

August 31, 2022

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
139 Agricultural Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078

To Whom it May Concern:

It is an honor it is to have been nominated for the position of Professor and Assistant Director and State Program Leader for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Community Economic Development, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES). I very much appreciate the confidence shown by the individual who submitted my name.

Oklahoma State University and the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service has a very special place in my heart. It was in the OSU Animal Science department I began my career in academia in 1993. While serving as a post-doctoral research associate for Dr. Gerald Horn in Animal Science, I was asked to teach the undergraduate forage course in the Agronomy department. The course had not been taught for several years. I developed the course and taught it for the first time in the spring of 1994. The frozen position for assistant professor and State Extension Forage Specialist was opened later that year and I was fortunate to be chosen to serve in that position until 1999 when I returned home to Texas to work for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service (now Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service).

I began my Texas A&M University career as an Extension forage specialist in the department of Soil and Crop Sciences (SCSC) at the Research and Extension Center at Overton, TX where I worked closely with livestock producers, wildlife managers, and county extension agents. In 2004, I was asked to transfer to College Station to serve as the State Extension Forage Specialist. Although I do not have a teaching appointment, I developed and began and continue teaching SCSC 444/644 *Forage Ecology and Management*. I currently serve as Associate Department Head and Extension Program Leader for SCSC where I supervise 26 Extension faculty and other related support staff. My faculty work from Amarillo to Corpus Christi, Overton to San Angelo and many Research and Extension Centers in between. Our crops emphases include cotton, forage, water quantity and quality, wheat, corn, sorghum, sunflowers, peanuts, hemp, turf, weed management, soils and soil fertility. I manage a hard dollar budget of approximately \$1.5 million and oversee grants averaging around \$2 million. As Associate Department Head, I am not relegated to only Extension activities, but engage with our teaching faculty on campus and our research faculty both on and off campus.

Unlike more traditional faculty, my interests and experiences are quite varied. By training I am a strange mixture of agronomist and range scientist. I also have graduate training in wildlife management. Thus, my primary interest is in natural resource management involving the soil-plant-animal-water interfaces.

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However, as an administrator with faculty working with all manner of crop production, I have also embraced growers and commodity groups representing most of the major commodities in Texas. I am a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management and a Certified Wildlife Biologist and was a Certified Professional Turf Manager.

I was the first (and remain the only) endowed Extension Specialist due to obtaining an endowment worth about \$1.8 million in 2013; this endowment has sustained much of my land stewardship educational program efforts since that time. I have subsequently obtained an additional endowment for the same type of educational programs. These endowments will provide support for Extension land stewardship programs in perpetuity, and I believe these types of gifts are critical to the future of Extension. Grants are an obvious short-term answer to some issues, but gifts, endowments, partnerships with industry, etc. must be continually explored to allow Extension to provide the science-based educational programs and information into the future to an ever-growing population.

I have been fortunate enough to be selected by the Texas A&M University Board of Regents as a Regents Fellow and as fellow of both the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America. The Vice-Chancellor and Extension Director at Texas A&M University both have awarded me multiple awards...but this is important...most of my awards have been for team collaborations. I am a tremendous believer in working as a member of a team and emphasize this to new faculty as early as their interview process. I learned long ago at Oklahoma State University the important of working as a member of a team.

Having worked my entire career in Extension, I am a fierce proponent of the Organization and understand the importance of the work we do for our citizens every day, whether it is in wheat or cotton variety trials, water quality and conservation, or natural resource management. Extension continues to provide the relevant information society needs as we face greater challenges regarding feeding and clothing a growing population, helping develop new enterprises for community support, and keeping the wild places wild.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to apply for the position of Professor and Assistant Director and State Program Leader for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Community Economic Development for the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES). I look forward to hearing from you regarding this position.

Best regards,



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