

PLANT HEALTH SPECIALIST 2

KIND OF WORK:

Intermediate-level professional work and leadwork in a specific plant pest survey and control, certification or regulatory program.

NATURE AND PURPOSE:

Under general supervision, an employee in this class is responsible for providing lead work direction in one statewide pest control or regulatory program (e.g. nursery inspection program, shade tree program or ornamental pest survey and detection program). The PHS2 works independently applying and implementing laws, cooperative agreements, and departmental policy. Assignments may include being designated as a technical specialist in a biological science such as entomology or plant pathology and/ or serving as a program resource person. The PHS2 performs related work as required.

The PHS2 level differs from the PHS1 level in the increased ongoing independent responsibility for one program area, including leadwork responsibilities, and a higher level of knowledge of division policy and procedure. It differs from the PHS3 level in the scope of leadwork provided: the PHS3 level provides leadwork direction in more than one statewide pest control or regulatory program.

EXAMPLES OF WORK: (A position may not include all the work examples given, nor does the list include all that may be assigned).

Provides laboratory and greenhouse diagnostic services so that Division activities are facilitated and the public sector is adequately assisted in implementing appropriate control measures by providing shade tree diagnostic service; providing honeybee diagnostic service; providing soybean cyst nematode diagnostic service; providing barley smut diagnostic service, conducting laboratory tests for phytosanitary certification; conducting plot, and greenhouse tests for phytosanitary certification and other division activities; and providing resource and technical support needed for effective operation of all division programs.

Provides field oriented support for Division activities so that the Division's goals and responsibilities are met by conducting nursery inspections; conducting field surveys for phytosanitary certification; contacting clientele, before and after conducting surveys to answer questions they may have; and conducting corn borer, gypsy moth, and other surveys/inspections as the need arises.

Represents the Department in matters related to technical support activities so that the public, municipalities, and industry are informed of these programs by attending information workshops and conferences, and assisting with educational exhibits and meetings of the Department and other agencies.

Develops a statewide comprehensive plant pest survey information service so that Minnesota agriculture and related interests are informed by coordinating data for the Minnesota Cooperative Plant Pest Survey and Detection Program; coordinating standardized survey and detection information for exotic and/or endemic plant/animal pests of agriculture significance; working closely with extension specialists, research scientists in the disciplines of agronomy, entomology, horticulture, plant pathology and weed science; and assisting private, county, state and federal pest control efforts, pest damage assessment and evaluation.

Assists in and coordinates computer support for Plant Protection Division so that information dissemination is carried out by setting up computer operations at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's St. Paul Office; preparing sets of computer use instructions; organizing field computer training with instructions; and retrieving field data, analyzing and preparing summaries.

Assists in the development of appropriate visual workshop materials, training manuals and other publications so that staff are trained to work in the field by developing visual, publication, and training materials; assisting in organizing training workshops/meetings for field personnel and the public; and attending conferences, workshops, and appropriate training classes.

Monitors certification of nursery stock, registration of growers and dealers, and coordinates post entry and special inspections so that requirements of the nursery laws are fully met by issuing dealer and/or certification applications; reviewing completed applications for content and accuracy; assigning, scheduling and reviewing employee's work; and monitoring work assignments.

Monitors nursery inspection procedures so that nursery stock can be certified apparently free of plant pests or as viable stock by planning, and routing grower, dealer and special inspections; monitoring staff activities and information concerning inspections; prohibiting the sale or distribution of stock in violation of the laws and withholding certificates/certifications when necessary; informing Program Supervisor of activity budget needs, inspection progress and anticipated staffing problems; purchasing necessary supplies to ensure uninterrupted inspection of nursery stock; and conducting nursery inspections.

Provides training and technical guidance for inspectors, technicians or Plant Health Specialist 1s so competency, efficiency, and effectiveness is maintained for the control program activity, division, and department by providing instruction and monitoring of field inspection techniques and enforcement procedures; providing access to workshops, trade shows, and formal sources which relate to inspection; and prescribing procedures for handling records, reports, and travel policies.

Represents the department in matters associated with nursery inspection so that nurseries are assured the free movement of healthy nursery stock by maintaining current regulatory requirements of other states, the U.S. Government, and foreign nations; fulfilling the requirements of all regulatory agencies pertaining to the nursery industry by maintaining

liaison role with the agencies; explaining the legal aspects of nursery inspection when requested by groups or Plant Health Specialist 2 individuals; and representing the Department at meetings, forums, etc. on regulatory matters pertaining to the nursery industry.

Plans and directs statewide survey programs in agricultural crops so that economic pests are detected and farmers/appropriate agricultural interests are informed by developing statewide survey plans for plant diseases, weeds and insects; organizing and designating surveys in the crop reporting districts; scheduling dates and times for return of survey data to the central office; preparing summaries of survey data and interpreting findings; and coordinating the preparation of the Minnesota Pest Report.

Provides technical direction to Plant Health Specialists, Plant Industry Inspectors and Agricultural Technicians so that surveys and field inspections are conducted by organizing training workshops for field personnel; developing training manuals; developing and testing standard survey methods, survey forms, and computer formats; assisting in the coordination of field computers and central computer; and assisting in the use of the central computer.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED:

Knowledge of:

State laws, rules and regulations as applied to apiary, nursery industry, municipal pest control, crop pest control or forest pest control sufficient to be aware of constraints and to meet their objectives.

Insects and plant disease problems of a wide variety of nursery stock sufficient to monitor and certify pest free plants.

Agriculture involving the technical and regulatory aspects of apiary inspection sufficient to implement a statewide Apiary Program.

Other state and federal laws and regulations regarding interstate movement of plants and plant products sufficient to meet their objectives.

Biological/scientific principles involved in pest management sufficient to administer and implement appropriate management practices and regulatory programs. This includes: plant pathology, entomology, horticulture and agriculture.

Laboratory practices and procedures sufficient to provide accurate diagnostic services.

Insects, plant diseases, chemical and other factors affecting agricultural crops sufficient to establish and implement a pest control program.

Ability to:

Identify plant pests for both lab and field conditions sufficient to ensure accurate survey techniques and information are provided to all clientele.

Deal appropriately with supervisors, co-workers, other department employees, other government agencies staff, special interest groups, nurseries, farmers, crop growers, and the general public in a variety of situations.

Communicate orally and in writing sufficient to write reports, summarize results and interpret technical information, prepare information for distribution to both technical personnel and the general public, provide information for individuals and groups in a clear and concise way, and to give clear directions to clientele.

Evaluate staff personnel training needs and arrange and/or conduct appropriate training sufficient to ensure that subordinate personnel are functioning at the highest level possible in a statewide inspection program.

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T.C.: Plant Health
Specialist, Int.
Former Title(s):