

January 29, 2020

To whom it may concern:

This letter accompanies and supports the joint application of Wageningen University and Research (WUR) in The Netherlands and the College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES) at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, DC for the *2050 Food System Vision Prize*. The collaboration of these two outstanding institutions represents a unique pairing of Goliath and David in which both will strengthen the capabilities of the other in their common purpose of empowering urban and peri-urban communities to become protagonists of their own food future.

One of the great advantages of this pairing is the value that will be derived from WUR's vast resources in every aspect of food system development alongside UDC's knowledge of "the street". The innovations they structure will be assured of reaching down to neighborhoods where the need is greatest and where the impact will be most dramatic.

As the world's premiere academic institution for agricultural research, WUR will bring to this challenge its innovations in regenerative and sustainable food systems and its leadership in urban agricultural production. CAUSES has won high praise for its Urban Food Hubs located in underserved communities throughout Washington, DC. In doing so it has become an agent of change, even with its limited resources. Its food hubs have proven their transformative potential by aligning key elements of urban agricultural development such as improved nutritional standards, expanded green infrastructure, and shared value that benefits residents, students, public officials, and small businesses. CAUSES also provides a feeder system of enlightened students and practitioners to support community-centric entrepreneurship as well as culturally-sensitive food crops grown for personal consumption from plots tended by local residents who are trained by CAUSES personnel.

In the hands of Dr. Sabine O'Hara and Dr. Marian Stuiver, the methodologies developed for building sustainable, circular economies can become an international template for communities in which a lack of adequate resources demands creative solutions to every challenge. They will resolve more than waste reducing practices that maximize environmental protections and improve economic efficiencies. In the hands of these two visionary leaders, the restless, creative energy of the people who live in those underserved communities will discover that a platform has been built for them in which their human capacity can evolve to a point at which it is capable to closing the circle completely.

Yours truly,
Daniel A. Silverstein
Founder, Ag Salon