Sustainable Development Research Internships in Ecuador

Six undergraduate research internships in sustainable agriculture are available on a Virginia Tech research internship project in Ecuador. Interns will spend 6 weeks in the summer of 2019 working collaboratively to conduct research on assessing sustainable management practices for farms in an Andean highland watershed. Participants will examine institutional and other obstacles to widespread diffusion of conservation agriculture (CA) practices. Working knowledge of Spanish is required. Interns will spend two weeks in Quito, Ecuador improving language skills followed by four weeks conducting research in a field site near Riobamba. The project will pay interns' travel, housing, and meal expenses. Participants will be expected to take a 3-credit course at Virginia Tech during Spring Semester 2019 in preparation for the trip. The course will address research methods and other skills needed for working in a developing country. Interns will prepare a final group report on their research findings.

The internship project includes faculty and staff from the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Virginia Tech as well as Ecuadorian agricultural researchers and students from ESPOCH University in Riobamba. The project seeks to enhance the sustainability of agriculture in the Andean highlands. Interns will design, administer, and analyze a field survey of farmers to improve understanding of farmer knowledge about CA, determinants of technology adoption, and on-farm management of the technology. Interns will gain experience with sampling and questionnaire design, data collection (on tablet computers), cleaning, and analysis.

Interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, academic transcript, and names and telephone numbers for two references. In the cover letter, the applicant should state why they are interested in the research internship. Materials should be sent electronically by November 5th 2018 to Dr. George Norton (gnorton@vt.edu). For further information, contact Dr. Norton, Dr. Jeffrey Alwang (alwangj@vt.edu), Dr. Catherine Larochelle (claroche@vt.edu), Dr. Susan Chen (ecsusan@vt.edu), or Ms Katie White (katiewhite@vt.edu).