

Specialty Crops: Production and Cost Information

A good source of information about production of specialty crops—including estimated costs and returns, are the Cost and Return Studies available from the UC Davis Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. There are over 100 studies that are current, and a good number more that are historic, or archived. All current studies can be accessed via the internet at <http://coststudies.ucdavis.edu>, as can some of the archived studies. Many can also be obtained at our local office.

Recently completed is a series of new cost and return studies available for specialty vegetables. They are: Bittermelon, Chinese Long Bean, Daikon, Oriental Eggplant and Lemongrass. Each study contains a written description of the sequence of operations used to produce the crop, seasonal material inputs such as fertilizers and irrigation water, and labor and equipment use. The studies also contain a number of tables with costs for operations, monthly cash costs, and potential net returns above operating, cash, and total costs given certain price and yield ranges. While these particular studies focus on production in the San Joaquin Valley, there is a substantial amount of information that is of value to production in different regions.

For up-to-date market news for specialty vegetables and fruits, a good source of information is the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service website, <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/mktnews.html>.

Also worth looking to for information on various specialty crops are three UC Davis research and information center websites.

The Vegetable Research and Information Center, <http://vric.ucdavis.edu>

The Fruits and Nuts Information Center, <http://fruitsandnuts.ucdavis.edu>

The Small Farm Center, <http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu>