

May 15, 2017

Dr. Ernie Minton, Chair

Search Committee for Interim Director

Food Science Institute

Dear Dr. Minton and Search Committee Members,

Please consider this letter and my curriculum vitae as my application for Interim Director of the Food Science Institute (FSI). I am glad that this position is being filled, even with an interim person, since the FSI is a very important component of the College of Agriculture (COA) and has been a tremendous asset to our constituents whether students, food processors or state and federal agencies. As required by the job announcement, I will address in this letter my leadership philosophy and my qualifications for this position.

Since all good application letters begin by a definition from Webster, I am quoting two of his definitions of the verb to lead as 1. "To show the way to by going in advance"...4."To guide the action or opinion of" These two definitions are complimented by a plethora of leadership theories ranging from the Great Man to the Trait Behavior and Contingency theories. It is my personal view that leaders are born and not made. There are certainly beneficial trainings and learned skills that would improve inborn leadership traits such as integrity, initiative, empathy and the ability to make rational decisions. I believe that I do possess these qualities. During my many years of service with Kansas food processors and students, my integrity has never been called into question; my sense of initiative is evidenced from starting the value-added program at K-State from scratch; my empathy is always appreciated by students and Kansas citizens; my potential for rational decision making was manifested when I requested to move from the College of Human Ecology to the College of Agriculture for the benefit of the food science program. In my position as Interim Director, I will aim to enable faculty, staff, and students to perform to the best of their abilities; I will always be open to new ideas and willing to admit when I have been wrong. I will also strive to build consensus on issues and opportunities facing the FSI. However, I realize that consensus is not always possible and there would be cases where a leader has to make a decision that he or she believes will be for the benefit of an organization as a whole even though it may not benefit all individuals. I am talking here about my desire to fully explore the feasibility of moving the FSI into an independent departmental unit (Department of Food Science) under the College of Agriculture. It is my personal conviction that such a move will help propel the food science program into the top five programs in the nation; this is my ultimate goal and reason for applying for this position.

I have thoroughly reviewed the list of qualifications for this job and I will address below how I fit these qualifications.

I have a doctorate degree in food science and I am a tenured full professor in the Department of Animal Science and Industry. You will note from my CV that I have a strong commitment and appreciation for

research, teaching, and extension. Even though I never had a research appointment I have directed the research of numerous graduate students and have been successful in securing extramural research grants. Despite having only a 0.15 teaching appointment, I have co-developed and taught 4 classes. I always get good student evaluations, I have led food product development teams to national awards, and I have published a textbook on food product development which has recently been adopted by 15 universities. My extension program has been extremely beneficial to the state of Kansas and has attracted national and international attention. I have trained the extension specialists in Arizona, South Dakota, and New Mexico to develop similar programs in those states.

Within my extension program I have had to manage extension assistants, graduate and undergraduate students, and to maintain numerous budgets at one time. I have proved my communication skills, both written and oral, through grant writing, media appearances, both printed and electronic publications. I have already established excellent rapport with many food industries, agricultural groups and regulatory agencies which gives me an edge at being a good representative of the FSI.

I have presented technical papers to international audiences and presented on food safety and preservations to the lay public. I do have very strong ties to the Kansas and national food industry and a strong record of grantsmanship. I have a strong commitment to working with diverse audiences and students of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. I have an appreciation for diversity and believe the food science department could be doing a better job of recruiting students from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups such as African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans.

Finally I would like to thank the committee for their work and consideration and wish you luck on your search.