To:

California Department of Food and Agriculture
2012 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Re: Letter of support for the project titled “Protecting the sustainability of organic crops from increased costs and regulation due to the production of a serious nuisance vector, the eye gnat Liohippelates collusor (Diptera: Chloropidae)”.

I strongly endorse and support the proposal submitted by James Bethke of the University of California Cooperative Extension about the eye gnat and its management to protect the sustainability of organic crops. Eye gnat is not an agricultural pest, but organic farming practices can favor their populations. Eye gnats are a nuisance to humans and animals and are becoming a major concern threatening the sustainability of organic farming practices. This project aims at learning more about this pest and developing effective IPM practices to manage this pest. I am a co-PI on this project and very confident that this project will generate valuable information that is important for both organic farmers and general public.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Surendra Dara