

Driscoll's

Title: Research Associate II – Strawberry & Blueberry Breeding
Department: Breeding
Report to: Subtropical Plant Breeder
Location: Dover, FL, USA
Classification: Full-time, year-round

About the Role

As a member of the Global Breeding team, the Research Associate II – Strawberry & Blueberry Breeding is responsible for supporting breeding activities in Dover, Florida and the development of improved berry cultivars for subtropical climates. This position will test, evaluate, and select adapted germplasm in the Dover test plots, ensure successful trialing through the coordination of data collection and management of breeding databases, and will participate in the design and execution local phenotyping projects. This position supports the advancement and commercialization of new breeding selections in the Southeastern USA through interactions with Production Managers, Applied Research, Growers, and other regional stakeholders (Local Commercialization Team) in Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. Under the guidance of the Subtropical Plant Breeder and Molecular Strawberry and Blueberry Breeders, this position will oversee phenotyping projects related to the discovery and validation of molecular markers for use by the breeding programs.

Qualifications

MS degree in Horticulture or Agronomy with 1-3 years of experience in Plant Breeding

- Experience and familiarity with molecular breeding tools and techniques
- The ability to successfully work independently as well as with a diverse cross-cultural team
- Must be disciplined, self-motivated, and have very strong organizational skills
- Must have strong verbal/written communication skills and the ability to successfully manage remote collaboration with teams at other R&D sites
- Ability to exercise flexibility, initiative, good judgment, and discretion
- Knowledge in experimental design, statistics, and data analysis
- Research and analytical skills sufficient to analyze problems in multi-faceted ways and to develop and participate in implementing solutions
- Experience with database management and statistical and analytical software is desirable.
- Ability to work both in a field and laboratory setting
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) will constitute a point of preference
- Florida driver's license and the ability to be covered under company-sponsored vehicle insurance program.
- A valid passport and the ability to travel regionally and internationally as required

Responsibilities

Breeding:

- Works cooperatively with the Subtropical Plant Breeder and Research Farming staff in the planning, establishment, and maintenance of test plot breeding trials
- Evaluates breeding selections for horticultural characteristics and post-harvest performance
- Coordinates with the Subtropical Plant Breeder, Molecular Strawberry and Blueberry Breeders, and Quantitative Geneticists on the design, execution, and analysis of phenotyping programs for molecular marker development

- Plans, supervises, and performs post-harvest evaluations, including weekly flavor testing, shelf life evaluations, shipping evaluations, firmness evaluations, and brix/TA evaluations, as necessary
- Supervise breeding seasonal technical staff (if applicable)
- Assists the Subtropical Plant Breeder in making advancement decisions and with the design of breeding crosses to develop new seedling families
- Occasional regional travel to visit and evaluate demo plots and On Farm Trials of breeding selections established on grower ranches; provides input as required for the preparation of annual demo and On Farm Trial reports
- Occasional domestic and international travel to other cross-trial locations and to Global Breeding meetings
- Collaborates with regional Production Managers, Applied Research, and District Managers (Local Commercialization Team) towards the validation and deployment of new cultivars
- Prepares test plot summary reports, maps, and production curves from breeding database data
- Organizes occasional test plot visits with regional team and growers; hosts various visits from growers and colleagues from other regions.
- Using good judgment and discretion, responsible for identifying anomalies in the data that will require further consideration during analysis
- Collect necessary patent data for commercial variety release, as required

General Responsibilities

- Ensures the confidentiality of Driscoll's financial, proprietary, and employee information
- Represents Driscoll's in a manner that demonstrates Driscoll's Mission and Values in all interactions, internally and externally.
- Performs other duties as instructed
- Maintains a safe and professional office and other work-related areas
- Promotes a positive work environment
- This job description is intended to describe the general nature of the work performed by employees in this job. It is not an exhaustive list of all the job's responsibilities. At Driscoll's, all of our jobs include broad responsibilities for continually improving the processes we use to develop our products.

About the Company

Driscoll's is the global market leader for fresh strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. With more than 100 years of farming heritage and hundreds of independent growers around the world, Driscoll's is passionate about growing fresh, beautiful and delicious berries. Our values of humility, passion and trustworthiness have guided our mission to delight consumers around the world.

Driscoll's exclusive patented berry varieties are developed through years of research using only natural breeding methods – meaning, no GMOs. From farm-to-table, we focus on delivering a high quality, premium berry experience with our many supply chain partners.

Driscoll's is the trusted brand for Only the Finest Berries™.

For more information, please visit our website at www.driscolls.com.