POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Cornell University Department of Natural Resources
Part-time Gradate Research Assistant

Post Revised 3 September, 2011

The Cornell Ecoagriculture Working Group is recruiting a **part-time graduate research assistant for fall 2011** to collaborate on two exciting research projects related to biodiversity conservation and tropical agriculture. This position is an excellent opportunity for a student in ecology, natural resources, sustainable agriculture, or a related field to gain experience working on key scientific challenges at the nexus of agriculture, tropical deforestation, and biodiversity conservation, and to interface with leading organizations working in this space.

Project overview and position responsibilities: Both projects seek to apply current ecosystem science to evaluate and improve the environmental performance of eco-certification systems for tropical agricultural commodities such as palm oil, soybeans, coffee, cocoa, and sugar. The first project—which will constitute the majority of the job—will review and assess the availability of suitable, cost-effective methodologies for monitoring the impacts of eco-certified production on biodiversity, water quantity and quality, and other key ecosystem services. This work will draw on recent scientific literature, methodological tools, and activities and innovations of leading certification entities such as Rainforest Alliance, FSC, etc. The second project will assess the current role of the tropical commodity "roundtables" (i.e., voluntary eco-standards bodies for palm oil, soy, and sugar) in supporting biodiversity conservation, and will identify key political and technical barriers and opportunities for improving biodiversity conservation outcomes from these roundtables. For both projects, the research assistant will be responsible for conducting literature review and synthesis, writing, and collaborating with the project team based at Cornell and EcoAgriculture Partners. The RA will be supervised by Dr. Jeffrey Milder, visiting fellow in the Dept. of Natural Resources and Director of Research at EcoAgriculture Partners.

Qualifications and requirements: Preference will be given to 2nd year or higher Cornell graduate students enrolled in an MSc or PhD program. Recent graduates or

exceptional first-year graduate students will also be considered. Applicants should be prepared to commit to working an average of at least 10 hours per week during fall semester 2011 plus one week full-time in December 2011. Hours are flexible, although the RA must be based in Ithaca to facilitate collaboration. Candidates should possess excellent research and writing skills and be highly organized, creative, and self-directed.

This position will be compensated at $14-18 per hour, depending on qualifications. To apply, please send a CV, writing sample, and a 2-3 paragraph cover e-mail stating your interest in and qualifications for the position to Jeffrey Milder, jcm85@cornell.edu.
About the Cornell Ecoagriculture Working Group: *The Working Group is an association of Cornell faculty, students, and staff working to advance the science and practice of ecoagriculture – the integrated management of rural landscapes to increase synergies among food production, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, and human wellbeing. Core Working Group collaborators and supporters include the Cornell Dept. of Natural Resources; Cornell Cooperative Extension; Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture and Development (CIIFAD); David R. Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future; and the non-profit organization EcoAgriculture Partners. For more information, please visit http://ecoag.cals.cornell.edu.*