

UC ANR Water Webinar



High Density Planting of Avocado in High Water Cost Region of California

By

Eta Takele, Area Advisor Farm Management/Agricultural Economics

Day/Time: Monday 05/22, 12 - 1 PM

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/93722796133?pwd=a2FsKzBTUGVtOEovSTNVanRSNjZMdz09>

Meeting ID: 937 2279 6133; Passcode: 92837

Speaker Bio: Eta Takele is an extension farm management economist in the University of California Cooperative Extension. Her research and extension focus is in farm level decision making, farm management and has engaged herself in investigating and advising growers on the profitability of various crops grown in California. Over the years, she did over 100 cost of production and investment studies for over 40 different kind of crops. Her work kept growers and businesses abreast of the impacts of resource price increases such as land, water and labor on profit and enterprise sustainability. Takele's extension programs have statewide reach via her collaboration with commodity advisors and specialists.

Abstract: Rising water cost has challenged the sustainability of avocado growing in San Diego County by gradually eroding enterprise profitability in the last two decades. Acreage declined significantly from 76,000 in 1987/88 to ~15,000 in 2021, a decline of ~4% per year. In 2018 funded by the California Avocado Commission, a field trial of high density planting proposed to measure the productivity per acre and the water use and investigate if higher yield and returns could reduce the impact of water cost and improve profit. Dr. Gary Bender, the subtropical horticulture farm advisors in San Diego County, now emeritus conducted the field trial in Valley Center San Diego County from 2012-2018, and measured the water use, pruning need and yield of the high density orchard. Using the data and other production practices provided by the cooperating grower of the field trial, Etaferahu Takele evaluated the profitability of high density by estimating the establishment and production costs via a full enterprise budget analyses to project the potential of high density in the sustainability of avocado production in the county.

Host: Safeeq Khan & Ellen Bruno, CE Specialists UC ANR