

How to find a job in the Plant Pathology Industry (FAQ's)

Q: Where should I begin my search for a job in industry?

A: Make as many contacts with people in industry as possible. Attend workshops like the one you are currently attending. Attend the Industry committee's Graduate Student Breakfast (held every year at the National APS meetings). Visit the industry displays and ask lots of questions.

Q: Will I be able to dedicate my career and focus on the one thing that I really love to do?

A: Most likely this will not be the case. With rare exception what one does in industry has to be relevant to commercializing and selling products that will be of value to the agricultural industry. If you want to specialize in only one very specific area you will need to be very selective of what position you interview for.

Q: How can I best prepare myself for a job in Industry?

A:

1. Broaden your knowledge base in plant pathology and agriculture as much as possible. A solid understanding of the fundamentals of plant pathology and agronomy is highly advised. The job force for skilled applied plant pathologists is dwindling so if you really want a competitive edge than broaden your scope.
2. Fine tune your communication skills. Communication skills are important for many jobs in industry. It is important to be able to speak and write on many levels. Honing your communication skills is time well spent as these skills are important for almost any professional job you may take.
3. Be willing to be flexible. Jobs in industry can, and often do, change with the times. Be open-minded to changes in your job goals and/or daily requirements. Be receptive to changes in the projects you work on and even where you may live.
4. Be a team player. This is a high priority to most companies. Most research and development projects are global in nature and require team work for timely success. Being willing and able to work effectively with others will be a feather in your cap.
5. Be creative. Think out of the box. Companies are always looking for new and creative ideas. Don't be afraid to be innovative.

Q: Is my experience in molecular biology not important for a job in industry?

A: Absolutely not the case. There are many agricultural chemical companies that are focusing on genetically modified traits. The future of the industry will certainly include both chemicals and biotechnology. So don't throw in the towel. Make as many contacts with people in the industry that do this kind of work and find out what their jobs are like, what is important to the companies they work for, and how they got their jobs.

Q: How should I prepare my resume?

A: Your resume is absolutely important. This is your opportunity to spell it out and illustrate how and why you are qualified for the position you are hoping to interview for. This is clearly the only part of the process that you have complete and total control over. So do yourself justice and put some effort into producing a resume that will get you in the door. There are many books and web sites that can help you so I will go no further. I would highly recommend that you consider participating in the resume workshop that

Dr. Roger Kaiser (Bayer Crop Science) hosts at the annual APS meetings. Sign up early, space is limited.

Q: How should I prepare for a job interview in Industry?

A: You should do this the same way you would for any interview. Polish your game and come prepared. Remember that your interview is not only your shot at showing off what you know, but also an opportunity to demonstrate your skills in the things I mentioned above (team play, communications, creativity, and flexibility). Some of the following tips might be useful in preparation.

- Do your research. Read up on what the company does? Understanding what the company does and the products they sell will give you a feel for what they might be looking for.
- Interview yourself. Prepare for the questions that you think you might be asked. Give some critical thought to what you bring to the table and what your limitations might be. There are many good web sites on what potential questions you might want to prepare for.
- Be prepared to interview the company. You also need to learn enough about the company to know if you want to work for them. So prepare your list and don't forget to interview the company while you are there.

Q: What are some of the companies hire plant pathologists?

A: Below is an abbreviated list but at least a good starting point for you to work with. For the up-to-date contact information visit web sites for these companies.

Agdia Inc	Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Co Ltd
AgraQuest Inc	Monsanto Co
Alf Christianson Seed Co	Natl Alliance of Ind Crop Consultants
Arysta LifeScience North America	Nufarm Americas Inc
BAAR Scientific LLC	Percival Scientific Inc
Ball Horticultural Co	Pest Pros Inc
BASF Corp	Pioneer Hi-Bred Intl Inc
Bayer CropScience	Plant Pathology Research Group
BIOREBA AG	Sakata Seed America Inc
Busch Agricultural Resources Inc	Seminis Vegetable Seeds
Cereal Research Non Profit Co Inst	Spectrum Technologies Inc
CerexAgri Inc	STA Laboratories Inc
Dow AgroSciences LLC	Syngenta Crop Protection
DuPont Ag & Nutrition	Syngenta Seeds
Gylling Data Management Inc	The Scotts Co
ISK Biosciences Corp	Valent BioSciences Corp
Janssen Pharmaceutica	Valent USA Corp
Landis International Inc	

I hope this information provides you with a good starting point and some useful tips. Good luck and all the best.

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