

**Biologist, GS-0401-12**  
**Rangeland Management Specialist, GS-0454-12**  
**Forester, GS-0460-12**  
**Conservation Agronomist, GS-0471-12**

REASON FOR THIS POSITION										POSITION DESCRIPTION COVER SHEET			
1. NEW		2. IDENTICAL ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHED PD NUMBER				3. REPLACES PD NUMBER							
<b>RECOMMENDED</b>													
4. TITLE Conservation Agronomist							5. PAY PLAN GS	6. SERIES 0471	7. GRADE 12				
8. WORKING TITLE (Optional) Plant Materials Center Manager							9. INCUMBENT (Optional)						
<b>OFFICIAL</b>													
10. TITLE Conservation Agronomist													
11. PP GS	12. SERIES 0471	13. FUNC 51	14. GRADE 12	15. DATE MONTH   DAY   YEAR			16. I/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	17. CLASSIFIER Kayla D. Ascher					
<b>18. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (Agency/Bureau)</b>													
1st	Natural Resources Conservation Service					5th							
2nd	KS State Conservationists Off					6th							
3rd	Plant Materials Staff					7th							
4th	Manhattan 3800 S 20th St					8th							
<b>SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION</b>													
I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the position and its organizational relationship and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statute or their implementing regulations.													
19. SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE					20. DATE		22. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE			23. DATE			
21. SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE					24. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE								
<b>FACTOR EVALUATION SYSTEM</b>													
FACTOR		25. FLD / BMK		26. POINTS		FACTOR		25. FLD / BMK		26. POINTS			
1. Knowledge Required		Level 1-7		1,250		6. Personal Contacts							
2. Supervisory Controls		Level 2-4		450		7. Purpose of Contacts		Level 3C		180			
3. Guidelines		Level 3-4		450		8. Physical Demands		Level 8-2		20			
4. Complexity		Level 5-4		225		9. Work Environment		Level 9-2		20			
5. Scope and Effect		Level 5-4		225		27. TOTAL POINTS ▶				27. 2,820			
										28. GRADE ▶		28. GS-12	
<b>CLASSIFICATION CERTIFICATION</b>													
I certify that this position has been classified as required by Title 5, US Code, in conformance with standards published by the OPM or, if no published standard applies directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.													
29. SIGNATURE							30. DATE						
31. NAME AND TITLE Jane Medina, Human Resources Manager													
32. REMARKS This position is determined to be EXEMPT from the provisions of FLSA based on the PROFESSIONAL Exemption criteria.							33. OPM CERTIFICATION NUMBER						

**MASTER RECORD/INDIVIDUAL POSITION DATA**

*THIS SIDE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLASSIFIER*

<b>A. KEY DATA</b>					
1. FUNCTION (1) A/C/D/I/R	2. DEPT. CD/AGCY-BUR-CD. (4) AG 18	3. SON (4) 5275	4. MR. NO. (8) 022359	5. GRADE (2) 12	6. IP NO. (8)

<b>B. MASTER RECORD</b>									
1. PAY PLAN (2) GS	2. OCC. SER. (4) 0471	3. OCC. FUNC. CD. (2) 51	4. OFF. TITLE CD. (5) 0002	5. OFF. TITLE (38) Consv Agron					
6. HQ. FLD. CD. (1) 1 = HQ 2 = FLD	7. SUP. CD. (1) 4	1 = Sup. SGEG 3 = Mgr. SGEG 4 = Sup. CBRA 5 = Mgmt. CBRA 6 = Leader LGEG 8 = All Others		8. CLASS. STD. CD. (1) X = New Std. Applied Blank = NA	9. INTERDIS. CD. (1) N = No Y = Interdis	10. DT. CLASS (8) MO   DAY   YEAR 07/25/07			
11. EARLY RET. CD. (1) 1 = Primary 2 = Secondary	3 = Foreign Svc. Blank = NA	12. INACT / ACT (1) 1 = Inactive A = Active	13. DT. ABOL. (8) MO   DAY   YEAR	14. DT. INACT / REACT (8) MO   DAY   YEAR	15. AGCY. USE (10)				
16. INTERDIS. SER. (40)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)
17. INTERDIS. TITLE CD. (50)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)

