



STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Funding Award and Acceptance Letter

May 1st, 2020

Project: Woody Polyculture Work Study

Dear Mx. Bruce Branham:

On behalf of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Student Sustainability Committee (SSC), I would like to thank you for considering the funds raised by the Sustainable Campus Environment Fee to implement a project that improves the sustainability of our campus. SSC is pleased to inform you that we are recommending to the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE) that your project receives **\$20,000** in grant funding.

In order to remain eligible for this award, you must agree to the following conditions:

1. A final report of all work completed should be provided to the SSC Program Coordinator by May of 2022.
2. Project status updates and detailed account statements must be provided at the end of each semester, in the method requested, until the project is completed.
3. The Contact Person will be individually responsible for all official communication and the execution of this agreement.
4. The CFOP provided for this award shall strictly be used for the money awarded in this proposal.
5. Any substantial modifications to project scope, budget, or timeline must first be approved by SSC. These requests must be submitted in a formal letter to the Chair and Coordinator.
6. All projects will be expected to follow campus policies and procedures as well as any applicable State and Federal laws.
7. SSC reserves the right to revoke funding if the project does not comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this letter.
8. Any press releases or educational/promotional materials involving the project should acknowledge SSC funding.
9. Any signage involving the project or events surrounding this project should include SSC's logo and/or a statement of which fee funded the project. Projects must coordinate with SSC to ensure promotion appropriately highlights the SSC's contributions to the project.

If you agree to the terms and conditions for the funding, please sign on the designated line at the bottom of this letter. If you have any questions regarding these requirements please contact the SSC, at sustainability-committee@illinois.edu. You will be notified when the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs officially approves this project. Again, thank you for your interest in improving the sustainability of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We look forward to working with you in the future.



STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

SSC Signatories

John Edwards

Joseph Edwards, Chair
Student Sustainability Committee

Jonah Messinger

Jonah Messinger, Treasurer
Student Sustainability Committee

Awardee Signatory

Bruce Branham 5/1/20

Bruce Branham
Applicant

iSEE Signatory

Evan H DeLucia

Dr. Evan DeLucia, Director
Institute for Sustainability, Energy & Environment

Student Affairs Signatory

Dr. Danita M. B. Young

Dr. Danita Brown Young
Division of Student Affairs



STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Project Information

Project: Woody Polyculture Work Study

Funding Source: Sustainable Campus Environment Fee

Funding Amount: \$20,000

Receiving Campus Unit: Crop Sciences

Unit Financial Contact: Shawna Graddy

E-mail: sgraddy@illinois.edu

Project Description:

The Multi-functional Woody Perennial Polyculture (MWP) study was started in 2015 with a grant from iSEE as an ecological study on agroforestry for food production. We planted currants in the spring of 2015, the understory crop, and three tree crops: chestnuts, hazelnuts, and apples. The hazelnuts have been ordered 3 times, planted twice (one order of tissue-culture propagated hazels were defective and died in the greenhouse), and have now failed twice. The chestnuts were planted in 2017 and have failed in the areas of the site that have persistently wet ground. We have determined that is best to replant both tree crop species, while the apples are doing well and will continue to grow. While we are at the northern edge of Pecan growing region, one of the treatments in this study, a highly diverse planting of native fruit and nut crops, has pecan trees that have performed very well. We have decided to replace chestnuts with pecans. We acquired seed for the pecans from the same source used previously and those will be planted very soon (this spring). The hazelnuts are a challenge because the American hazelnuts have good disease tolerance but poor nut quality. The ones we initially planted were out of an Oregon breeding program and presumed adapted to our climate, but we have since determined they are not. So, we want to purchase a variety that has known tolerance to Midwest winters and can be transplanted next spring. This 30 acre site has been counted as part of the campus plan to increase the number of acres of trees so we feel it is critical to keep this site going. The second part of this project is to hire three undergraduate students (2/3 requested funds, 1/3 outside existing funds) to work on agroforestry for food projects this summer. We have several sites that will require a significant amount of hand labor, the MWP site, the original agroforestry for food project, which we've called Woody Perennial Polyculture (WPP), and three currant trials. Currants (*Ribes* spp.) are a highly nutritious berry crop that can fill the understory niche of a polyculture system. We have a trial of 24 currant varieties that are grown in full sun and under 50% shade cloth. This trial provides valuable information on currant performance in the Midwest and under shade. We also have a currant germplasm trial that will provide important Midwest performance data that will be useful in future breeding programs. All of these trials will require hand labor for weed control, harvest, pruning, and other field maintenance tasks. These will provide undergraduate students with an unparalleled learning opportunity in agroforestry for food production. Food-producing agroforestry systems holds tremendous promise as a form of agriculture that will promote carbon sequestration, soil conservation, nutrient and pesticide input reduction, all while increasing biodiversity. These are systems that are vital to help mitigate climate change.



STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

This proposal directly funds:

1. Student Wages
2. Trees
3. Miscellaneous Supplies