

# Issue: Diversification & Profitability in Horticulture

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**Region:** EAST      Circle which primary base program it addresses -      ANR

## Section 1. Relevance

### **Where did this issue surface?**

Texas Community Futures Forum

County Committees

Commodity / Industry / Special Interest Groups

Specialist(s)

### **What is the issue/problem?**

Need to help agricultural producers to diversify and to increase profitability.

### **Problem size and scope? (How many people does it affect? How wide spread?)**

A major issue across the state.

### **Problem severity? (How serious is this issue?)**      *High*

Description: Producers statewide need to protect themselves by diversifying and becoming more profitable.

### **Target Audience?** (Who does the problem impact and how many?) Ag producers, the Green Industry (nurseries, greenhouses)

Ag producers need training in horticultural production and marketing. Can market to producers in economically depressed areas (e.g. 90% of production is in wheat, but wheat prices are very depressed).

## Section 2. Response

### **State the goal of the program.**

To increase profits for producers and to help protect them from depressed markets.

### **State the outcome objectives.**

| <b>Client Change</b> | <b>At the end of this program, will....</b>   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Knowledge</i>     | increase knowledge on...<br>alternative/specialty crops,<br>marketing,<br>environmental production practices. |

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>Skills</i>          | develop skills...<br>identification of crops and pest problems,<br>irrigation,<br>development of a customer base,<br>labor management |
| <i>Attitude</i>        | change their attitudes pertaining to....<br>diversification,<br>environmental practices,<br>importance of marketing                   |
| <i>Behavior Change</i> | adopt...<br>diversification strategies,<br>improved production practices,<br>more effective marketing                                 |
| <i>New Technology</i>  | adopt...<br>water recycling in nursery/greenhouse production,<br>alternative/speciality crop production                               |
| <i>Best Practice</i>   | adopt .....<br>environmental production practices   |

### Program Design.

| <b>Topic (Subject Matter)</b>      | <b>Strategy to Deliver Content (Method)</b> | <b>Existing Resource(s)</b> | <b>Contact Person(s) (Includes CEA's Specialists, Commodity Reps)</b> |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Alternative crops                  | day-long seminars                           | publications                | Dr. Frank Dainello<br>Dr. Don Wilkerson                               |
| Environmental production practices | seminars                                    |                             | Dr. Frank Dainello<br>Dr. Don Wilerson<br>Dr. Steve George            |
| Marketing Strategies               | workshop                                    | publications                | need to replace Dr. Charles Hall!!!<br>(re. hort marketing)           |
| Labor Management                   | workshop<br>newsletter                      |                             | industry expert   |

|                         |                                 |              |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Plant identification    | classroom lecture<br>Field Tour | Publications | Garry McDonald                        |
| Plant Problem Diagnosis | classroom lecture<br>field tour | publications | Dr. Carlos Bogran<br>Dr. Kevin Ong    |
| Irrigation practices    | workshop                        | publications | Dr. Don Wilkerson<br>Industry experts |

### Section 3. Results

| Client Change Level   | Sample Questions (Review the objectives section to help place questions or statements in the space below)   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Knowledge</i>      | Do you believe you have increased your knowledge of alternative crops appropriate for your area?<br>Have you increased your knowledge of the marketing of alternative crops?<br>Have you increased your knowledge of environmentally-responsible production practices |
| <i>Skills</i>         | Can you now identify the 5 major alternative crops for your area?<br>Can you now devise a plan to develop a strong customer base for your new crops?<br>Can you devise a water capture system for a nursery or greenhouse range?                                      |
| <i>Attitude</i>       | I consider environmental impacts before making a management decision.<br>I now produce at least one alternative crop.<br>I put a marketing plan into operation before producing a given crop.   |
| <i>New Technology</i> | What new alternative/specialty crops are you now producing?   |
| <i>Best Practice</i>  | Water recycling.<br>Slow-release nitrogen; no phosphorus unless called for by a soil test.<br>Minimal use of pesticides.  |

**Economic Indicators.** Are there economic indicators that can be measured concerning this issue?

YES

Please list them below.

Profit made from newly adopted crops.

Number of jobs created from producing newly adopted crops.

**Interpretation.**

| <b>Internal to Extension Stakeholders</b>   | <b>External Stakeholders</b>   |
|---|--|
| Department of Horticulture<br>Department of Soil and Crop Sciences<br>Department of Entomology<br>Department of Plant Pathology | Texas Department of Agriculture<br>Texas Nursery and Landscape Association |

**Additional Resources.** What additional resources are needed to address this issue? In other words, what is needed to design innovative programs that will impact our audiences? Use the space below or the back if needed.

We desperately need an Extension Economist for Horticulture.

We also desperately need an Extension Horticulture Specialist for alternative/organic crops.