Farming with Confidence: A Risk Management Course for Specialty Crop Growers
SYLLABUS
Mondays, February 5, 2006 – March 12, 2006, 4:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Location: Southern Oregon Research & Extension Center, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point


Facilitators: Melissa Matthewson & Maud Powell—OSU Extension Small Farms, 541-776-7371

This course is designed to give specialty crop growers the tools they need to make appropriate business and risk management decisions on their farms. The classes will combine lectures and panel discussions with hands-on exercises and worksheets. At the end of the course, growers will have the building blocks of a farm business plan.

Monday, February 5th—Setting Goals and Values
Facilitator: Melissa Matthewson, OSU Extension Small Farms
Guest Speaker: Don Tipping, Seven Seeds Farm
Topics: Define values, prioritize goals and develop a mission statement.
Tasks: 1.1 (p. 24), 1.2 (p.25), 3.1 (p.97), 3.2 (p. 98), 3.3 (p.99), 3.4 (p.100), and 3.5 (p.101).
For next week: Read Task Two (p. 27-66) in Building a Sustainable Business.
Finish worksheets. Plan to bring in any budget information, including your personal expenses, farm expenses, and income.

Monday, February 12th—Assessing Business History and Resources & Researching Market Potential
Facilitator: Maud Powell
Guest Speakers: Garry Stephenson, OSU Extension Small Farms Statewide Specialist
Tim Franklin, Yale Creek Ranch
Topics: Assess current state of marketing, operations, human resource and finances on your farm.
Tasks: 2.1 (p.67), 2.2 (p.69), 2.3 (p.70), 2.4 (p.71), 2.5 (p.72), 2.6 (p.73), 2.7 (p.74), 2.8 (p.75), 2.9 (p.76), 2.10 (p.77), 2.11 (p.78), 2.12 (p.79), 2.13 (p.80), 2.14 (p.81), 2.15 (p.82-83), 2.16 (p.84), 2.17 (p.85), and 2.18 (p.86).
For next week: Finish worksheets and read p. 103-133.
Monday, February 19th—Developing a Market Strategy
Facilitator: Maud Powell
Guest speakers: Larry Lev, OSU Extension Marketing Economist
Chris Jagger, Blue Fox Farm
Suzanne Fry, Fry Family Farm
Chi Scherer, Hi Hoe Produce at Bluebird Farm
Maud Powell, Wolf Gulch Farm & Siskiyou Sustainable Cooperative
Topics: Direct marketing channels, industry trends, and marketing in Southern Oregon.
Tasks: 4.1 (p.186), 4.2 (p.187), 4.3 (p.188), 4.4 (p.189), 4.5 (p.190-191), 4.6 (p.192), 4.7 (p.193), 4.8 (p.194), and 4.9 (p.195-196).

Monday, February 26th—Farm Operation Strategy
Facilitator: Melissa Matthewson
Guest speakers: John Broome, Lane Community College
Mark Wheeler, Pacific Botanicals
Steve Fry, Fry Family Farm
Topics: Scale of production, work force needs, operations strategies and management approaches.
For next week: Finish worksheets and read p.154-184.

Monday, March 5th—Financial Planning
Facilitator: Melissa Matthewson
Guest speakers: Jack Vitacco, Small Business Development Center
Bart Eleveld, OSU Extension Agricultural Economist
Mary Alionis, Whistling Duck Farm
Topics: Enterprise budgeting, financial projections and strategic evaluation.
Tasks: 4.27 (p.217), 4.28 (p.218), 4.29 (p.219), 4.30 (p.220), 4.31 (p.221), 4.32 (p.222), 4.33 (p.223), 4.34 (p.224), 4.35 (p.225-226), 4.36 (p.227), 4.37 (p.228), 4.38 (p.229), 4.39 (p.230) and 4.40 (p.231).
For next week: Finish worksheets, read Task 5 (p.233-242), and complete 5.1 (p.243), 5.2 (p.244) and 5.3 (p.245).

Monday, March 12th—How to Manage Production Risk and Final Presentations
Facilitator: Melissa Matthewson
Guest speakers: Nick Andrews, OSU Extension Small Farms
Melanie Kuegler, Blue Fox Farm
Mike Curtis, Wild Honey Bee Farm
Joan Thorndike, Le Mera Gardens
Topics: Strategies for managing production risk including soil fertility, season extension, succession planting, and pest management.
Small Group Presentations
Field Day—Date & Place TBA