<b>C. INDIVIDUAL POSITION</b>																																							
1. FLSA CD. (1) E = Exempt N = Nonexempt	2. FIN. DIS. REQ. (1) 0Y	0 = None 1 = CD 219 2 = CD 220	3 = DF 278 4 = AD 392 5 = DF 849	3. POS. SCHED. (1) A = Sched A B = Sched B C = Sched C	0 = Excepted but not A, B, C	4. POS. SENS. (1) 1N	0 = Nonsensitive 1 = Noncritical 2 = Critical Sensitive	5. COMP. LEV. (4) 0471																															
6. WK. TITLE CD. (4) 3570	7. WK. TITLE (38) Plant Mtrls Center Mgr																																						
8. ORG. STR. CD. (18) 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 017780				9. VAC. REV. CD. (1) 0 = Position Action No Vacancy A = No Change B = Lower Grade C = Higher Grade D = Different title and / or series E = New Position / New FTE																																			
10. TARGET GD. (2)	11. LANG. REQ. (2)	12. PROJ. DTY. IND. (1) Blank = N/A Y = Yes	13. DUTY STATION (5) State (2) City (4) 20 3490	County (3) 161	14. BUS. CD. (4) 8888	15. DT. LST. AUDIT (8) MO   DAY   YEAR	16. PAS. IND. (1) Blank = N/A 1 = PAS	17. DATE EST. (8) MO   DAY   YEAR																															
18. GD. BASIS. IND. (1) 1 = Rev. when vacant 2 = Impact of Person 3 = Sup. / SGEG 4 = Sup. / Program 5 = R/GEG 6 = Policy Analysis G E G 7 = Equipment Devel. Guide 8 = Agency Use 9 = Agency Use ALPHAS = Agency Use			19. DT. REQ. REC. (8) MO   DAY   YEAR			20. NTE. DT. (8) MO   DAY   YEAR		21. POS. ST. BUD (1) Y = Perm N = Other																															
22. MAINT. REV. / CLASS. ACT. CD. (2) (1st Digit = Activity and 2nd Digit = Results) <table border="0" style="width:100%"> <tr> <td><b>Normal Act</b></td> <td><b>Maintenance Review Act</b></td> <td><b>Results</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 = Desk Audit</td> <td>5 = Desk Audit</td> <td>1 = No Action Req.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 = Sup. Audit</td> <td>6 = Sup. Audit</td> <td>2 = Minor PD Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 = Paper Rev.</td> <td>7 = Paper Rev.</td> <td>3 = New PD Req.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 = PME / Activity Rev.</td> <td>8 = Panel Rev.</td> <td>4 = Title Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>5 = Series Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>6 = Pos. Upgrade</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>7 = Pos. Downgrade</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>8 = New Pos.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>9 = Other</td> </tr> </table>										<b>Normal Act</b>	<b>Maintenance Review Act</b>	<b>Results</b>	1 = Desk Audit	5 = Desk Audit	1 = No Action Req.	2 = Sup. Audit	6 = Sup. Audit	2 = Minor PD Change	3 = Paper Rev.	7 = Paper Rev.	3 = New PD Req.	4 = PME / Activity Rev.	8 = Panel Rev.	4 = Title Change			5 = Series Change			6 = Pos. Upgrade			7 = Pos. Downgrade			8 = New Pos.			9 = Other
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30. CLASSIFIER'S SIGNATURE					31. DATE																																		
32. REMARKS																																							

## **INTRODUCTION**

This position is on the State Conservationist's (STCs) Staff and is headquartered at the Manhattan Plant Materials Center (PMC) located at Manhattan, Kansas. The incumbent serves as PMC Manager and is responsible for managing and administering the PMC's operations to meet the goals and objectives of the Kansas PMC Program.

## **DUTIES**

Directs all PMC activities to develop solutions to high priority resource problems as specified by national, regional, and state priorities, and organizes the functions of the PMC in accordance to the long-range strategic plan. Develops an annual business plan for the PMC which supports the long-range strategic plan authorized by the STCs' Plant Materials Advisory Committee. Advises the STCs' Plant Materials Advisory Committee on PMC operational needs annually.

Has overall responsibility for work on technical and production studies; supervision of personnel, administration of facilities and equipment; and maintenance of buildings, grounds, and land located at the PMC. Submits the annual business plan for the PMC to the STC for approval, and prepares annual cost estimates for the proposed budget that supports the PMC's long-range strategic plan.

