
BEACON HILL
LIFE SCIENCES®
&
39°N
QUARTERLY TALENT MARKET REPORT
GREATER ST. LOUIS REGION AGTECH

OCCUPATION SPOTLIGHT

BIOLOGICAL SCIENTIST

Jaspreet Sandhu | Biologist

What initially inspired you to pursue biology and plant science?
In school, I always enjoyed science subjects. Learning biological concepts like genetic inheritance and gene cloning drew me toward biology. I grew up in the northern plains of India, which are agriculturally rich regions and spent my childhood around wheat and rice fields. So, a combination of interest in biology and crops inspired me to become a plant scientist.

What mentor or mentors have had the greatest impact on your career?
As a first-generation college student, I relied on the people around me for guidance, and I am grateful to each of them. Dr. Walia, my PhD advisor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Dr. Eveland, my postdoctoral advisor at the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, have shaped my career the most. They created opportunities for me, gave me the freedom to express my own scientific ideas, and shaped my approach toward solving scientific problems.

What brought you to the St. Louis plant science community, and what has encouraged you to stay?
My PhD work focused on identifying genes that can protect rice grain production under high temperatures. That research made me curious about the genetics behind inflorescence architecture, the grain-bearing structures that determine the number and arrangement of grains. The project at the Danforth Center closely aligned with this interest, so it felt like my dream project. I now want to investigate how crop production can be improved when heat, nutrient shortages, and other stresses occur simultaneously, as they do in real field conditions. The amazing people at the Center, the lab culture, and St. Louis's thriving scientific community have encouraged me to stay.

What advice would you give a student or young professional considering a career in plant science?
Stay curious and don't shy away from learning new skills. Share your ideas, ask questions, and develop critical thinking. Most importantly, becoming a scientist is a journey, and it's your story, so enjoy the process and the journey.

"Becoming a scientist is a journey, and it's your story, so enjoy the process and the journey."



Photo courtesy of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center

THIRD QUARTER 2026

JOB POSTING OVERVIEW

This quarterly report combines data from three separate Lightcast reports. The **Job Posting Analysis Report** measures hiring demand by aggregating job postings from multiple sources, filtered to relevant agtech industries and roles within the Greater St. Louis 15-county region and defined timeframes.

The **Profile Analytics Report** provides high-level statistics on the local supply of agtech talent in the Greater St. Louis region based on Lightcast profile data.

Finally, the **Company Talent Profile** provides company-level workforce context. For this report, we selected a representative sample of agtech companies to represent hiring and skill demand patterns within the regional market.

2,113
Unique Postings
5,609 Total Postings

509
Companies Posting
21,894 Total Companies

29 Days
Median Posting Duration
Regional Average: 23 Days

KEY DEFINITIONS USED THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT:

Job postings are aggregated listings from multiple sources. Metrics are reported as **Total Postings** (the full count of listings observed) and **Unique Postings** (distinct roles).

Lightcast **Profiles** represent distinct individuals compiled from publicly available sources, including résumé databases, job boards, opt-in employer systems, and related datasets. Each profile includes attributes such as job title, employer, skills, and education, linked to a unique individual. Profiles represent the observable workforce, not only active job-seekers.

