

November 3, 2015 revised and prepared by William T. Hlubik and Raymond Samulis

## **Starting and Managing a Small Farm 11:020:305**

### **Agriculture and Food Systems Class**

**Spring 2016**

**Professors Bill Hlubik and Raymond Samulis**

First and Second Period on Monday Mornings 9:15 to 12:15 pm

#### **Credits 3**

**Pre-requisites** - Introduction to Ag and Food Systems is preferred, Introductory Economics course preferred but not required, basic soils class preferred but not required.

This course is a required pre-requisite to Applied Analysis of Successful Agricultural Enterprises 11:020:460

#### **Learning Objectives: As a result of this course students will:**

- Identify resources available to help establish a small farm business
- Describe the primary agricultural production systems for small farms
- Describe basic retail and wholesale marketing techniques
- Identify creative new marketing techniques used by small farmers in the Northeast
- Describe strategies for overcoming basic challenges in new farm business start-ups.
- Identify basic elements for producing and marketing high value crops & animals
- Develop a basic farm business plan

**Justification-** Students wishing to pursue a career in agricultural science often graduate with an inadequate understanding of the fundamentals that apply to starting and managing a small farm business. Students will examine the basics of traditional and organic farming systems and learn about resources and strategies to get started running their own farm business. Students will gain a valuable understanding of the myriad of economic and regulatory issues involved in starting a farm. The information and understanding gained from this course will prepare students to look at agricultural businesses from a holistic and realistic perspective.

**Description-** Students will learn about major agricultural production systems throughout the state and region through discussions and visits to local farm operations. Course will address gathering startup capital, the basics of farm management and marketing practices which are necessary to run a successful farm enterprise. (For interested students, an on-farm spring and summer work experience can be arranged)

#### **Proposed Text**

None, assigned at this time, readings will be provided on Sakai

**Student Grading and Assessment**- Students assessment will include the following:

- 25% Participation in class discussions, attendance and reading assignments
- 25% Mid-term exam
- 25 % Business Plan and written assignments
- 25% Final Exam

**Final Grades:**

- A= 90-100 %
- B= 80-89 %
- C= 70-79 %
- D= 60-69 %
- F = <60%

**TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE**

WEEK	TOPIC	ASSESSMENT
1.	Course overview, Syllabus, History of NJ Ag.	
2.	Challenges to Agricultural Production	Class participation
3.	Getting Started Overview  Resources and Opportunities in the Northeast	Class participation
4.	Basics of Farm Business Management	Short paper on challenges to Ag Production
5.	Farm Management Tools for Success – Starting Your Business Plan  Managing regulations and challenges	Starting outline and framework for a basic farm business plan
6.	Production systems overview  Useful calculations for farming and research applications	Homework worksheet on basic calculations

7.	<p>Mid-term first half of class---</p> <hr/> <p>Review of your business plans to date with your teams</p>	<p>Midterm</p> <p>Class participation</p>
8.	<p>High Value Specialty Crop Production</p> <p>Crops for Diverse Populations</p>	Class participation
9.	<p>High Value Small Animal Production</p> <hr/> <p>Large Animal Production for Small Farms</p>	Class participation
10.	Season Extension Techniques for High Value Crops	Determine cost / benefits of each system of season extension
11.	<p>Small Fruit Production and Marketing</p> <hr/> <p>Large Fruit Production and Marketing</p>	
12.	Field Trip Two Local Farms Direct Marketing and Specialty Vegetable and Fruit Crops	Class participation
13.	<p>Niche production for local markets</p> <hr/> <p>Getting creative with your farm business</p>	Class participation
14.	Field Trip to Brewery and Wine Facility	Class participation
15.	Field Trip to the EARTH Center	Final Business Plan and Paper Due

	Review and Discussion for Final Exam  Career Discussions and Opportunities in Agricultural Production and Research	Class participation
TIME TBD	Location at EARTH Center	Final Exam

**End of Class Discussion and Participation ---- Beyond the field** - class discussion on the breadth of careers in Agriculture and related fields. Discussion among students and instructors regarding careers. At the end of every class there will be 10 to 20 minute open discussion of topics regarding careers in agriculture as well as assigned papers on agricultural topics related to class assignments.