Works with state program staffs, resource conservation staffs, other specialists, and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field personnel to identify and address the needs for plant materials and plant-related technologies for all phases of resource conservation and environmental improvement in the four-state area served which includes Kansas, Nebraska, northern Oklahoma, and northeastern Colorado.

Develops plant evaluation study plans for promising plant materials, associated agronomic practices, and plant management methods specifically for use in addressing identified natural resource concerns. Study plans involve: 1) analyzing complex plant science problems identified within the physiographic areas served, 2) verifying the problem, 3) identifying promising plant materials to address the problem, 4) inventorying and maintaining existing plant propagules, 5) collecting and evaluating plant materials that will treat natural resource concerns, and 6) demonstrating results scientifically.

Directs the application of approved plant establishment practices. Assembles and comparatively evaluates plant materials at the PMC and at other locations in cooperation with the state plant materials specialist (PMS) and other appropriate NRCS staff where soil, climate, or other conditions differ significantly from those at the PMC. Prepares study plans and directs the maintenance of records for all study plans associated with the delivery of technical assistance, materials, and for the ultimate release of plant materials to the public.

Maintains effective working relationships with specialists in NRCS, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Agricultural Research Service (ARS), universities, and other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as commercial seed and nursery producers in the development of plant materials that address resource concerns. Represents NRCS to the public and to other agencies in matters pertaining to work conducted at the PMC. Shares with the PMS the review and processing of plant materials, the processing of technical information relating to new releases, and assists with education materials related to PMC services.

Coordinates the production of foundation-quality seeds and plant establishment materials to be made available to conservation districts, and other federal, state, and local agencies, non-government organizations (NGO), and private citizens so that plantings of new varieties may be established and evaluated for conservation use.

Prepares formal proposals for submission to state agricultural experiment stations and crop improvement associations for plant materials research for release of new varieties; provides guidance for the production of certified seed and vegetative materials; and distributes needed plant materials to government agencies or private enterprises. Works closely with the PMS and other appropriate regional and national staff members on the allocation and distribution of plant materials throughout the service area. Records all accomplishments into the Plant Materials Operations and Management System (POMS) and Performance Results System (PRS).

Supervises all staff and volunteers assigned to the PMC. Assigns work based on the capability of an employee to perform the required task with minimum supervision. Develops and maintains individual employee development plans, provides oversight and controls of work performed by PMC staff and volunteers, and ensures all necessary administrative actions, travel authorizations, and time and attendance are properly recorded according to agency policies.

Provides or requests training for all employees at the PMC as needed. Recognizes individual training needs and provides on-the-job training. Recommends formal NRCS training courses and requests training assistance from state staff. As requested, conducts training at the PMC and elsewhere on field evaluations and plant maintenance techniques for NRCS employees and others.

Conducts tours of the PMC, develops professional papers and presentations, and participates at professional conferences, seminars, workshops, and trade shows to promote PMC activities and products.

Maintains accurate inventories of plant propagules, other property, production and distribution records, office files, and the preparation of routine and special reports. Requests supplies, materials, equipment, and other services for the efficient operation of the PMC based on work plans, priorities, and funding. Ensures that all NRCS property is maintained and properly used.

Carries out special national NRCS assignments as requested. Assignments may require gathering and assessing information or preparing reports on plant science and material applications.

Serves as the Hazard Communication Officer for the Kansas NRCS.

Performs related duties as assigned.

Prepares reports, maintains records, and identifies opportunities and forwards recommendations to reduce field level workload, as appropriate. Works within a team concept to develop and implement ways to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of the products and/or services provided to internal and external customers.

Provides and maintains a safe and healthy work environment, assuring that subordinates have received available safety training and literature and requiring that employees and others use safety precautions when exposed to dangerous objects, chemicals, extreme temperatures, etc.

Provides leadership and guidance in the design, development, and implementation of administrative procedures to assure that civil rights policies regarding the delivery of NRCS programs and services and the application of personnel rules and regulations are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or physical or mental handicap. Actively supports civil rights policies regarding personnel rules and regulations.

#### **CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT:**

Operates a motor vehicle incident to the above duties. Must possess and maintain a valid state motor vehicle operator's license for the type of vehicle(s) operated.

