

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

SUMMER INTERNSHIP 2026

WAGE:

\$20.00/hour

HOURS: Maximum of 400 hrs. between May-August 2026

TO APPLY, SEND:

- Resume
- Cover Letter
- Contact Information for two professional references

To Whitnee Askew
via email at:
waskew@vt.edu.

**OR APPLY ON
HANDSHAKE**

<https://joinhandshake.com/>

Applications will be collected until a suitable candidate is identified.

The Virginia Tech School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, working in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), is looking for a **nutrient management summer intern**. This individual will work with staff from the DCR – Division of Soil and Water Conservation in the Staunton Regional Office located at 12 Sunset Blvd.; Staunton, VA. The summer intern will perform a range of technical and administrative duties to implement DCR's Pre-Side Dress Nitrate Testing (PSNT) Program.

The purpose of the PSNT Program is to help farmers better gauge application of fertilizer and to help them better target commercial and manure nutrient applications to meet crop needs. The resulting improved management of fertilizer application will increase farm profitability while also improving water quality.

In addition to working with DCR staff, the intern will work with farmers in Rockbridge, Augusta, and Rockingham Counties. Job duties include fieldwork, lab work, and office work, specifically collecting soil samples, GPS location of samples, lab analysis of soils samples for nitrogen, data management, and extensive record keeping of data collected and used by this program.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS & PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Interest in agricultural production, specifically row crops
- Ability to work with a diverse population in rural areas
- Ability and willingness to perform extensive fieldwork that includes walking to field sites on uneven terrain and working outside in hot, humid conditions
- Proficient in MS Office Suite, specifically Excel, Word, & Outlook
- Ability to work with limited supervision
- Must be able to lift 25 lbs.
- Must have a valid driver's license

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Individual pursuing a degree in agriculture, an environmental field, or related disciplines
- Practical experience related to fieldwork, especially agricultural and agronomic principles
- Knowledge of soil and crop science and knowledge of field sampling techniques
- Strong skills in GPS, GIS, and management and manipulation of data resulting from collection of field samples and lab reports.

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The intern will be required to work 40 hours a week during daylight hours. The work schedule may be 5 days a week at 8 hours per day or 4 days a week at 10 hours per day. Overtime is not required or allowed. There will be no overnight travel required.

THIS INTERNSHIP INVOLVES A WIDE VARIETY OF TASKS AND SKILLS.

The day-to-day tasks will initially involve driving to farms in Rockbridge, Augusta, and Rockingham Counties and collecting soil samples according to established procedures and protocols. A significant amount of time will be in the field. Collecting these samples will require working in hot, humid conditions. The intern will have to carry (and keep track of) various types of sampling equipment and supplies. While collecting the soil samples, the intern will need to record information on the location where samples were collected. The intern will also have to properly handle and process the samples that are collected.

The intern will perform lab work analyzing the collected soils for nitrogen. As soil samples are collected, the intern will be expected to perform a soil nitrogen analysis commonly known as the “Pre-Side Dress Nitrogen Test” (PSNT). The intern will be provided training on how to perform these tests. The intern will be expected to record all laboratory results according to project protocol, which will largely involve entering information into computer databases.

The intern may be expected to assist in follow up contact with farmers to ascertain whether information given to the farmers about the results of their PSNTs resulted in net change in nitrogen rates to the fields sampled.

Additional work may include precision nutrient management work. This may include mid-season nitrogen testing, zone sampling of soils, test analysis related to manure injection and working on manure spreader calibrations and sprayer calibrations as well as assisting with outreach meetings.

At the conclusion of the summer internship, a report and/or presentation summarizing the work completed will be required.