

**California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Produce Safety Program  
Environmental Scientist  
Duty Statement**

**I. Program/Position Identification**

The Inspection and Compliance Branch deals with a broad range of environmental, environmental health, and on-farm management issues related to protecting public health. The Branch consists of the following programs: Shipping Point Inspection Program; Produce Safety Program (PSP); State Organic Program; Direct Marketing Program; Standardization Program; Avocado Inspection Program; Citrus Program, OCal Program and the Technical Assistance Program for Produce Safety. The Branch includes a multi-disciplined staff, including Agriculture Program Supervisors; Environmental Scientists; subject matter specialists; inspectors and investigators; and technical and support staff.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released the first-ever regulations in accordance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), signed into law in 2011 by President Obama. The regulations now require producers to adhere to prescriptive measures intended to minimize food safety risks at the farm level. The PSP is responsible for the implementation of the Produce Safety Rule (PSR), one of seven new regulations under FSMA.

Under the direction of the Senior Environmental Scientist (SES) (Supervisory) within the PSP, the Environmental Scientist will conduct on-farm environmental assessments and farm inspections to ensure compliance with FSMA and the PSR, upholding the FDA approach of “educate before and while we regulate” for FSMA implementation. The incumbent must be able to be commissioned and credentialed by FDA to perform work concerning present and future environmental issues relating to food safety and must work with industry to bring production/facility sites into compliance with FSMA requirements. The incumbent will be responsible for on-farm inspections to ensure that PSR standards are met and that effective on-farm training and communication are in place. The incumbent will use a prioritized inspectional approach to conduct specific statewide inspections and procedural activities for the PSP.

The Environmental Scientist will be responsible for carrying out inspections and implementing the PSR in the Southern California Region. This includes, but is not limited to the counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, Imperial, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Ventura. The incumbent may be required to go to other locations throughout California as needed.

Classification: Environmental Scientist

Position Number: 018-775-0762-005

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This position is designated under the Conflict of Interest Code. The position is responsible for making or participating in the making of governmental decisions that may potentially have a material effect on personal financial interests. The appointee is required to complete Form 700 within thirty (30) days of appointment, on an annual basis, and upon vacating the position. The incumbent must complete an Ethics orientation training course within six months of assuming a Form 700 covered position, and every two (2) years thereafter, by December 31 of each numbered year. Failure to comply with the Conflict of Interest Code requirements may void the appointment. *\*\*Only applicable for incumbents placed in Environmental Scientist, Range C.*

**Classification:** Environmental Scientist

**Working Title:** Environmental Scientist

**License or Other Requirement:** FDA Commission with Credential will be required as a condition of permanent state employment in this position. Commission appointment requires the incumbent to be a citizen of the U.S., and to undergo a detailed background check and live scan fingerprinting.

Bachelor's or advanced degree with a major in biological, chemical, physical, or environmental science, or a closely related scientific discipline.

Valid California Driver's License

**Position Number:** 018-775-0762-005

**Division/Branch/DAA:** Inspection Services/ I & C

**Location:** Riverside

**Date Prepared:** January 2026

**Work Hours/Shift:** 40 hours per week

## **II. Essential and Non-Essential Job Functions**

### **A. Essential Functions:**

**Function #1**

**Perform Assessments-45%**

- Conduct food safety field inspections and assist on investigations and monitor activity on farms to ensure compliance with PSR requirements. The position may entail up to 70% or more travel for any given month throughout California.
- Scientifically analyze and evaluate food safety claims and guarantees in order to ensure alignment with PSR requirements; provide scientific guidance and recommendations of appropriate actions pertaining to PSR requirements; and request additional data from producers and/or industry organizations as needed.
- Determine and evaluate impacts on environmental systems and assess public health impacts.
- Using various modes of transportation, visit grower business sites and farms to ensure PSR requirements and guidelines are followed.
- Regularly confer with and advise the SES (Supervisory) on any industry and inspection issues to ensure the appropriate procedures, guidelines, and processes are adhered to, and report egregious and potentially egregious conditions to the SES (Supervisory) as soon as possible.

