

Postdoctoral Position in the Hans Merensky Chair in Avocado Research

We seek to hire a postdoctoral research fellow to characterise the pathogenicity genes of *Rosellinia necatrix*.

Rosellinia necatrix is a filamentous ascomycete that is pathogenic to a wide range of economically important plants worldwide, including avocado. The pathogenicity mechanisms and interactions of *R. necatrix* with its host are not well understood. Prediction of pathogenicity-related genes can provide insight into infection mechanisms used by the pathogen and can further allow advances in research focused on host-pathogen interactions. Currently, little is known about which genetic and molecular pathways govern a successful *R. necatrix* infection. This study aims to identify *R. necatrix* candidate effectors using *in silico* methods, followed by functional characterizing of candidate effectors to help gain insight into the pathogenesis during avocado.

Qualifications: PhD in plant pathology, microbiology or a closely related field; with demonstrated experience in conducting plant inoculation trails, the use of molecular techniques such as DNA and RNA isolations, PCR and sequencing; genome annotation; demonstrated analytical and writing skills; ability to work independently and as part of a team; and a strong publication record. Preference will be given to candidates with previous research experience in fungal genetics.

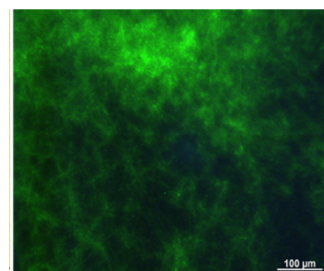
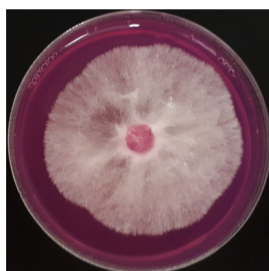
Responsibilities: The postdoc will be responsible for: 1) contributing to the design of the study and future proposals; 2) analysis and publication of the results of the project; 3) supervising postgraduate students; 4) engagement and support of related research projects; and 5) presenting results at professional and stakeholder meetings.

Compensation: The compensation package for this position is very competitive and is dependent on experience.

Duration: 12 months, full-time initial appointment with the possibility of two years additional support, conditional on satisfactory performance (evaluated annually) and the availability of funds.

Preferred start date: As soon as possible.

Application Process: Email to Prof Noëlan van den Berg (noelani.vandenberg@up.ac.za): 1) a cover letter that includes your research interests and qualifications and analytical and writing experience; 2) Curriculum Vitae; 3) representative publications, and; 4) contact information for three referees. Review of applicants will commence on 1 August 2023 and continue until a suitable candidate is identified.



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Hans Merensky
Chair in Avocado Research