Postdoctoral Research Associate – Chemical Ecology and New World Screwworm Attractant Research

START DATE: Immediately

SALARY: Commensurate with training and experience

TERM: 2 years with possibility of extension contingent on funding and performance

The New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) is an economically important parasitic fly that threatens livestock health and agricultural production. Its spread highlights the need for effective surveillance tools for early detection of incursions. In this USDA-funded Grand Challenge project, we will investigate microbial cues associated with animal wounds and exploit their attractiveness to gravid female screwworm flies to develop novel lures for surveillance. The project will involve collecting and culturing microorganisms from animal wounds, evaluating individual bacterial isolates and combinations through laboratory and semi-field behavioral bioassays, and developing promising microbial attractants formulated for evaluation in field trials.

POSITION DESCRIPTION: The post-doc will carry out all phases of this research, from microbial isolation and culturing through attractant formulation and field evaluation, under the supervision of Dr. Gideon Wasserberg at UNC Greensboro, in collaboration with Dr. Loganathan Ponnusamy at North Carolina State University and Dr. Luis Escobar at Virginia Tech. A substantial portion of the work, including colony development, field collections, and bioassays, will take place in Guatemala.

QUALIFICATIONS: We are looking for a highly motivated candidate. Required: a Ph.D. in Biology or a related life science field (completed by the start date); experience conducting ecological or behavioral research; strong analytical and scientific writing skills; the ability to work independently and collaboratively; and willingness to spend extended periods working in Guatemala.

PREFERRED: A background in entomology, insect behavior, chemical ecology, microbiology, or microbial ecology; experience with microbial isolation and culturing, behavioral bioassays, insect attractant development, or laboratory and field research; and Spanish-language proficiency.

APPLICATION: Submit by email attachment a CV, PDF files of relevant articles/manuscripts, and a cover letter describing background, skills, and research interests to: Gideon Wasserberg g_wasser@uncg.edu,

REVIEW PERIOD: begins 10/18/2026 and continues until the position is filled.