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AMHERST

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To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being submitted in support of the University of Massachusetts Amherst's STARS application for Innovation Credit 3. UMass Amherst has been actively involved in exploring the use of biochar to slow global climate change.

Biochar, a form of carbon prepared by heating biomass in limited air (pyrolysis) which serves as a soil "permanent" additive, stabilizing soil, promoting growth and acting to store CO<sub>2</sub> in the soil.

In Spring 2009, UMass Amherst sponsored a conference, the Northeast Biochar Symposium, and followed up this effort with a weekly series, the Climate, Energy, Biochar, & Agriculture Seminar Series, during the 2011 spring semester, sponsored by the UMASS Center for Agriculture and the Department of Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences.

The goal of both the conference and seminar series is to educate the campus and the public about this little-known process that has the potential to sequester carbon in the soil for hundreds to thousands of years, improve water quality, increase soil fertility, raise agricultural productivity and reduce pressure on old-growth forests.

I feel strongly that biochar is an important process to consider in the fight against global climate change, and that it is important to bring together the scientific community and the public to increase awareness and to effectuate change.

As Director of the Center for Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts, I was one of the sponsors of a weekly lecture series this spring and intend to pursue additional educational and scientific opportunities to explore the local and global uses of biochar.

Sincerely,

Stephen Herbert,  
Associate Dean, Agricultural Research and Outreach, College of Natural Sciences  
Director, Center of Agriculture  
Director, UMass Extension  
Director, UMass Experiment Station