Organic Food Production 1  
HORT 162AA   65823  
Cabrillo College Horticulture

Instructor: Doug O’Brien  
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Office hours: Monday 5:30-6 pm, Rm 5010, Saturday 8:02- 9:00 am, Rm 5010

Course Description: Horticulture 162AA introduces the theories and practices of good management agriculture with the focus on organic. Practical emphasis is on springtime, commercial scale, local area, vegetable and fruit crops. The scientific, economic and social basis for good-management practices will be emphasized. The course includes extensive practical activities at the on-site farm field and greenhouses. The course will explore organic farming and farm business, and is designed primarily for students planning a management career in organic horticulture. The course also meets the needs of students who want theoretical and practical exposure to the organic food production industry, or will continue on for an agriculture degree at a four-year university.


Required additional reading: (1)ATTRA. attra.ncat.org Request hard copies directly from ATTRA, view/print the articles online or read/copy them in the horticulture library. (2) Teaching Organic Farming and Gardening: http://casfs.ucsc.edu/education/instruction/tofg/index.html (3) Teaching Direct Marketing: http://casfs.ucsc.edu/education/instruction/tdm/index.html View or print online, or read/copy from the books in the horticulture library.


Supplies: Bring the textbook, and a calculator to each soils lecture. Use a binder, 3-hole punched paper and a clipboard for lecture notes, field trips and the farm field. Clean, sturdy footwear is required for each lab and lecture.

Student Learning Outcomes

1) Demonstrated knowledge of commercial organic production systems, particularly the practical, regulatory and business aspects.

2) Demonstrated ability to adapt to new information by demonstrating the knowledge of, and ability to critically evaluate, the main principles and skills of good farm management.
The course will cover the following topics:

Principles of good farm management, the National Organic Program and organic certification; soil health and management; ecological theory and organic pest management; spring-time management of crops at the farm and greenhouse, including certification, crop planning, soil preparation, irrigation, propagation, crop scouting, problem solving, crop rotation, harvesting and marketing; organic farming enterprise including financing, land selection, land acquisition and improvement, cropping systems, record keeping; major crops of the Monterey Bay area.

**Class Organization:**

Lecture: Monday 6:00 p.m. – 9:05 p.m.  Room 5010

Labs: Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. Room 5010

Required lecture and lab reading includes material from the text, ATTRA, and the two UCSC publications. Students must complete the reading for each session in advance. Students must plan to arrive on time for carpooling to extra-mural field trip sites and to attend lectures and labs. All the field trips will require a written summary for grade credit. Notes should be taken during instruction at the Cabrillo farm field, at all labs, field trips and lectures; concepts and information presented during labs, field trips and guest lectures will be included as the basis for exam questions.

An in-class quiz (March 22), an in-class midterm (April 12), and a comprehensive final exam (June 1) are required. Exam questions will be based on lectures, reading assignments and field trip notes. Examples and depth of understanding for exam questions can be gained through review of assigned readings and lecture/field trip notes.

A Term Paper is required and will be an Organic System Plan Update for the Cabrillo College farm field. The plan should follow guidelines for organic certification under the National Organic Program. **The term paper is due in class on May 24.**

**Requisites:** None

Recommended Preparation: Eligibility for ENGL 100, READ 100, and MATH 154.

**Class management:** Attendance is required for all class meetings. Students will be dropped from the course or receive a NC grade after four absences. No smoking during the labs, even if they take place outside.

**Lectures:** Lectures will frequently include field trips or activities at the farm field and greenhouses. Always wear clean, sturdy footwear to every class meeting.

**Labs:** The labs are an opportunity to get hands-on experience: students must participate in the scheduled activities: attendance will be taken at the beginning and end of the day – you must attend the entire lab for attendance credit. Always wear clean, sturdy footwear. Labs that are field trips begin at the designated field trip location
at the regularly scheduled lab time. Field trip reports are due in lab the week after
the field trip.

**Grading:** Cabrillo College uses whole grades, A, B, C, D, F and W. A Credit/No Credit
option is also available. Students who must miss too many classes or who need to stop
coming to class have the responsibility to officially withdraw. The instructor can also
officially withdraw students from class if the student has missed too many classes. There
are specific dates that students should know (listed below). If a student wants a “Credit”
grade instead of a letter he/she must notify the instructor. A “credit” (CR) grade will be
given to those wanting one if a “C” or better is obtained in the course and the student has
participated in all class activities. A student may not apply more than 12 units of CR/NC
courses toward fulfillment of the requirements for the A.A. or A.S. degrees.

**Grade for this class will come from a combination of:**

2- 1.5 hour-long exams  50 points
1- half hour-long quiz     10 points
1 Organic System Plan Update 20 points
5 Field trip reports (4 points each) 20 points

Students with a total of 90% of the possible total or will receive an A, 80% or
higher a B, 70% or higher a C, 60% or higher a D, and less than 60%, an F.

**Missed Exams and Homework Dates:**

Students are allowed to make-up a lecture exam only under the following
conditions. 1) Instructor is notified by the day of the exam that student will not be
attending. Use email (best) or phone. 2) Student must take the exam before it is
turned back to the class. Failure to do either will forfeit the student’s opportunity
to take the exam. Instructor will not accept late field trip reports.

**Significant dates for Spring 2009:**

Last day to add or withdraw with a refund: Feb 19
Last day to withdraw without a W: March 6. CR/NC Deadline Mar 13
Last day to withdraw at all: May 8

**Student Accommodations** I encourage students with disabilities, including ‘invisible’
disabilities such as chronic diseases learning and psychological disabilities, to let
me know of their needs and appropriate accommodations. Please bring
verification of your disability from the Learning Skills Program Room 1073, or
Disabled Student Program and Services office Room 810, and/ or a counselor or
specialist’s recommendations for accommodating your needs.

**Please observe the following rules:** Please do not bring pets to class, dogs are not
allowed on campus. Anyone not registered for the class is not allowed to attend
on campus classes. Please respect others in the class, come on time and do not
carry on private conversations while others are talking. Failure to abide by these
and other socially accepted behavior will result in oral and or written notification,
removal from the class for a short period of time or withdrawal from the class.