

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

Department of Crop Sciences

AW-101 Turner Hall
1102 South Goodwin Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801-4798



August 25, 2015

Student Sustainability Committee
c/o Micah Kenfield
285 Illini Union South
MC 384
Campus

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Perennial Polyculture Production Research Site project team. Our project was funded by the Student Sustainability Committee in December 2012 to (1) produce food for the campus dining halls, (2) study perennial polyculture production, also known as permaculture or agroforestry, and (3) increase the availability of student education around sustainable agriculture on our campus. Our team has made tremendous progress on all of these goals over the last 2.5 years.

As stated in our original award letter, all funds are to be expended by December 31, 2015. However, due to the late receipt of original funds along with less than ideal climate/growing conditions in 2012/13, our work has been delayed significantly. Funds have not been spent as quickly as intended. As of July 31, 2015, we have spent approximately \$105,000 of the original \$125,050 award. Our team is concerned that we will be unable to effectively utilize our remaining funds prior to the original deadline. Most importantly, the poor growing conditions in 2012/13 have continued to affect the maturity of the polyculture site. Our goal of reaching a self-sustaining operation by the end of 2015 may not be realized because several of the perennial tree species have not yet begun to bear fruit in significant quantities. Based upon our harvest totals in 2014 and 2015, we expect fruit and overall produce production to increase substantially in 2016 and beyond. However, we anticipate needing funding in 2016 in order to employ the labor necessary to harvest the site. Consequently, our team would like to request a 12-month extension of this project to help achieve self-sufficiency. To be clear, we are not requesting any new funding. We believe that by judiciously spending the remaining funds from the original grant, we can reach our goals of food production for campus dining and resulting self-sufficiency for the duration of the project.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything else that we can do or provide to help you effectively review this request. We look forward to wrapping up this great project and solidifying its place as a cornerstone of sustainable agriculture research and education on our campus.

Sincerely,



Bruce Branham
Professor
Department of Crop Sciences