#### **EVALUATION FACTORS**

##### **1. Knowledge Required by the Position, Level 1-7, 1250 points**

Professional knowledge and understanding of the concepts, principles, and practices applicable to agronomy, biology, botany, forestry, horticulture, critical area treatment, plant breeding, plant taxonomy, and specialized plant materials usage in order to service multiple state and soil and water conservation programs.

Professional knowledge and understanding of seed lab techniques, greenhouse technologies, seedbed preparation, planting techniques, tilling, harvesting, cleaning of seed and vegetative propagules. Skill in conducting scientific studies with plant materials sufficient to provide solutions and demonstrate results statistically.

Professional knowledge of plant science, including the principles and techniques of plant breeding, in order to evaluate data and release and certify improved plant materials.

Knowledge of, and skill in, oral and written communication methods, techniques, and procedures sufficient to discuss, explain, and advocate biological principles applicable to conservation issues, problems, and solutions to diverse groups.

Knowledge of computers to integrate various program activities, technical, and management functions in area and field office operations, and to provide training in planning and biological science technical applications.

## 2. Supervisory Controls, Level 2-4, 450 points

The incumbent is under the general supervision of the STC for Kansas. Much of this supervision is of an agency policy and administrative nature. The PMS on the Kansas Resource Conservation Staff provides guidance and review of technical matters along with the Regional PMS from the National Technology Support Center (NTSC) in Fort Worth, Texas. Overall operation of the PMC is the responsibility of the STCs' Plant Materials Advisory Committee. The committee is composed of the STCs from Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Colorado.

The PMC Manager takes the initiative to develop and implement the PMC's long-range program, annual business plan, and project work plans. This entails exercising initiative and providing leadership in the planning, coordination, and administration of all PMC activities. Sensitivity is required to current trends, national study results, and program changes along with exercising technical responsibilities.

The incumbent is responsible for planning and executing assignments, selecting appropriate techniques and methodology, and determining the approach to be taken. The incumbent resolves most problems that arise and coordinates the work with biological, forestry, rangeland, water quality, and agronomy specialists headquartered in the state office. The incumbent interprets and applies program policy in terms of established objectives and keeps the supervisor informed of progress, potentially controversial problems, concerns, issues or other matters having far-reaching implications.

Completed work is reviewed for general adequacy in meeting program or project objectives, producing expected results, and compatibility with other work. For the most part, field work is not subject to direct review; however, complete reports analysis, and writings are spot-checked for technical adequacy and accuracy through peer review at the state and national levels. The scientific methods used in developing new plant materials and/or plant technologies are normally not reviewed, except for prior consultation with the National Plant Materials Program Leader and staff.

3. Guidelines, Level 3-4, 450 points

Guidelines include long-range strategic plans and annual business plan for activities at the PMC, the National Plant Materials Manual, national and regional program direction and guidance, electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), professional journals, research reports, and agency policy directives. These guides are general in nature and the incumbent must use experienced judgment in adapting and modifying guides to resolve situations and problems that are encountered.

The incumbent selects, interprets, and applies guidelines to satisfy requirements of assignments, recommends changes in methods or procedures, and develops specifications and information brochures for new plant materials releases.

The employee uses judgment, initiative, and resourcefulness in deviating from established methods to make recommendations on technical changes that may have state-wide significance. This may require the employee to analyze conditions and assumptions on the basis of inconclusive and variable data and to select, adopt, and apply the appropriate criteria, methods, and procedures to the conditions present.

4. Complexity, Level 4-4, 225 points

The PMC Manager provides leadership in incorporating new science and technology into the collection, development, evaluation, deployment, and release of plant materials designed to address specific natural resource conservation needs. This work involves a comprehensive understanding of the practical applications of plant physiology, plant pathology, weed science, plant breeding, agronomy, and ecology. These activities are incorporated into the long-term strategic and annual plans of operation. The incumbent coordinates development and release of all materials from the PMC through the PMS and state resource conservationist (SRC) in an effort to achieve its desired objectives and widespread acceptance.

Due to the presence of complex and varying conditions for which PMC products are applied, the incumbent must use originality and ingenuity in order to devise solutions in developing plant materials to meet customer expectations.

