

PhD-level Graduate student position at the Lethbridge Research and Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

We are seeking highly motivated candidates with interest in vector ecology for an upcoming PhD position that will be funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and based at the Lethbridge Research and Development Centre (Lethbridge, Alberta). The student will be hired through the Government of Canada's Research Affiliate Program ([LINK](#)), following acceptance into the graduate student program at the University of Saskatchewan.

Project Title: Identification of mosquito and *Culicoides* midge species and their vertebrate hosts

Brief Project Description:

The vector ecology lab at AAFC Lethbridge focuses biological and ecological questions relating to arthropod pests and vectors of livestock pathogens. We will be working on collaboration with Dr. Neil Chilton, a parasitologist at the University of Saskatchewan. The primary goal of this project is to describe the host range of *Culicoides* biting midges and mosquitoes in the dry grasslands of western Canada through blood meal analysis. Although the species of mosquito and *Culicoides* species present at several locations in western Canada have been identified, we do not know which species feed on livestock and are potentially relevant to their health. This project will include field work for arthropod sampling, lab work for morphological identification of specimens, and for the molecular identification of the blood meal sources and arthropod species. The field and lab work will be based at AAFC-Lethbridge, with field sites near Lethbridge and in southern Alberta.

Supervisors: Dr. Neil Chilton (U of S) and Dr. Shaun Dergousoff (AAFC-Lethbridge)

Anticipated start: Sept, 2018

The project and the position will be funded until March 2021.

Qualifications and experience:

- A MSc degree in biology, entomology or related field.
- Knowledge of and experience working with insects, preferably mosquitoes and biting midges.
- Field work experience that includes mosquito and biting midge sampling.
- Familiarity with statistics and experimental design.
- A valid driver's license is required.

Interested candidates, please contact Dr. Dergousoff (shaun.dergousoff@agr.gc.ca).