

## Paid Summer Undergraduate Research and Extension Experiences in Belize **Deadline Extended to Jan 15**

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences are starting year 2 of a 3-year project in Belize with our partners the Friends for Conservation and Development, Friends of the Vaca Forest Reserve, Cayo Women for Conservation, and the Belize Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, and Sustainable Development.

**What will students do:** Students will be paired with and mentored by a faculty member from UT or UF to conduct a research project for 6-weeks in Belize Summer 2018 and an extension project based on those results in Summer 2019. We are only accepting applications at this time for certain areas of interest **a) 2 projects on agricultural production, agroecology, or water quality, b) 2 projects on forest production, reforestation, or forest economics.** *We are no longer accepting applications for the wildlife, fisheries, and human dimensions of wildlife research areas.*

**Study location and student accommodation:** Students will conduct research with farmers in and around the Vaca Forest Reserve. This area is tropical rainforest with exceptional biodiversity, part of the Maya Mountains protected areas, and home to many endemic and threatened species. There are also farms adjacent to and within the Vaca practicing conventional and sustainable agroecological farming methods.

All student expenses will be covered **including a stipend**. Students will stay at a local hostel. At least 2 mentors from UT or UF will be present at all times in Belize. There are options to receive academic credit.

*Students from outside UT are highly encouraged as we will only choose a maximum of 4 students from UT.*

We are interested in highly-motivated early-career students (First and Second Year Students, & Juniors graduating end of Summer 2019 or Dec 2019). Students must commit to: 1) working with a mentor in Spring 2018 to develop the research project (US), 2) 8 paid weeks in Summer 2018 conducting research (US and Belize), 3) Data analysis and manuscript prep Fall 2018 (US), 4) Extension program design Spring 2019 (US), and 5) 8 paid weeks conducting extension projects Summer 2019 (US and Belize). The environment in Belize is hot, humid, rugged, and buggy, therefore students must be in good physical condition and able to work in challenging surroundings.

We encourage you to investigate a potential faculty mentor's research interests and contact him or her before writing your application: **a) projects on agricultural production, agroecology, or water quality**-Dr. David Butler (UT) and Dr. John Stier (UT); **2 projects on forest production, reforestation, or forest economics**-Dr. Michael Andreu (UF) and Dr. Don Hodges. More information on past Belize work can be found on the UTIA International Programs website <https://ag.tennessee.edu/international/Pages/NIFA-Belize.aspx>

**Application process:** Please submit the following items as a single .pdf file by **January 15** to Adam Willcox ([awillcox@utk.edu](mailto:awillcox@utk.edu)) note double 'l' in Willcox.

- 1) Resume or CV
- 2) 2-page essay that describes your research interests (choose one of the topics above) and why this experience in Belize will be beneficial to your academic and career goals
- 3) Academic transcript.
- 4) A letter from an academic mentor or advisor