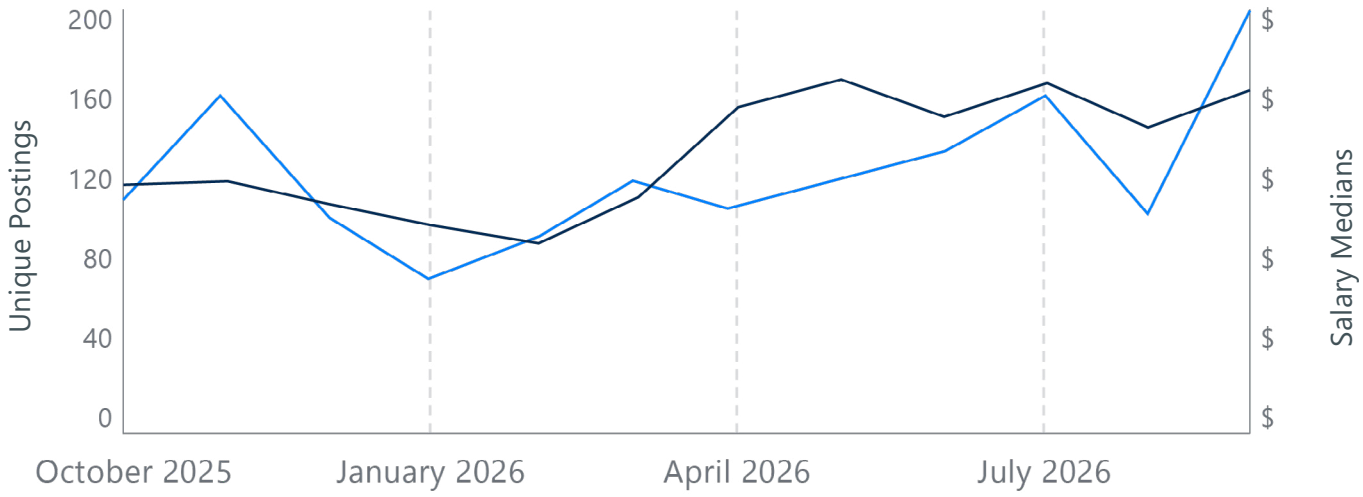
Job postings reflect employer demand signals, while profile-based metrics represent workforce availability.



Advertised Salary & Unique Postings Trends

The chart compares prior year job posting trends with observed median salary levels to illustrate demand and compensation trends.

