Background: Our laboratory studies the dynamic interactions between plants, herbivores and their natural enemies, with a particular focus on toxic plant metabolites. The PhD project will investigate the effect of maize benzoxazinoids on western corn rootworm larvae and entomopathogenic nematodes using plant mutants and insect RNA interference. Through its interdisciplinary nature, the project has the potential to make an original contribution to the current state-of-the- art and deliver critical information for biocontrol approaches to combat an important agricultural pest.

We look for an enthusiastic PhD student with strong interests in plant-herbivore interactions. Applicants should have a firm background in one of the following fields: molecular biology, biochemistry, plant physiology, analytical chemistry, entomology, ecology. All our projects are highly integrative and require willingness to embrace multiple disciplines within the domain of plant-environment interactions. Excellent University grades at the MSc. level are expected. Fluent spoken and written English are prerequisites for this position.

We offer an inspiring research environment, including state-of-the art research facilities, extensive supervision and an exciting project of considerable fundamental and applied relevance. The institute of Plant Sciences is located at the shore of the river Aare, close to the vibrant center of the city of Bern. PhD students are paid according to University standard rates and have the possibility to join the graduate program in Molecular Life Sciences.

How to apply: Send a single pdf including a letter of motivation, a CV with University grades and the names and addresses of two referees to matthias.erb@ips.unibe.ch . **The position is available from February 2015 and open until filled**
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