University of California, Merced
5200 N. Lake Road
Merced, CA 95343

April 21st, 2021

RE: Contactless Food Box Delivery Service AASHE Innovation Credit

Dear AASHE Committee,

I am writing this letter to affirm The University of California, Merced's (UC Merced) Contactless Food Box Delivery Service. The Contactless Food Box Delivery Service is an innovative program that delivers surplus food to ten residents in Merced each week. Transportation is a contributing factor to food insecurity in our area so we work with a local food pantry, Bread4Life, to deliver these boxes to those in need. Thus the service reduces food waste and food insecurity which is especially important during these turbulent times.

The Contactless Food Box Delivery Service meets the criteria outlined in the innovation credit because the service is an innovative way to reduce food waste and food insecurity, while improving campus and community sustainability. For example, the service is an additional resource for food for our food insecure UC Merced students. It is innovative because many pantries and programs require that the guests come to them; instead, we bring them the food.

Program Highlights:

1. The Contactless Food Box Delivery Service is an innovative program within California and the Central Valley.
2. The Contactless Food Box Delivery Service is an ongoing program.
3. The Contactless Food Box Delivery Servicewas implemented and officially launched December 28th, 2020 in Merced County.
4. This program has not been widely adopted and as such, it is innovative.
5. This program is a partnership between UC Merced and Bread4Life

For more information, please visit https://sustainability.ucmerced.edu/initiatives/food/contactless-food-box-delivery-service.

Sincerely,

Erin Meyer
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