**Graduate Assistantships Available**

**Description**

The Department of Horticulture <http://www.hort.vt.edu/> and Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center (AREC) <http://www.arec.vaes.vt.edu/hampton-roads/>  of Virginia Tech have openings for two graduate students interested in pursuing a doctoral degree in one of the following commodity areas listed below.

1. Small Fruits (strawberries). Potential areas of research could involve evaluating bio-based fertilizers, or cover crop management. Current program efforts are based on optimizing soil solarization and pelleted products as alternatives to soil fumigation. Experience with berry or plasticulture crop production, pest and nutrient management, and applied field research is preferred.

2. Nursery crops. A team of horticultural scientists and an environmental engineer are seeking a student to conduct and publish research focused on nitrogen fate in containerized specialty crop production. Experience with plant nutrition, container-grown plants, woody crops, soilless substrates or analytical chemistry is preferred.

The student will gain valuable experience by serving as both graduate teaching and research assistants to provide a foundation for careers in academia, cooperative extension or industry. Successful applicants will be expected to support classroom instruction while on teaching assistantship on Virginia Tech’s main campus in Blacksburg and conduct research at the Hampton Roads AREC in Virginia Beach. Interested candidates should contact Dr. Jayesh Samtani [jsamtani@vt.edu](mailto:jsamtani@vt.edu) for small fruits, and Dr. Jim Owen [jim.owen@vt.edu](mailto:jim.owen@vt.edu) for nursery crop production.

**Requirements**

Candidates should have completed a M.S. degree in Horticulture, Crops, Plant Science, or a related field from an accredited institution.