

Business Planning and Financing

July 9, 2013 Agenda

- 8:00 AM **Registration**
- 8:30 AM **Business Planning for Your Small-Scale Farming Operation**
Planning and management are very important when beginning any operation. We'll cover both topics in this interactive program. You'll have a chance to discuss your own opportunities and ideas.
Dr. Danny Klinefelter, Professor and Extension Economist, Director of The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers
- 12:15 PM **Lunch**
Catered.
- 1:00 PM **Financing Panel**
This is your opportunity to ask the experts about different financing options – some traditional, some a little more “out of the box”. Bring your questions about agricultural financing through USDA loans, traditional bank loans, grant funding, crowd-funding, and community partnerships.
- 2:45 PM **Break**
- 3:00 PM **USDA's Microloans Program**
The new USDA Microloan program is designed with small producers in mind. A simplified loan application process and modified eligibility requirements are well-suited to beginning farmers, ranchers, and CSA operators. Learn all about this exciting new program.
Terri Trevino, Farm Loan Manager, USDA's Farm Service Agency
- 3:30 PM **Tour of Tecolote Farms: Infrastructure and Income Streams**
Our Business Planning day will wrap up with an on-farm training at Certified Organic Tecolote Farm. Tecolote, a local pioneer of both CSA and organic agriculture, has been feeding Central Texas for over 20 years! David Pitre, cofounder and farmer at Tecolote, will give us the inside scoop on investments in farm infrastructure and income streams.
- 5:00 PM **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Sustainable Ecosystem Management

July 16, 2013 Agenda

- 8:00 AM **Registration**
- 8:30 AM **Soil Life and Fertility**
The basis for all organic farming systems is healthy soil. In addition to maintaining adequate fertility, organic farmers strive for the microbial populations necessary for nutrient cycling. Learn the science and the practices with one of Texas' most-esteemed composting engineers.
Jody Slagle, P.E., Environmental Engineer, Hornsby Bend
- 9:50 AM **Break**
- 10:00 AM **An Ecosystems Approach to Farming**
Learn the history of organic farming, and tour the varied landscape of "ecosystem" approaches to sustainable agriculture. Your "tour guide" grew up on a Pennsylvania farm, managed an organic farm in Maryland, and now directs the acclaimed Center for Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend.
Kevin Anderson, PhD, Director of the Center for Environmental Research, Hornsby Bend
- 11:00 AM **Integrated Pest Management for Organic Field Crops**
You probably know that IPM does not begin with pesticides...but do you know where to start? Learn about insects that are likely to give you problems, how to minimize pest impact through a variety of methods. Also, learn which organic pesticides are most effective and when to use them. Hands-on exercises will prepare you for planning the optimal environment for IPM.
Wizzie Brown, Entomologist and Program Specialist - IPM, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
- 12:00 AM **Lunch**
Catered.
- 12:45 PM **Integrated Pest Management for Organic Field Crops, cont.**
Wizzie Brown, Entomologist and Program Specialist - IPM, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
- 3:00 PM **Break**
- 3:10 PM **Erosion Control (+ Field Demonstration) – Keeping your Topsoil and Rain Water**
Hold tight to your two most important inputs – water and topsoil! We'll teach you how to maximize the rainfall and moisture-holding properties of your land, techniques for erosion control, proper handling of fertilizers and chemicals, and what to do in case of a spill. Then, we'll head out to the field to see the demonstrated use of a rock berm, mulch log, brush pile application, and/or silt fence.
David Peyton, Engineering Specialist, Travis County Storm Water Management Program
- 4:40 PM **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license CEUs available for this program:

2 IPM, 1 General

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. We will seek to provide reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. We request that you contact our office at least one week in advance to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service you will require. The Texas A&M System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.

