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January 5, 2016

Dear AASHE STARS Program Staff,

This letter serves as affirmation that California State University, Sacramento's multi-trophic, sustainable, food system project qualifies for the AASHE STARS innovation credit.

The conceptual goal of the project was to build and operate a food waste to good food system that demonstrates key waste management issues, ecological principles, and nutrition concepts. The system uses aquaponics, the combination of aquaculture and hydroponics, combined with earthworm and insect processing of the food wastes to produce protein as a substantial component of the fish food, typically one of the most costly and ecologically damaging inputs to fish production. This goal provides an academic context for addressing the full range of issues about sustainability. The practical goal was to develop a pilot-scale system to demonstrate how all the campus food waste can be processed. The academic value of this goal is in linking theoretical issues in sustainability with practical, institutional issues and daily experiences that provide immediate learning opportunities.

This project has established faculty relationships in the following academic departments: Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Engineering, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Sociology. Getting food waste from the Day Care Center has created opportunities for very young kids to see and learn about the system and about sustainability principles. We are also working with the Office of Water Programs on water quality issues.

Discovering sustainable food practices is an imperative focus when moving toward an environmentally conscious future. We appreciate your consideration of the multi-trophic, sustainable, food system project for an innovation credit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristina Cullen'.

Kristina Cullen  
Sustainability and Operations Analyst, Facilities Management  
California State University, Sacramento