**Implications of Oil Dependence for the US Midwestern Agricultural Sector**

**Synopsis for IRB**

1. The potential subjects will be corn farmers that are located in the Midwestern section of the United States, specifically in Iowa. The anticipated age is from approximately 35-55 years of age. Their sex and ethnic background cannot be anticipated. The state of health is likely good considering they are farming. The interviewee must be a corn farmer.

2. In order to recruit the subjects I will contact the Departments of Agriculture at Iowa State University and the University of Iowa to determine the best method for contacting and selecting corn farmers to participate in this study. The consent form on the IRB application will be presented to them along with a short synopsis of the study.

3. The methodology will use qualitative analysis to compare and evaluate the farmers’ perspectives regarding the use of alternative sources of energy in the US Midwestern agricultural sector. A questionnaire in interview form will be applied to gather the farmers’ perspectives. The specific questions have not been determined yet.

4. There are no risks to the subjects involved in this study. The subjects will remain anonymous and there will be no repercussions for participating in this study.

5. Again there are no risks for participating in this study.

6. This study will access the level of understanding of Midwestern farmers regarding the potential impacts of the oil crisis on the agricultural sector, and their willingness to invest in alternative sources of energy for their agricultural needs. Results from this study will be beneficial to the development of strategies for the transition from an oil-based to a renewable energy-based agriculture in the US Midwestern agricultural sector.

7. No compensation will be provided to the participants, except a very large thank you.

8. The only risk I predict that could occur is resentment from big oil due to the huge investments that big oil has in the agricultural sector, specifically in the Midwestern portion of the United States.

9. There are no specific sites or agencies being used in this study.

10. I am working on my honors undergraduate thesis and I need to interview corn farmers in Iowa in order to formulate a hypothesis on the social acceptance of alternative energy in the Corn Belt area of the United States. My supervising faculty member is Dr. Vince Lopes from the Department of Biology at Texas State.

13. The results of this study will be published both on eCommons and in a scholarly journal.