



UNIVERSITY *of* CALIFORNIA  
**Agriculture & Natural Resources**

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July 20, 2013

Kern County Board of Supervisors  
Kern County, California

To Whom it May Concern:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide some feedback regarding our experiences to date at the Shafter Research Station operated by the San Joaquin Quality Cotton group in cooperation with Kern County. Let me start by indicating that all of the communications between the San Joaquin Quality Cotton group staff and my staff have been very professional in nature, and a great deal of effort has been evident in trying to meet our needs and work with us in getting re-established in our operations at the Shafter facility.

This has been a transitional year for my research program in getting established at Shafter. We have a research program that requires quite different needs in order to accomplish our work, and those needs are not just as simple as office space and laboratory space. For the 2013 year, we have committed to an agreement for the Shafter Research Station to provide us with one large laboratory space, the research gin, multiple storage rooms, an office in the main building, outside storage space in the yard for a truck, several trailers and two weigh units we use in on-farm cotton harvests. We are very satisfied with the flexibility the Station staff have provided us in terms of figuring out access needs, spaces for equipment, and in being flexible in this transition year as we figure out how to get our work done. We expect to request use of similar spaces for 2014 and beyond, based on our work space needs and current assumptions regarding available research funds for our work. If we are able to add another person to our staff, and secure funds for and expand into more breeding and selection work, we anticipate that we may also be interested in the seed storage and delinting building at the facility.

While I am technically based out of the UC Davis Plant Sciences Department and also am Center Director at the University of CA West Side REC, for many years my appointment and the research program I coordinate have been split between the Shafter Research Center and the West Side Research and Extension Center. I continue to feel that the Shafter Station is a good fit for part of my research program, based on the facts that I have access to work and laboratory spaces that are good quality for the kind of work we do, access to the research gin at the Station, plus I have Kern County based employees who want to remain in the area. Access to the research gin building continues to be vital to a cotton research program, and the San Joaquin Valley Quality cotton group has also been helpful to us in providing access to industry contacts able to help us keep that equipment operational even with older equipment and tight budgets. We have worked together with the San Joaquin Quality Cotton group to maintain our air permits to allow the gin to remain operational and meet air quality regulations and permit requirements.

The research program that I have been involved in, in cooperation with other UC Cooperative Extension researchers and some out of state USDA-ARS researchers, is the type of work that in

addition to the gin requires some relatively large work spaces and storage spaces for equipment and for treating, sorting and storing seed. Although the cotton industry acreage has declined in recent years, there remain some significant challenges in terms of research efforts to address, including: (1) continuing efforts for independent University testing of new commercial varieties suitable to meet yield and quality goals for the marketplace; and (2) evaluation and screening of commercial and experimental germplasm resistant to Fusarium to be jointly developed by USDA-ARS and UC. We have been generously supported by the cotton industry of CA and elsewhere to continue these efforts. Some of this work is conducted at the Shafter facility, but in many ways we also utilize the Shafter facility as a "base" for on-farm and UC-REC work conducted elsewhere in Kern County, Tulare County and Fresno County. Basing our current operations out of Shafter provides a good combination of work spaces and access to facilities needed for both types of work.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on our experiences to date in 2013 working with the San Joaquin Quality Cotton group at the Shafter Station. Please let me know if I can provide additional information.



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