The incumbent manages a facility of 169 acres, specialized farm equipment that includes trucks, tractors, combines, trailers, sprayers, cultivators, swather, plow, disc, plot planter, and seed dryers. The facilities include an office, seed cleaning building, seed testing laboratory, seed storage building, equipment storage buildings, pesticide storage facility, irrigation wells, lathhouse, headhouse, and greenhouse. Besides on-center field evaluation plantings, there are off-center field evaluation plantings in numerous locations throughout the service area. The incumbent also supervises a staff of professional, technical, clerical, and seasonal personnel. The incumbent is responsible for developing and carrying out a long-range plan and annual business plan that will address the plant materials' needs of each state.

The availability of suitable plant materials and related plant technologies is a significant factor in the effectiveness of the ecological science phases of natural resource conservation programs. New developments in this field will have a significant impact in environmental protection and in enhancing the quality of the environment. These complexities require the incumbent to have a thorough knowledge of the various land resource areas, technologies, and programs.

5. Scope and Effect, Level 5-4, 225 points

The PMC is responsible for the collection and analysis of performance data of field evaluation plantings and the release of seed to commercial seed dealers who produce and sell certified seed of improved plant materials. The new or improved plant materials are for soil and water conservation practices.

Work involves investigating, analyzing, and evaluating problems and situations involving a wide variety of circumstances or unusual conditions. It also involves developing new or improved techniques, criteria, or alternatives to meet requirements involving specific plant materials and forestry needs and activities, and assessing program effectiveness in a four-state area. The employee ensures a correct understanding of biological phases of soil and water conservation activities and their applications by state and federal agencies and local units of government personnel, consultants, technical service providers, and private land users.

The purpose of the work is to test, propagate, select, and improve superior grasses, legumes, forbs, shrubs, and trees for use in solving priority natural resource conservation problems in the service area, and to develop or modify plant science applications to solve complex resource concerns for which PMC materials provide conservation solutions.

The work affects the attainment of conservation and environmental improvement programs throughout the service area as conservation treatments become increasingly dependent on plant-based solutions.

6. Personal Contacts

7. Purpose of Contacts, Level 3C, 180 points

Personal contacts include NRCS personnel at the field, area, and state office levels in Kansas and other agency personnel in Nebraska, Oklahoma, Colorado, program leaders for NRCS plant materials at the NTSC and National Headquarters; local and area district supervisors, representatives from other federal, state, and local agencies and units of government, state regulatory services, crop improvement associations, research organizations, nurseries, and commercial seed producers.

Non-routine contacts include private landowners, professional consultants, agricultural colleges, universities, experiment stations, plant scientists, researchers, plant breeders, agricultural commodity associations, and news media. There may be some contacts with influential members of agricultural organizations, educational institutions, or foreign visitors to this country who are interested, active, and influential in conservation activities.

The primary purpose for these contacts is to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts and solve operating problems by influencing or motivating individuals or groups who are working toward mutual goals, but may be skeptical or uncooperative. The incumbent must be experienced in approaching the individual or group to obtain the desired effect, such as gaining compliance with established policies or acceptance of established methods using persuasion or negotiation, or establishing rapport to gain information. Other contacts are for the purpose of advising on the development of plant materials projects, planning and coordinating plant material activities, keeping abreast of current developments, and reconciling to the extent possible, conflicting viewpoints and ideas. Contacts are especially important in the selection of plant materials that best meet the resource conservation needs identified within the serviced area. Arranging for propagation, distribution, achieving agreement on new plant releases, and securing the support of commercial sources is critical to meeting PMC objectives and solving needed natural resource concerns.

Contacts are necessary to provide technical guidance, assess the need for and provide training, and assure that high quality technical assistance is provided to carry out a strong and unified effort in the planning and application of resource management practices.

8. Physical Demands, Level 8-2, 20 points

The work requires frequent walking or standing in field areas and test plots or barns. Walking may be complicated by irregular ground contours or the need to carry moderately heavy equipment or other items. The incumbent may operate trucks, tractors, combines, or other equipment.

9. Work Environment, Level 9-2, 20 points

Work assigned involves exposure to operating equipment such as tractors, forklifts, skid-steer loaders, and seed cleaning machinery, and other implements such as plows, cultivators, discs, and harvesting equipment. There may be exposure to rain and dusty conditions. Herbicide and chemical spray operations require safety precautions. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as Tyvek suits, respirators, hard hats, boots, and gloves may be necessary.

This position is determined to be exempt from the provisions of FLSA.