Cultivation and Methods in Central Texas
July 23, 2013 Agenda

- 8:30 AM **On-Farm Training at Boggy Creek Farm**
It's a harvest day at Boggy Creek Farm! We kick off our Cultivations and Methods workshop by learning first-hand about small acreage farming in Central Texas. This guided tour will highlight the many systems in place to ensure crop health and bountiful harvest. Everyone will meet at the farm in the morning, then drive to 6011 Blue Bluff after the tour.
Carol Ann Sayle, Farmer and Co-Owner of Boggy Creek Farm
- 11:00 AM **A-Z Growing Fruit in Central Texas**
From planting to pruning - everything you need to know to start your small orchard or vineyard.
Jim Kamas, Asst. Professor and Extension Horticulturist
- 12:15 PM **Lunch**
Catered.
- 1:00 PM **Recommended Fruit Crops for Central Texas**
Are you interested in which peach, plum, and pomegranate cultivars perform best in our area? We'll tell you, and we'll also discuss other possible fruit crops that you might consider.
Jim Kamas, Asst. Professor and Extension Horticulturist
- 2:00 PM **Break**
- 2:15 PM **Vegetable Production from Start to Finish**
There are lots of great vegetable choices that do well in Central Texas; we'll cover what you need to know for sustainable production.
Dr. Joe Masabni, Associate Professor and Extension Vegetable Specialist
- 4:30 PM **Wrap-Up and Evaluation**

Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license CEUs available for this program:
3 General

Local Food System and Farmers' Resources

August 6, 2013

8:30 – 5:00pm

We're still settling this agenda – to be announced soon!

This NOT-TO-MISS day will present a wide array of local, state, and national resources that support and connect small-acreage producers. Leave *informed, inspired, and connected* to the movers and shakers in local agriculture:

- Hear about the immense **economic impact of Central Texas' local food system** from a dynamic City of Austin Manager, and how the City plans to bolster infrastructure and support production even more.
- Does your land qualify for **Agricultural Use Exemption**? Speak with the authority on the matter – the Director of Travis Central Appraisal District's Land and Agriculture Division is here to answer all your questions.
- **Local food policy** is changing as we speak –get up to speed! Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (FARFA) is a national organization based in Central Texas that “supports independent family farmers and protects a healthy and productive food supply for American consumers.” Learn from the Executive Director of this organization who is winning hearts and minds in the legislature and making great headway for a thriving local food system.
- Looking for land? Want a more intimate understanding of your acreage? The **USDA's Web Soil Survey** accesses the largest natural resource information system in the world. We'll show you how to use it to get a detailed soil survey of your “area of interest.”
- Want local one-on-one assistance with getting your small business off the ground? Your **City of Austin Small Business Development Program** team will help you shape this new knowledge into a strong foundation for your farming operation.
- Want to learn about the resources and opportunities provided locally by the **USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service**? You're in the right place.
- **Much more!!**

Sales and Marketing
August 13, 2013 Agenda

- 8:00 AM **Registration**
- 8:30 AM **Farmers Markets**
Want to sell your harvest at a farmers market? Great idea! Learn how to become a vendor and maximize your experience!
Carla Jenkins, Mueller and Cedar Park Market Director
- 9:30 AM **MarketReady™**
The MarketReady Training program prepares producers to develop supplier relationships with restaurants, grocery, wholesale and foodservice buyers. This curriculum is based around specific best business practices (in communications, packaging, labeling, delivery, invoicing, etc.) identified by current buyers – not to miss!
Marco Palma, PhD, Assistant Professor and Extension Economist
- 12:30 PM **Lunch**
Catered.
- 1:15 PM **Exploring Texas MarketMaker**
Really? Social marketing media for farmers? Explore this virtual market place between Texas producers and buyers, and learn how to create a profile for your farm.
Marco Palma, PhD, Assistant Professor and Extension Economist
- 1:45 PM **Farm to School**
Improve children's access to healthy and fresh food, while gaining an institutional buyer. The Farm to School movement is growing exponentially in Texas and across the nation. We'll show you how to create a path from your fields to a local cafeteria.
Alyssa Herold, Farm to School Program Specialist, Texas Department of Agriculture
- 3:15 PM **Break**
- 3:25 PM **Share It, Tweet It, Snap It: Social Media 101 for Farmers**
Successful urban farms integrate their livelihoods into the social and cultural fabric of their cities. Plus, it's fun to create your farm's social identity! Learn how to foster a "personal" connection between your farm and your urban community from author, educator, and social media guru, Kate Payne. We'll give you all the tools you need to jump right into Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Blogging and Google +.
Kate Payne, Author of Hip Girls Guide to Homemaking, and FCS Volunteer Coordinator at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – Travis County
- 4:25 PM **Wrap-Up and Program Evaluation**
- 4:50 PM **STRONG STARTS Closing Thoughts**