## **Function #2**

## **Reports and Correspondence-35%**

- Ensure industry standards and PSR requirements of applicable assessment procedures are met by reviewing on-farm records and practices to ensure uniformity and accuracy throughout statewide programs.
- Implement, update, and maintain inspection procedures adhering to state, Federal, and industry standards. Write inspection documents capturing inspection findings consistent with federal and state standards.
- Respond to inquiries from industry, by written correspondence or telephone, regarding environmental issues related to food safety compliance.
- Document compliance and industry issues by maintaining ledgers and statistical logs, per Branch policies and FDA requirements.
- Develop recommendations for corrective actions for on-farm food safety issues as necessary.

**Function #3**

**Public Outreach-15%**

- Travel to various locations throughout the State to attend meetings, training, conferences, and workshops and/or participate in presentations on food safety analyses related to the PSP.
- Provide technical consultation, support, training, and guidance to advisory boards, committees, and commissions.
- Serve as a contact for addressing issues and questions on food safety methodologies and how they affect the environment and public health.

**B. Non-Essential Functions:**

**Function #1**

**Miscellaneous duties – 5%**

- Perform other job-related duties as requested by supervisor.

**III. Work Environment**

This position requires the incumbent to work cooperatively with others; maintain regular, consistent, predictable attendance; and exercise good judgment. The incumbent must have good written and oral communications skills. This position requires the incumbent to work from home and to travel by air, private or State vehicle, or other transportation modes to various locations throughout the state. This position is based in Central California; however, travel throughout California may be required. It may be possible for the person to live outside the region. The incumbent must possess a valid California driver's license to drive a personal or State vehicle.

Regular or recurring telework may occur as part of the incumbent's ongoing regular schedule in accordance with CDFA's Telework Policy.

The duties of this position are performed in various environments, which consist of working outdoors approximately 70% of the time and indoors 30% of the time. The outdoor activities include visiting and traveling overnight to farms, processing plants, trainings, meetings or conferences. Outdoor work may also include walking on uneven ground; carrying and using sample equipment; and conducting visual environmental assessments, field inspections, and data recording. Incumbent may be required to travel and be in field locations during inclement or severe weather.

Indoor work will be performed from a workstation equipped with standard office equipment. Indoor activities may include trainings, presentations, and computer and electronic communication. This position requires the ability to operate a computer terminal, calculator, photocopier, fax, and telephone; participate in, give presentations at, and interact with others at meetings; grasp papers, small objects,

and manuals; and maneuver above shoulder level and below waist level to access upper and lower files and cabinets.

Due to the duties of this position, FDA Commission with Credential will be required as a condition of permanent state employment. Once hired, the application process for the FDA Commission with Credential will begin and can take approximately 3-4 months. Commission appointment requires the incumbent to be a citizen of the United States or United States National, and to undergo a detailed background check and live scan fingerprinting. For additional information regarding this process, please see the US Food and Drug Administration Regulatory Procedures Manual available at <https://www.fda.gov/media/71888/download>.

#### IV. Employee's Statement

(Initial applicable Statement)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the duties and essential functions of the position. I understand Reasonable Accommodation<sup>1</sup> and how it applies to essential functions. **I can perform the duties of this job without Reasonable Accommodation.**

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the duties and essential functions of the position. I understand Reasonable Accommodation<sup>1</sup> and how it applies to essential functions. **I will need Reasonable Accommodation to perform one or more of the essential functions described in this duty statement.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature<sup>2</sup>      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

CC: **Employee**  
**Supervisory Drop File**  
**Official Personnel File**

<sup>1</sup> A reasonable accommodation is an adjustment or modification to a job or workplace that allows qualified employees or prospective employees to perform the essential functions of the job successfully.

<sup>2</sup> Duties of this position are subject to change and may be revised as needed or required. If/when duties change you will be provided a revised duty statement to sign.