Assistant Professor in Postharvest Genomics

**SHORT PITCH:** This position is a great opportunity for -omics experts with model experience to translate their skills to Florida's rich specialty crop industries. In the race to feed 9 billion by 2050 understanding post-harvest biology will be even more important, and we anticipate this position will play a key role in defining the molecular/biochemical basis of fruit and vegetable quality after harvest. No specialty crop experience necessary. Bring a heavy toolbox and an interest in working with Florida's fruit and vegetable industries.

http://explore.jobs.ufl.edu/cw/en-us/job/505082

**LONG PITCH:** This is a 12-month tenure-accruing position that will be 50% teaching (College of Agricultural and Life Sciences) and 50% research (Florida Agricultural Experiment Station), available in the Department of Horticultural Sciences, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, at the University of Florida. This assignment may change in accordance with the needs of the unit.

Duties will include: "The successful candidate will pilot a dynamic research program focusing on postharvest plant physiology to reduce food waste and improve product quality, utilizing the tools of modern biology, including genomics, transcriptomics and proteomics. The candidate will also develop a leading program in undergraduate and graduate teaching around the critical issue of fresh food distribution and reduction of waste. The candidate will be someone whose interests complement those of existing faculty and who is open to developing cooperative relationships for research and teaching.

The research component of this position will involve investigating the fundamental physiological and biochemical processes through which harvested plant organs interact with their environment and which determine the shelf life and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables. These research efforts will lead to development of diagnostic tools for understanding of postharvest processes that lead to decreased food waste, increased grower profits, and benefits across the supply chain. The position will also support breeding and other genetic improvement programs in the department. It is expected that the research program will be developed in collaboration with existing faculty working on postharvest biology and technology as well as related disciplines of genomics, plant pathogen interactions, biochemistry, and plant developmental biology, especially in areas such as plant organ senescence or fruit ripening.

Florida producers rely on trained experts to aid in the production and distribution of fruit and vegetable crops, so this position plays a key role in educating the next generation of scientists and industry experts. The new faculty member will teach an established graduate course in postharvest biology and will participate in the development of two new courses, one at the undergraduate level and one at the graduate level. It is expected that these courses, as with other existing postharvest courses, will be team-taught by members of the department's postharvest group. The new undergraduate course will focus on how to feed a growing population and the contribution of postharvest technology at all levels to increasing food availability by lowering waste and losses. The new graduate course will cover the genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics and metabolomics related to how plant organs develop, senesce, and respond to abiotic and biotic stresses after harvest. This course will complement other graduate-level, plant science courses in these basic science areas."

Tenure will accrue in the Department of Horticultural Sciences. The faculty member will participate actively in undergraduate education and graduate education by chairing graduate committees, serving on graduate committees, supervising thesis and dissertation research, supervising undergraduate research, and publishing the results with his/her graduate students. The faculty member will seek contract and grant funding actively to support his/her program. The faculty member will engage in Extension activities in his or her program area.
The successful candidate will engage in scholarly activities related to instruction, including teaching undergraduate and/or graduate courses, advising and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students, participating in curriculum revision and enhancement, seeking funding for the teaching program, supervising undergraduate and graduate research and creative work, publishing teaching-related scholarship, producing learning tools, and engaging in professional development activities related to teaching and advising. Faculty are encouraged to support and participate in the CALS Honors Program, distance education, and international education.

Because of the IFAS land-grant mission, all faculty are expected to be supportive of and engaged in all three mission areas—Research, Teaching and Extension—regardless of the assignment split specified in the position description.

**Background Information:**

For more than 50 years, the Horticultural Sciences Department (www.hos.ufl.edu) at the University of Florida (www.ufl.edu) has been a leader in postharvest physiology research, teaching and extension, with a strong contingent of faculty supporting the second-largest horticulture industry in the U.S. Our postharvest programs have covered all aspects of the field, from introduction of new commercial practices to molecular studies. The University of Florida has strong programs in whole plant physiology, plant pathology, agricultural engineering, food science, and molecular genetics that provide support for the postharvest programs. The postharvest programs share multiple laboratories, with instrumentation and controlled temperature storage chambers to support research, and faculty and facilities at UF/IFAS Research & Education Centers throughout the state available for collaborative interaction. There are excellent facilities and support for teaching through both traditional and distance or digital methods. The Horticultural Sciences Department is a unit of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (www.ifas.ufl.edu) one of the nation's largest agricultural and natural resources research and education organizations.