October 2025 - September 2026



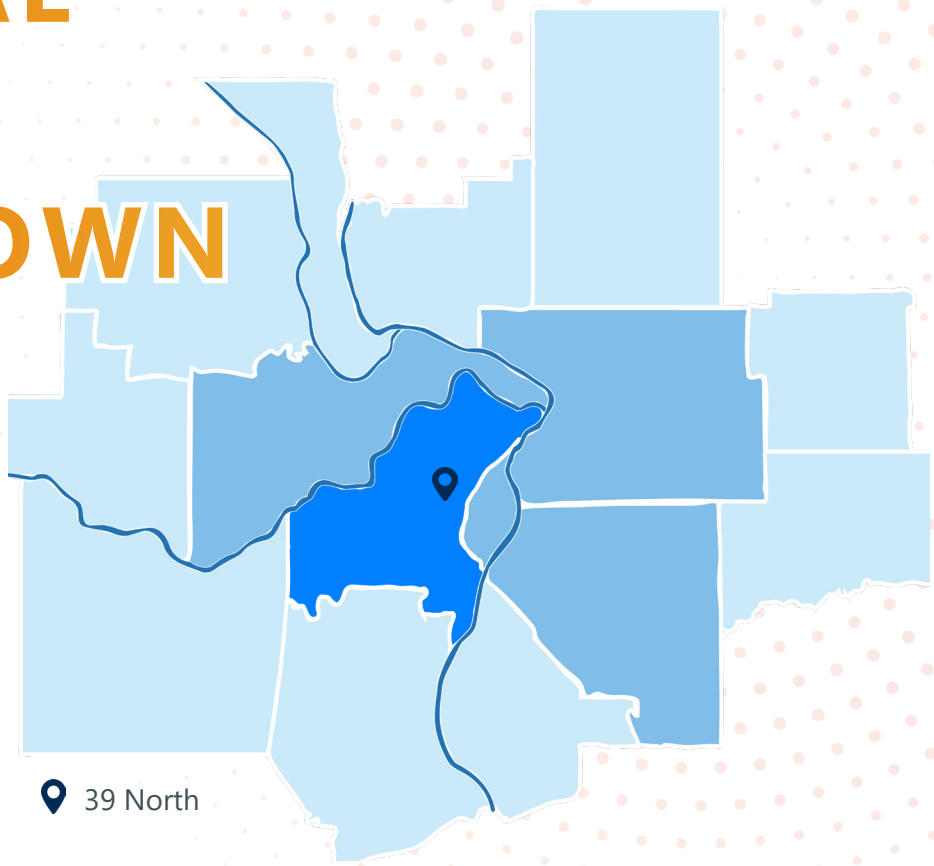
ADVERTISED SALARY TREND

UNIQUE POSTINGS TREND

Source: Lightcast Job Posting Analysis Report

REGIONAL DEMAND BREAKDOWN

Given 39 North's focus on the **Greater St. Louis region**, this analysis is limited to the 15 counties that make up the metro area. Job postings are geographically concentrated in St. Louis County and St. Louis City, indicating that most agtech hiring activity remains clustered near core employment centers.



EDUCATIONAL DEMAND BREAKDOWN

Among the observed job postings that included an education level, a **Bachelor's degree** was the most commonly required.

Education Level	% of Total
High School or GED	12.2%
Associate's Degree	8.0%
Bachelor's Degree	38.3%
Master's Degree	20.5%
Ph.D. or Professional Degree	21.1%

Source: Lightcast Profile Analytics Report

AGTECH JOBS IN ST. LOUIS

These charts summarize the most frequently observed specialized and software skills appearing in agtech job postings across our curated Job Posting Analysis report.

Lightcast skill projections are calculated at the national level, independent of any location or industry filters. **Skill Growth Relative to Market** compares the projected change in demand for a specific skill to the projected change in overall skill demand within the market over a two-year period.

Top Specialized Skills

	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Biology	635	30%	845	6%	↑ 21.5%	Rapidly Growing
Data Analysis	356	17%	2,054	15%	↑ 19.9%	Rapidly Growing
Chemistry	316	15%	813	6%	↑ 12.6%	Growing
