Organic Agriculture Graduate Certificate Proposal

Executive Summary

The online Graduate Certificate in Organic Agriculture will address the current educational gap created by a rapidly-growing global industry and the needs of this industry for trained, experienced professionals. Courses for the certificate will be offered online, allowing students and professionals to access graduate study where they may otherwise not have access, as there is no other graduate-level program in Organic Agriculture in the US, Canada or Europe. The objective of this program is to provide this necessary expertise, and produce graduates who will then be able to effectively work in organic food production, processing, distribution, policy-making, education, or potentially beginning their own organic-related businesses.

This certificate will be a provided through the College of Agricultural Science with courses taught by several Departments and Programs across campus. This will allow us to build a graduate program with the potential for several areas of specialization within the Organic Agriculture Certificate. Courses offered in Anthropology, Food Systems, Food Culture and Social Justice, and Health and Human Sciences will give students perspective on the social and cultural impacts of the way organic foods are produced and consumed around the world; courses offered by the Departments of Horticulture, Crop and Soil Science, and Animal Science will allow students to understand organic production with the potential to specialize in several areas: whole farms systems management, organic livestock management, and specific crop types for which organic production is used.