

Q: We're looking for resources on how to manage a family farm. Do you have information on business plans, budgets, do's and don'ts and so on?

A: Great question. We have a new website, which will help with many of your management questions—and marketing needs. The website is the University of California's Farm Business and Market Place. It was specially designed to provide a 'one stop place' where owners and managers of Central Coast farms can access research based information to assist with business and marketing decisions and success. Please visit the site at:

<http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/farmbusinessandmarketplace>

If you are looking for information specific to business plans, click on the main category heading 'Planning and Management'. There you will see several subcategories to choose from, including 'Business and Marketing Plans'. There are a number of resources listed, with brief descriptions of each to help you select and download one or more publications that best fit your needs. Other subcategories under planning and management include budgeting, enterprise selection, and records and finances.

Another main category heading is 'Marketing'. Under this heading you will find several subcategories to choose from including marketing channels and strategies, conducting market research, and promotion and branding. Each subcategory has multiple resources, all geared towards small to mid-scale farms that produce fresh products.

The website also has easy-to-access website links to government agencies and offices. For example, if you want to find the Agricultural Commissioner's contact information, click on the main category 'Government Programs', then 'County'. If you want to find other University of California programs and services, click on 'Government Programs', then 'California'. First you will see a listing of California's regulatory agencies, and then a number of UC website links. There are a substantial number of national websites listed under the 'United States'.

We will be adding more resources in the future, including online presentations for multiple topics under the planning and management and marketing headings. That way, you can choose to download and read various publications or, if you prefer, view educational programs online, at your convenience. Also planned for the future are Spanish language publications and online presentations. So please visit the website from time to time to see what is new! We welcome comments you might have about the website's content and also any suggestions for improvement. We hope you will find the website a valuable resource, as well as a 'one stop place' for your farm business and marketing needs.