W.K. Kellogg Endowed Chair in Sustainable Food Systems
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ENDOWMENT PURPOSE
The W.K. Kellogg Endowed Chair in Sustainable Food Systems provides leadership for the Agricultural Sustainability Institute and the UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. The holder of this chair leverages these entities with research and teaching to foster a safe, healthy, and accessible food supply while building a national network of leaders in sustainability.

RESEARCH
The flexibility and reliability of this endowment income are extremely valuable to me in my own research and teaching, as well as in my leadership of the Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI). During the current academic year, I have used the endowment income for two primary purposes related to my research. I’ve used a portion to fund a part-time pre-doctoral fellow to assist with the final stages of review of a book manuscript that is the culmination of a 7-year assessment of nitrogen in California. I’ve used another portion for a 50:50 match with a colleague at ETH Zurich to fund a full-time pre-doctoral position to build a research collaboration on resilience in food value chains, which I expect to develop into my primary research focus in the coming few years. Reviews of the nitrogen book manuscript have been exceedingly favorable; we also have our first two major journal articles out from the sustainable sourcing / food chain resilience project this year.

TEACHING
In addition to mentoring pre-doctoral fellows and graduate students, I teach the two-term capstone course sequence for graduating seniors in our Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems major, which is entitled "Workshop
on Sustainable Food Systems”. The major has grown rapidly and enrollment currently is at the roughly 30 student capacity for this course, which is designed to unify all seven of the student learning objectives in the major (e.g., systems thinking, understanding values, civic engagement) through team-based work for real-world clients. Ratings of the course were excellent this year, some of the highest teaching evaluations I’ve ever received for what is probably the most demanding course I’ve ever led for undergraduates.

STUDENTS
The main use of the fund is to support two pre-doctoral fellows—meaning staff who have shown great research promise and who intend further graduate study within 1-2 years. One fellow works with me on the California Nitrogen Assessment; she intends to apply for an MS in International Agricultural Development. The other fellow works with me on sustainable sourcing/resilience in food chains, with a joint appointment with ETH Zurich. I believe she will apply for PhD study in an integrated interdisciplinary PhD program in environment and resources, with a focus on the food system. I also use endowment income to support a peer advisor for the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems major and for other student research assistants.

OUTREACH
I undertake a number of outreach activities each month in my role as Director of our statewide Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. The most active area for outreach supported by the endowment income is the series of eight webinars which we are conducting as part of the stakeholder review of the California Nitrogen Assessment, with support from one of my pre-doctoral fellows. The other pre-doctoral fellow also collaborates with me in preparation of a variety of outreach materials and presentations on sustainable sourcing/resilience of food value chains.

LEVERAGING ADDITIONAL FUNDING
Although not entirely attributable to the endowment income, we do raise well over $1 million per year in gifts and extramural support.

THANKS
The income from the WKKF Endowed Chair plays an indispensable role in ASI’s leadership in sustainable agriculture and food systems in California, nationally, and increasingly globally. Specifically, it allows us to undertake higher risk, longer term initiatives that help to set the agenda, rather than simply responding to agendas set by others.