

Burden Center
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

23 April 2007

Project Number: LAB (State)

TITLE: Burden Center Research Facilitation Program

Objectives: The objectives of the research facilitation program at Burden Center are:

1. To facilitate horticultural and other plant science research by providing land, equipment, facilities, and personnel to visiting scientists and graduate students from the LSU AgCenter, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Southern University AgCenter to conduct basic and applied research primarily in the area of horticultural sciences, but also including some agronomic and urban forestry projects.
2. To provide live teaching labs for AgCenter teaching faculty and the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service (LCES) Specialists for labs and field days.
3. To provide care and maintenance for Windrush Gardens; a 15 acre formal garden associated with the Burden family home and the Rural Life Museum for the pleasure of the general public and visitors to the LSU Rural Life Museum (RLM).
4. To provide sustainable management for the 200 acres of forest/green space and the trails within.
5. Provide logistical support to the RLM on an as need basis; the RLM is a part of Burden Center.
6. Provide classroom, greenhouse, and nursery facilities for Master Gardener training.
7. To maintain and expand the Stone Memorial Camellia collection.
8. To maintain the Burden Rose Garden; an official All America Rose Selection display garden.

Justification: All Louisiana Agriculture Experiment Station faculty are required to have at least one Experiment Station project that formally describes and documents their plan of research, and for those LSU campus based horticulture and other plant science faculty that need or require field, greenhouse, or nursery space for the conductance of their research, Burden Center is available to them for this purpose. Burden Center currently accommodates and facilitates field, greenhouse, and/or nursery research for scientists and graduate students in the following campus based AgCenter departments:

- Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences
- Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology
- Entomology
- Renewable Natural Resources

Burden Center also houses a number of hives of bees for the USDA Bee Lab, and collaborates with Urban Forestry faculty from the SU AgCenter on research and teaching activities. Burden Center is the only horticulture research farm in the Baton Rouge area that is available to AgCenter campus based faculty, and as such, is a vital component of the LSU AgCenter.

Previous Work and Present Outlook: Burden Center is a beautiful 440 acre farm located in the heart of south Baton Rouge approximately five miles from the LSU main campus. This property was donated to LSU over a period of years beginning in the mid 1960's with the last parcel having been donated in 1992. Under the LSU AgCenter's management the property has been developed into a horticulture research farm with approximated 100 acres in irrigated plot space. There are approximately 200 acres of forest which also contains several miles of trails. Fifteen acres of this green space are formal garden areas known as Windrush Gardens that were developed by Mr. Steele Burden. In 2000 a land use plan was developed to segregate the various types of research activities including row crops, nursery and greenhouse crops, fruit crops, turfgrass, and trees for nutraceutical research.

Procedure: Research plot establishment at Burden Center for visiting scientists starts with a written work request. These requests are reviewed daily by the farm manager and tasks are posted on a calendar work board and then specific job assignments are made. Allocation of resources is based on need and priority as determined from these work requests. Facilities at Burden Center include four main operations centers. These are 1) Ione E. Burden Conference Center, which is the administrative building that also contains conference facilities for groups of up to 100 people, 2) Lab, which contains a wet lab, offices, supply storage, and a soil mixing and potting facility, 3) Field Office and Farm Shop, which contains three offices and facilities for equipment and supply storage, and a maintenance and repair shop and, 4) Ornamental and Turfgrass, which contains a service building with one office and space for limited equipment and supply storage. Burden Center staff is assigned according to their areas of expertise and job descriptions to, and operate out of these centers.

Probable Duration: 5 years.

Financial Support: This project will be supported with existing state appropriations and self-generated revenues.

Personnel: The project leader will be C. P. Hegwood, Jr., Resident Director, Burden Center. Cooperating personnel will be scientists and personnel from the LSU AgCenter, and other Universities and agencies.

Institutional Units Involved: Cooperating units involved will be the departments of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences, Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology, Entomology, Renewable Natural Resources, Biological and Agricultural Engineering, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service (master gardener training), Baton Rouge Green (management of forest trail tours), Urban Forestry (Southern University).

Cooperation: Cooperative arrangements with all LSU AgCenter departments and personnel, and state and federal agencies are informal in nature. Burden Center facilitates research projects, but does not actually participate in nor receive funds allocated to said projects. The cooperative arrangement with Baton Rouge Green for the Trees and Trails project is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding. Burden Center will receive a portion of the fees collected for the use of these trails.

Submitted By:
Project Leader/Unit Head

C. P. Hegwood, Jr., Resident Director Date _____

Approved:

Director Date _____