

I am thinking of getting into strawberries or raspberries. Is there any way I can get an idea of what this endeavor would take, as far as my time, energy and money go?

For a complete answer to your question, you need to look no further than the Cost of Production studies produced by UC Cooperative Extension.

It is important for potential growers be aware of cost of the crop they are considering growing. Raspberry, blackberry and strawberry growers on the Central Coast face ever more challenges in farming. Competition from the global marketplace, low and unpredictable produce prices, more expensive agricultural inputs and high land prices are examples of the challenges that growers face.

Cost of production studies written by UC Cooperative Extension are powerful tools to help growers face and understand the challenges of growing a crop. These studies include a thoroughly researched summary of the practices of growing the crop, from ground preparation, through planting, and harvest, to removal along with a summary of the concomitant costs. There are tables that detail monthly cash costs, cash overhead, and potential returns for a range of yields and prices of raspberries and organic strawberries are developed. Many of the crops listed on the Cost Studies website also have an active spreadsheet where growers can fill in their own costs and projected income to calculate returns.

Cost of Production for Strawberries, Cost of Production for Raspberries, Cost of Production for Organic Strawberries and Cost of Production for Blackberries have been published and are posted to the UC Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics website:

<http://coststudies.ucdavis.edu>

Copies of the studies are also available at the UC Extension office at 1432 Freedom Boulevard, Watsonville, in Santa Cruz County.

Please contact Mark Bolda at UCCE Santa Cruz if you have more questions on this topic or any other topics concerning blackberry, raspberry or strawberry production.