Biochemical Assays	248	12%	534	4%	↑ 5.9%	Stable
Chemical Hazards	223	11%	-	-	↑ 8.1%	Stable
Biochemistry	207	10%	757	5%	↑ 7.5%	Stable
Good Manufacturing Practices	202	10%	448	3%	↑ 11.7%	Growing
Molecular Biology	179	8%	1,000	7%	↑ 8.6%	Stable
Auditing	173	8%	347	3%	↑ 20.8%	Rapidly Growing
Laboratory Equipment	155	7%	228	2%	↑ 8.7%	Stable

Top Specialized Software Skills

	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Python	107	5%	1,171	8%	↑ 20.2%	Rapidly Growing
R	96	5%	806	6%	↑ 18.0%	Rapidly Growing
Laboratory Information Management Systems	66	3%	173	1%	↑ 11.8%	Growing
SAP Applications	29	1%	91	1%	↑ 18.8%	Rapidly Growing
SQL	26	1%	393	3%	↑ 5.9%	Stable
SAS (Software)	24	1%	147	1%	↑ 7.1%	Stable
Linux	23	1%	218	2%	↑ 5.3%	Stable
Geographic Information Systems	22	1%	137	1%	↑ 10.8%	Growing
ArcGIS (GIS Software)	21	1%	210	2%	↑ 11.8%	Growing
Application Programming Interface (API)	19	1%	132	1%	↑ 7.9%	Stable

Source: Lightcast Job Posting Analysis Report

2026

REALITIES OF HIRING IN THE US

Employers receive an average of **250 applicants** per online job posting, with entry/junior-level roles receiving **400+ applications**. On average, only about **4-6 candidates** from those interviews will be invited to interview—and **only one will be hired.**

Our team has a few practical tips to address some of the hiring challenges companies are seeing today.

61% of applicants report being ghosted after an interview.



Even a quick "We've gone in another direction, but will keep your resume on file" provides closure and leaves a better impression than silence.

