

Department of Agronomy
Kansas State University

March 13, 2017

Fred Iutzi, President
The Land Institute
2440 E. Water Well Rd.
Salina, KS 67401-9051

Re.: Support letter for The Land Institute

Dear Mr. Iutzi:

I write to express the important role that, from my perspective, The Land Institute plays in supporting the research and educational activities of Kansas State University and public sector agricultural research in general. The plant breeding and agronomy research you are performing is first class, and you have assembled an impressive group of scientists. The primary objective you're going after – developing perennial grain crops suitable to grow in mixtures – is a critical innovation for the future of agriculture in Kansas and around the world.

Both in my KU role and in my USDA role I deeply appreciate the collaborative approach you take to engaging research partners. Part of this has been in the form of direct funding: your joint Perennial Agriculture Project has funded over \$160,000 in grants to KSU over the last year, and you have told me that slightly over \$200,000 more is anticipated over the next two years. You have also shared that KSU has since 2005 been the beneficiary of an additional \$295,000 from grant projects that The Land Institute has secured. In addition to the direct funding, your presence in the state increases the opportunities KSU agricultural researchers have to identify and pursue high impact research. For example, you are currently providing both funding and crop germplasm for my lab group to apply the latest molecular biology tools to the effort to sequence the genome of the Kernza perennial grain crop you are developing. This crop will be increasingly important in wheat-producing areas in the US in the coming years, and this work lays the foundation for speeding up the plant breeding process and increasing yield, quality, and perennial stand life. Exposure to this research also provides an important educational experience for my students.

I believe the Land Institute's work provides a significant benefit to KSU and to the state of Kansas, and I hope that you are able to continue to expand your operations and impact.

Sincerely,

Jesse Poland, PhD

Adj. Asst. Professor of Agronomy, Kansas State University
Research Geneticist, USDA Agricultural Research Service