Dr. Samuel L. Purdue

Academic Dean and Director

College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences

Conner Hall, First Floor

University of Georgia

Athens, GA 30602

Dear Dean Purdue,

I am writing to you in support of filling the Viticulture faculty position at the University of Georgia, upon Dr. Cain Hickey’s recent resignation.

The University of Georgia Viticulture program is a robust program and the growers and producers in this state are grateful for the top talent your program has produced.

Our industry has a huge need for qualified and skilled employees. Like many other industries, we rely on stellar university programs and experienced faculty to prepare and educate the next generation to join the workforce. Dr. Cain Hickey developed an experiential learning opportunity internship program for undergraduate students, he also developed and taught a First Year Odyssey course for freshman students (Growing muscadines and wine grapes in Georgia’s challenging climate). He mentored over 20 undergraduate students through summer internship or undergraduate research positions, and graduated two graduate students as primary investigator, one of which is currently employed in the Georgia wine industry. If this position is not filled with another viticulture advisor, we fear the number of knowledgeable students entering the industry will also decline.

Our industry also relies on educational workshops and conferences. Dr. Cain Hickey presented at over 40 industry conferences and workshops, he also assisted in coordinating 19 workshops to help educate our industry. Without this Viticulture position being filled, we fear that these educational opportunities and workshops will no longer be available.

We hope that you will please consider our request. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best Regards,