus is based at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and collaborates with multiple CGIAR centers and partner organizations. This role is contracted via the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).

HarvestPlus has established a global crop development research network for the world’s major staples. CGIAR centers form the nexus of development of biofortified crops, and with public/private sector civil societies and research institutions forming a research alliance that conducts tactical and strategic breeding and performance testing in target countries, related plant science/agronomy research, the development of enabling technologies, and training and capacity building. To date, 300 micronutrient dense varieties of 11 crops have been released in more than 30 countries, over 10 million farmers are growing biofortified crops and providing access to biofortified food for 50 million farming household members.
About the position

The Senior Crop Development Specialist will manage biofortified crop development to achieve technological, crop improvement and commercial project goals: generating biofortified germplasm products without compromising agronomic performance and nutrition/end-use quality and assisting in guiding the design and delivery of the technology to undernourished people. The position reports to the Head, Crop Development.

Key Responsibilities

- Manage the HarvestPlus crop development research network and establish research capacity in Africa, Asia, and Latin America for rice, wheat, maize, cassava, bean and pearl millet; includes frequent project visits and convening crop meetings with partners along the value chain.
- Develop strategy and develop and implement product profiles/product development and delivery plans.
- Manage a portfolio of >40 projects/contracts involving >100 scientists in >20 countries; provide technical oversight and capacity building for crop improvement component. Assess progress, synthesize findings; internal/external reporting and knowledge management/documentation.
- Address gaps and bottlenecks, enhance breeding effectiveness, and take crop/profile specific action to strengthen variety development pipeline by direct engagement.
- Integrate human nutrition, socio-economic functions and in-country product delivery with crop improvement and interact closely with other relevant HarvestPlus divisions in developing strategies for scaling.
- Participate in strategy development, implementation, and resource allocation; interact and provide support to Nutrition, External Affairs, Impact & Policy and Communications; outreach/networking within agriculture/plant research communities, contribute to scientific publications and participate in resource mobilization.

Qualifications and requirements:

- PhD degree, with specialization in plant breeding/sciences or related discipline.
- Working experience: in developing countries and track-record in crop product development
  - Minimum of 5 years working experience with experience in project leadership and track-record in crop product development.
- Exceptional drive and entrepreneurship, a pronounced ability to motivate others and to build partnerships in different cultural contexts.
- Strong end-product focus and ability to deliver.
- Decisive, problem-solver with strong analytical abilities.
- Good interpersonal communication skills, writing ability and administrative skills; and capable of communicating effectively with researchers in the fields of agriculture, nutrition, and health.
- Agree to intensive international travel.
- Excellent written and spoken English.

Desirable:

- Position-related working experience at CG-Centers, Private Companies, Universities or Agricultural Research Institutes
Terms of employment

The initial contract will be for up to two (2) years, subject to a probation period of six (6) months, and is renewable depending on performance and availability of resources. The Alliance Bioversity-CIAT offers a multicultural, collegial research environment with competitive salary and excellent benefits. We are an equal opportunity employer, and strives for staff diversity in gender and nationality. Women and developing country professionals are encouraged to apply.

Applications

Applicants are invited to send a cover letter illustrating their suitability for the above position against the qualifications, competencies, skills together with a detailed curriculum vitae, including names and addresses of three (3) referees knowledgeable about the candidate’s professional qualifications and work experience. All correspondence should be addressed to the Human Resources Office, at (t.solis@cgiar.org) and should clearly indicate “Application: Senior Crop Development Specialist”.

Closing date for applications: Sep/30/2020,

We invite you to learn more about HarvestPlus and The Alliance Bioversity-CIAT by accessing the websites www.harvestplus.org / www.bioversityinternational.org / www.ciat.cgiar.org / www.cgiar.org