72% of candidates with a negative hiring experience report telling friends, family, and colleagues.



Treat every candidate interaction as an opportunity to build your reputation, even when it doesn't result in a hire.

52% of job seekers have admitted they declined a job offer due to a poor hiring experience.



Basic courtesies like prompt responses, clear feedback, and regular updates are green flags for candidates.

51% offer acceptance rate in Q2 2025; down from 74% in 2023.



Stay engaged at every stage and be prepared to speak to the practical details, from compensation and flexibility to the role itself.

42% of candidates withdraw from an opportunity when the interview process is too long.



Try to limit the interview rounds to no more than 3—if more is expected from the candidate, be honest about the time you'll be asking of them.

48% of employers identify improving the candidate experience as a strategic priority.



Focus on moments that matter: applying, scheduling, interviewing, waiting for updates, and receiving an offer.

The hiring process is often a candidate's first impression of an organization and every interaction sends a message about your culture, leadership, and employee value proposition.

Source: Recruitment Statistics You Should Know in 2026

TALENT SUPPLY: PROFILES

2,909
TOTAL

Of profiles with experience levels available, 28% have 10+ years in their field.

Experience	% of Total
0 - 1 Years	20.09%
2 - 3 Years	21.64%
4 - 6 Years	18.04%
7 - 9 Years	11.32%
10+ Years	28.91%

Top SOC Occupations

This chart summarizes the most common occupations among local agtech talent by SOC occupation. **SOC occupation** refers to a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics classification under the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system, grouping jobs by similar duties, skills, education, and training to enable standardized comparison across employers, industries, and labor market data sources.

Occupations (SOC)	Profiles
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	707
Environmental Scientists and Specialists, Including Health	334
Biological Technicians	282
Agricultural Technicians	237
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	233
Biological Scientists, All Other	219
Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geographers	142
Microbiologists	125

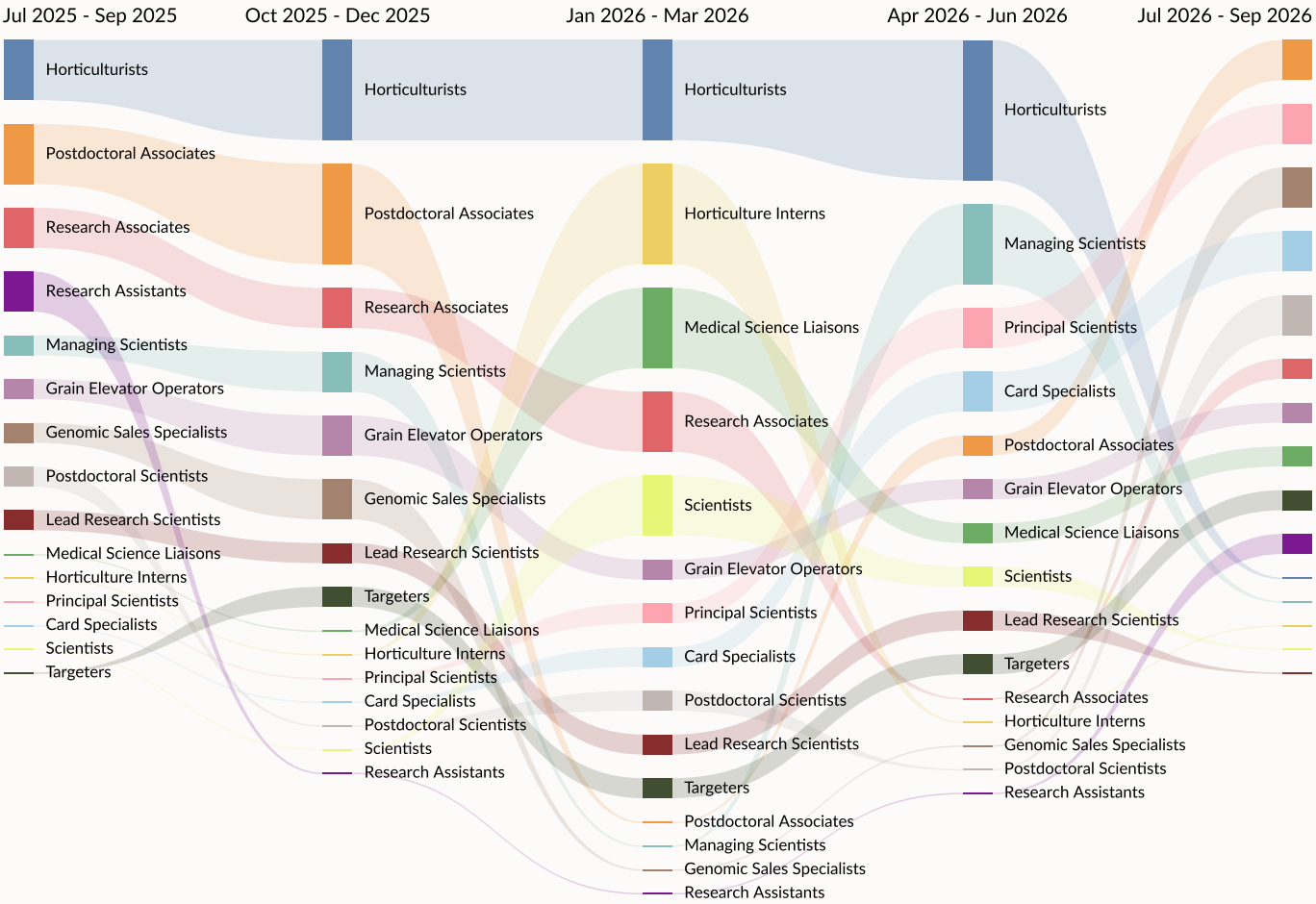
Source: Lightcast Profile Analytics Report



