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December 13, 2010

Gail Wadsworth  
Executive Director  
California Institute for Rural Studies  
P.O. Box 1047  
Davis, CA 95617

Dear Gail:

I am writing this letter of support for the proposal, "Assessment of Farmworker Communities and Residential Sites for Risk of Heat Stress" that is being submitted to the Agricultural Sustainability Institute. I am glad to be participating in this exciting project, especially the partnership with the California Institute for Rural Studies and the American Friends Service Committee. I believe the synergy between outreach, research, and advocacy will enable us to develop novel ways to address farmworker living conditions and the environmental effects of health issues such as heat stress.

As the team leader for UC Davis, I will be responsible for creating and testing of the assessment tool as well as advising CIRS with the literature review and other project-related activities. I will draw from my professional experience as a community planner and a community-based researcher, which includes over a dozen years as a practitioner and as a former director of a university-based center where I developed similar assessment tools to evaluate the physical environment related to health and community design. I have assembled a team of graduate student researchers that have professional experience related to the project tasks. George Hubert, a PhD student in geography, has a Master of Architecture degree and has worked on farmworker housing issues. He will be responsible for coordinating the residential site assessments and assisting in the development and field-testing of the assessment tool. Vallerye Mosquera, a graduate student in community development, will conduct the interviews with farmworkers as part of the post-occupancy evaluations, and has prior work experience working with Spanish-speaking populations around environmental issues.

Together, we will ensure that the research produced is relevant to the issues farmworker's face and can be utilized by the communities in which they live. On behalf of the UC Davis team, I would thank you for inviting us to participate in this important project and look forward to our future collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Rios".

Michael Rios, PhD  
Department of Environmental Design