

Class Concept

This is professional microbiology work in the food, feed or pesticide laboratory in the Department of Agriculture. Under the general supervision of the Agricultural Chief Microbiologist and as the lead for either the food, feed or pesticide units, employees plan, direct and organize the daily and weekly evaluation of food, feed or pesticides that are produced, processed or marketed in the State to ensure that they are microbiologically safe and are of the quality claimed by the producers. As the lead microbiologists for a respective laboratory unit, employees exercise personnel functions in the areas of counseling and disciplining, training, recruitment and selection, work performance and work review. Employees are responsible for quality control and efficiency for their respective units. Although employees may perform tests of similar complexity as recognized in the Agricultural Microbiologist I class, the distinguishing criteria is the more in-depth knowledge required in problem solving, handling the more complex or controversial complaints and standardizing new procedures to the laboratory. Employees may rotate among the food, feed and pesticide laboratory units as volume or emergencies demand.

Employees perform similar procedures as recognized in the Agricultural Microbiologist I class as well as participating in special analytical problems in such areas as identification of uncommon organisms, performing procedures for sensitive or controversial complaints and reconducting questionable positive tests to assure that outcomes are correct. In the standardization and documentation of new procedures, employees, through trial and error, must analyze available information, make conclusions or assumptions on inadequate information and experiment with various outcomes in order to standardize and document the procedures for consistent and verifiable use by laboratory personnel. Due to the time constraints of procedures, employees must closely plan laboratory activities for expected samples and also ensure adequate supplies and media are available on unexpected or complaint samples received which may vary based on the sample type received. As lead microbiologists for a unit, employees also participate in projecting equipment and supply needs for budget purposes. Work may include other related duties as assigned.

Recruitment Standards

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Considerable knowledge of the variety of laboratory procedures, concepts and theories applicable to the area of assignment.
- Considerable knowledge of laboratory methodologies and techniques and safety practices.
- Ability to standardize and document tests and procedures.
- Ability to analyze results, interpret methodology, solve procedural problems and to provide work direction and instructions to subordinates.
- Ability to perform multiple tests under stringent time restrictions.

Minimum Education and Experience

Bachelor's degree in microbiology, food science or a related curriculum from an appropriately accredited institution and two years of microbiological analytical experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.