JOB DEMAND TRENDS

Drawn from the Company Talent Profile, this Sankey diagram shows relative job posting volume for selected agtech and life science SOC occupations in the Greater St. Louis region across five quarters, from July 2025 to September 2026. Each column represents a quarter; band thickness reflects the relative volume of postings for that role rather than an exact count. Bands that extend across quarters show how demand for specific roles persists or shifts over time, highlighting both consistently high volume roles and those that appear more intermittently.

Job data are based on job postings from a representative selection of agtech companies in the 15-county Greater St. Louis region.



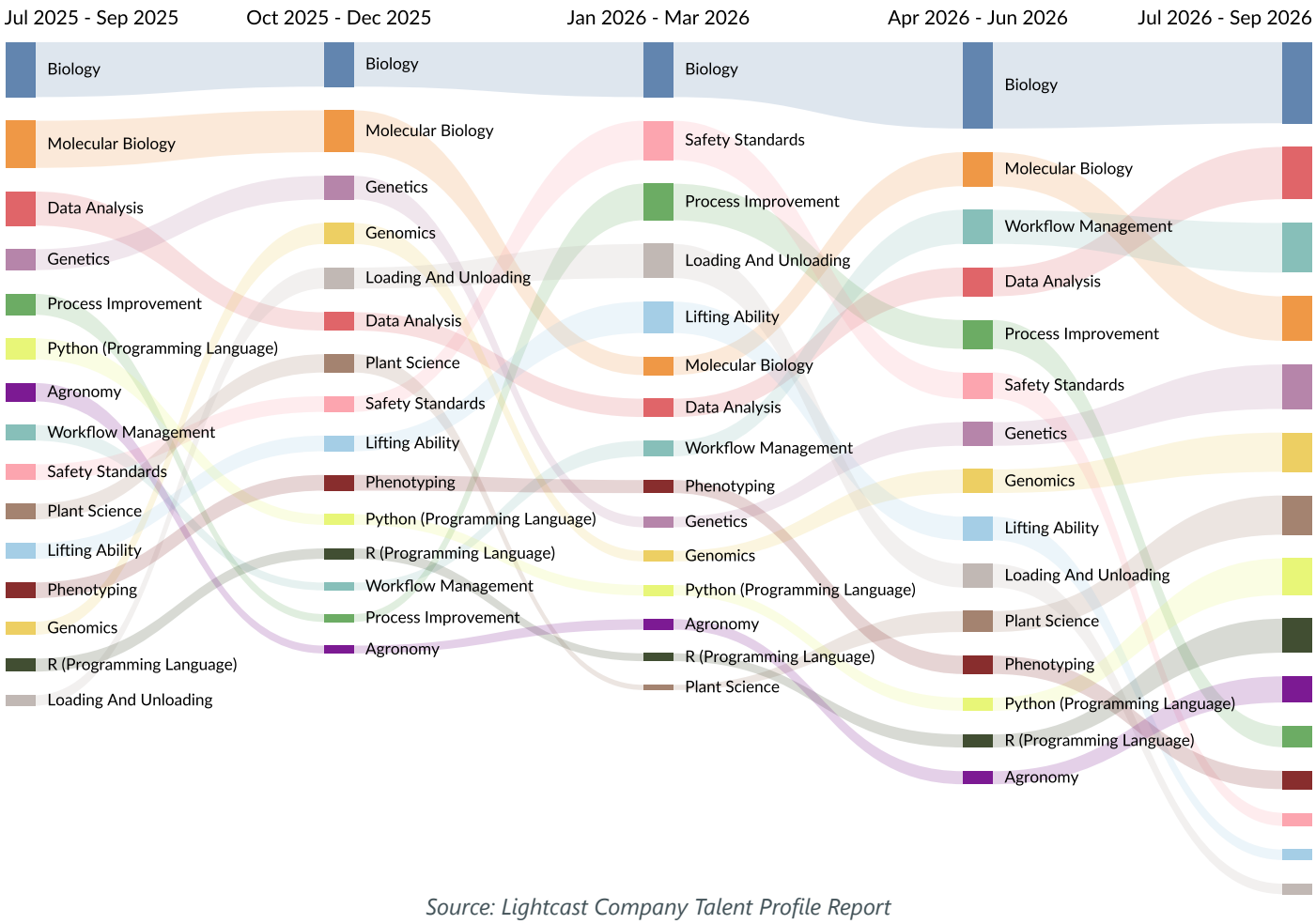
Source: Lightcast Company Talent Profile Report



SKILL DEMAND TRENDS

Similar to the previous, this diagram displays relative posting volume for selected agriculture and life sciences skills in Greater St. Louis across five quarters, from July 2025 to September 2026.

Skills data are based on job postings from a representative selection of agtech companies in the 15-county Greater St. Louis region.



Source: Lightcast Company Talent Profile Report

WHY COMPANIES PARTNER WITH

BEACON HILL LIFE SCIENCES

As your strategic talent partner, Beacon Hill Life Sciences helps organizations navigate an increasingly complex hiring landscape while ensuring candidates feel valued, informed, and engaged throughout the process. The result is better talent, stronger employer brands, and more successful hiring outcomes.

Great hiring experiences don't happen by accident. Organizations that communicate clearly, treat candidates with respect, and move efficiently are more likely to secure top resources and strengthen their reputation in the marketplace, especially in smaller communities such as the St. Louis agtech sector, where reputation matters and word-of-mouth knowledge sharing is crucial.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Beacon Hill partners with agriculture and life sciences organizations to translate market data into targeted, responsive hiring strategies—helping employers compete effectively in a complex and evolving talent landscape. **Looking to hire talent or looking for a job in life sciences? Contact Amber and Kate below or come visit us at The Hub at 39 North:**

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Beacon Hill uses Lightcast and Revelio Labs to benchmark compensation, supply, and demand, representing 99% of the US workforce. Paired with our expertise, we produce comprehensive reports for our clients!



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