



Cornell University
David R. Atkinson Center
for a Sustainable Future

Helene Schember, Ph.D.
Executive Director

200 Rice Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

607.255.0978 hrs6@cornell.edu

www.sustainablefuture.cornell.edu

July 8, 2011

Dear AASHE Program Staff:

I am pleased to confirm that that Atkinson Center's "Academic Venture Fund" (AVF) meets the criteria required by the AASHE STARS Reporting Framework for Innovation credits. This program is described on our website: www.acsf.cornell.edu/AVF.

Initiated in the fall of 2008, this signature program was developed to stimulate, nurture and connect teams of researchers in new original, cross-disciplinary research at Cornell in sustainability science. This is a competitive, peer-reviewed program, which yields seed funding for about 25 percent of proposals submitted. In an innovative move, the ACSF matches potential proposers with promising collaborators by making all letters of intent available to Cornell researchers on our website about 6 weeks prior to the submission deadline. ACSF Associate Directors review the letters and nurture collaborations among researchers in overlapping and complementary areas. Selected projects are also nurtured through regular meetings with the Center leadership. The proposed research must show promise for securing external funding and advancing sustainability locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally. The AVF is intended to support proposals that would not be funded by traditional granting organizations because the proposed activity is interdisciplinary, still early in development, high risk, or some combination of these factors.

In the four rounds of funding since its inception, the AVF has provided over \$2.8 Million to 35 interdisciplinary research projects at Cornell, for example:

- *Environmental, Energetic and Economic Potential of Biochar*
- *Forecasting Disease and Economic Consequences of Climate Change*
- *Sustainability of Food Systems*
- *The Impact of Green Energy Development on Rural Community Sustainability*
- *Replacing Antibiotics in the Food Animal Industry with Bacteriophages*
- *Harnessing Genomics to Advance Biodiversity and Conservation Research*
- *Sustainable Pest Management and Yield Increase Strategies*

See the complete listing of awards at www.acsf.cornell.edu/AVF.

These innovative and exciting projects have broadened Cornell's network of sustainability research, which now includes more than 250 researchers, in 120 departments, institutes, and centers, across all Cornell's colleges and schools. Many of these groups have now received substantial funding from agencies external to Cornell.

Sincerely,

Helene Schember