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John Vogel  
USDA-ARS, Genomics and Gene Discovery Unit  
800 Buchanan Street  
Albany, CA 94710  
E-mail: jvogel@pw.usda.gov

Dear John:

I am writing in support of your proposal to the DOE Joint Genome Institute Community Sequencing Program entitled "Genome sequencing of *Brachypodium distachyon*, a model for energy crops and temperate grasses".

As a rice geneticist and breeder, my research focuses on understanding which genes and gene interactions give rise to transgressive variation and heterosis in inter-specific crosses in rice. I am particularly interested in exploring the evolutionary history of genes, gene families and protein-protein interactions associated with agricultural performance among the cereals. Given the large genome size and complexity of the wheat, barley, rye and oat genomes compared to the compact size of the *Brachypodium* genome, I believe that this sequencing proposal is both timely and appropriate. If funded, *Brachypodium* will provide a valuable model that will greatly facilitate comparative studies in the grass family.

Further, as co-PI of the Gramene database, I look forward to working with you and your group to ensure that the information you generate for *Brachypodium* is integrated into the Gramene database in a timely way. This will allow users to access physical map, EST and genomic sequence information about *Brachypodium* in a context that facilitates comparative genome analysis and enhances its value to the research community.

Wishing you the best of luck with your proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Susan R. McCouch".

Susan McCouch