

(Attachment B.)

**Criss, Jeremy**

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**From:** Cheng-I Wei [wei@umd.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 14, 2012 5:54 PM  
**To:** Criss, Jeremy  
**Cc:** Nick T. Place; Charles Schuster; Douglas W. Tregoning; Stanley W. Fultz; cferguson@fredco-md.net; kzimmerman@hceda.org; Ensor, Robert R; Terry E. Poole; Loretta P. Carstens  
**Subject:** RE: UME-Central Maryland Cluster Recommendation on the Agronomy Educator Position

Jeremy:

Thanks for the note. I will read tonight and get back to you later.

Cheng-I Wei

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**From:** Criss, Jeremy [mailto:Jeremy.Criss@montgomerycountymd.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 14, 2012 5:45 PM  
**To:** Cheng-I Wei  
**Cc:** Nick T. Place; Charles Schuster; Douglas W. Tregoning; Stanley W. Fultz; cferguson@fredco-md.net; kzimmerman@hceda.org; Ensor, Robert R; Terry E. Poole  
**Subject:** UME-Central Maryland Cluster Recommendation on the Agronomy Educator Position

Hello Dean Wei,

On January 12, 2012 representatives from the Central Maryland Cluster met to discuss the UME-Agronomy Educator Position.

I have copied all of these representatives on this message including Nick Place.

I was asked by the group to make some changes to the attached letter which contains our recommendation surrounding this position and how to collectively fund it.

It is my understanding the proposed Agronomy Educator position will be mentioned during the Winter Agronomy Meeting next week.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Jeremy

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2/16/2012

(Attachment)

February 14, 2012

Dr. Cheng-I Wei, Dean and Director  
College of Agricultural and Natural Sciences  
University of Maryland Extension  
1296 Symons Hall  
College Park, MD 20742-5551

Dear Dr. Wei:

RE: Agronomy Educator-Central MD Cluster

On January 12, 2012 representatives from the counties in the University of Maryland Extension-UME Central MD Cluster met to discuss the Agronomy Educator position that the UME is proposing to fill this year. These representatives are as follows:

Frederick County: Stan Fultz, Terry Poole, and Colby Ferguson  
Howard County: Kathy Zimmerman and Robert Ensor  
Montgomery County: Chuck Schuster, Doug Tregoning, Jeremy Criss

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how the counties can collectively fund this position in partnership with the UME.

The representatives first discussed the concern as to whether a new Agronomy Educator position for the Cluster would negatively impact the contractual agreements that are in place for both Terry Poole and Doug Tregoning. The representatives agreed that services provided through these contracts should not be terminated once the Agronomy Educator position is filled. The representatives agreed that both Terry Poole and Doug Tregoning provide a different set of skills to farmers and both Terry and Doug can provide valuable input and experience to help train this new employee.

The representatives discussed the scope of services for the new Agronomy Educator position that initially includes the following:

The position should provide technical expertise to agricultural producers for:

Field crop assistance and agronomy needs

Nutrient Management assistance for water quality goals of the TMDL

The position should serve as the agricultural liaison for UME focusing initially in Howard County-Howard County Farm Bureau and Howard Soil Conservation District.

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The representatives also discussed where the office for Agronomy Educator would be located. We discussed the UME process that determines the location of the office for new UME hires. We also discussed the office space constraints that currently exist in the Montgomery and Frederick Extension offices. The Howard County office has available office space so it was suggested as the potential location for the new Agronomy Educator position.

The representatives used a September 1, 2011 UME Position announcement 103435 for an Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences (Finance) for the AGNR-UME-Montgomery County as a reference to discuss the Agronomy Educator position. We use the proposed Salary Base of \$45,250 and added an additional 35 percentage for the fringe benefits which resulted in an annual total of \$61,087 salary and fringe.

After additional discussion the representatives reached in principle a tentative agreement on how to collectively fund the Agronomy Educator position. The representatives propose the total annual amount of \$61,087 should be divided in half. The counties would provide an equal 1/3 share (\$10,011) of \$30,035 and the UME would provide the remaining \$30,035 to fund the Agronomy Educator position.

On January 13, 2012 some of the representatives learned (Jeremy Criss, Chuck Schuster Doug Tregoning, and Stan Fultz) the UME is proposing the Agronomy Educator position will be a Faculty Extension Assistant-FEA and not a Faculty Tenure position. These representatives are concerned as to why the Family and Consumer Sciences position was proposed as a Faculty Non-Tenured, On Track position and the Agronomy Educator position is proposed as a Faculty Extension Assistant. As you know the Agronomy Educators Doug Tregoning, Terry Poole and Caraugh Fitzgerald-spelling were all Faculty Tenured positions and we recommend the UME create an equivalent or similar position for the new Agronomy Educator that could enable the position to migrate towards a tenured position. We are concerned as to how the agricultural community will perceive the UME reducing the significance of the Agronomy Educator position going to a FEA position.

We recommend the UME consider these suggestions as you move forward on the Agronomy Educator position. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our suggestions and to answer any questions that you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Tregoning	Terry Poole	Robert Ensor
Chuck Schuster	Stan Fultz	Kathy Zimmerman
Jeremy Criss	Colby Ferguson	