



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Soil Scientist with Project Management Expertise

The [Soil Health Institute](https://www.soilhealthinstitute.org) (SHI), www.soilhealthinstitute.org a non-profit organization created to safeguard and enhance the vitality and productivity of soil through scientific research and advancement, seeks to hire a full-time Soil Scientist to lead soil health sampling for the U.S. Regenerative Cotton Fund. The Soil Scientist will serve as the soil sampling logistics manager for the U.S. Regenerative Cotton Fund (USCRF) and will contribute to SHI's Soil Health Benchmarks Initiative by providing expertise in project management and coordination as well as soil science expertise for data acquisition, quality assurance, impact assessment, and reporting. Year one of the position will focus on refining and documenting processes, supervising USRCF team members with soil sampling responsibilities, hiring temporary soil samplers, and coordinating a successful sampling campaign across five states in both spring and fall 2024.

This role will include implementation of the study design, quality assurance/quality control of metadata collected in the field and lab data, assisting in reporting results, and supporting the development of decision-support tools for farmers. The successful candidate will coordinate soil sampling, laboratory analyses, and data management among farmers, SHI contractors, and commercial labs. Data collection will involve working with SHI partners and farmers and coordinating follow-up interviews to collect agricultural management history. Successful implementation of the project will involve strong communication, organizational, supervisory, and cooperative skills. Qualified candidates located within the U.S. Cotton Belt will be preferred. Although SHI headquarters is in Morrisville, North Carolina, the successful candidate is not required to relocate for this job.

Project Needs:

- Plan and direct soil sampling campaigns
 - Hire, train, coordinate, and supervise a soil sampling team
 - Work with state- and county-level partners (e.g., farmer-led organizations, NRCS, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Cooperative Extension) to recruit farmers for soil sampling
 - Coordinate with farmers to collect and delineate field boundaries and consent forms for sample collection
 - Travel to support and supervise sampling teams in the field as needed
 - Maintain and prepare soil sampling equipment
- Implement operational workflows for farmer data collection, field boundary delineation, soil sampling, and management data collection to enhance standardization in cooperation with other SHI Team members
- Regularly report progress of soil science team to project manager and assist with preparation of reports
- Communicate with laboratories on sample receipt and data delivery
- Assure and control quality of soils data and metadata
- Assist in the delivery of farmers' data via individualized reports

Qualifications:

- A degree in soil science, agronomy, agriculture, or a related discipline in agriculture or natural resources. Candidates with fieldwork experience will be preferred. B.S. to Ph.D. encouraged to apply; we are looking for the right person.
- Enthusiasm for conducting scientifically precise work in challenging environmental conditions (e.g., heat and humidity, direct sun, and mosquitoes).
- Proficiency in project management, including refining and documenting processes and project plans
- Experience supervising teams, including hiring and training temporary staff
- Experience performing and coordinating soil sampling campaigns
- Strong understanding of soil science principles and methodologies for soil sampling
- Experience with soil data QA/QC
- Experience with GIS and remote sensing tools
- Strong problem-solving skills to address challenges in the field and throughout the project
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills for liaising with farmers, researchers, and industry and government partners
- Ability to travel and support soil sampling teams as needed during soil sampling (8 – 10 weeks in the spring and fall)
- Spatial orientation (i.e., ability to navigate to farms and sampling locations, sometimes without cell service).
- A valid driver's license.
- Must be able to lift 35 lbs.
- Authorization to work for any employer in the United States.

Work Environment

The Soil Scientist will coordinate soil sampling in a minimum of five states in 2024, including Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Missouri. Regular, multiweek travel to these states will be required during each of the two sampling seasons (spring and fall). Work outside of soil sampling can be conducted remotely or from the Soil Health Institute's office in Morrisville, North Carolina, adjacent to Research Triangle Park (RTP).

Compensation

The Soil Scientist will be hired as a full-time limited term employee, with a possible term of up to 4 years depending on employee performance and project funding availability. Annual salary will range from \$78k to \$90k, commensurate with qualifications and experience. This is a full-time position with competitive paid leave, life, health and dental insurance, 401K, and other benefits.

To Apply

Qualified applicants are encouraged to send their cover letter, college transcripts (unofficial ok), resume, and contact information for three professional references to Misty Miles, Project Manager, at mmiles@soilhealthinstitute.org. Position will remain open until filled; however, the first review of applications will begin **March 1st**, so interested candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by that date.