

**TITLE: Publication of Estimated Costs and Returns of Producing, Harvesting and Marketing Blackberries in the South Region of the United States**

**RESEARCH OR OUTREACH PROJECT: Outreach**

**Principal Investigators:**

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**Objectives of the project:** We requested funds to publish the work “Estimated Costs and Returns of Producing, Harvesting and Marketing Blackberries in the Southeastern United States” sponsored by the SRSFC in as an Extension Bulletin (NCSU AG Communications) and in HortTechnology. The former will be available on the web and will be linked to the SRSFC website in a downloadable format.

**Justification and Description:**

A complete cost model was developed for a one-acre planting of a blackberry production system. Production practices were based on management procedures recommended by Extension Specialists with input from current blackberry growers and research station personnel. The monthly production sequence; a detailed summary of the equipment, material and labor input requirements needed to complete each operation; and the estimated costs per acre were developed for the “Blackberry Budget”.

We have presented our “Blackberry Budget” at the North American Bramble Growers Association meeting in Tampa FL 2004 and will be using it for talks at the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable meetings (Jan 2005) and for the SRSFC Bramble Agent Training in 2005. We received positive feedback at the 2004 meeting and have incorporated a few key changes to the strengthen budget for the Jan 2005 meetings. The budget is its final form for presentation at the meetings in January 2005.

Our aim however, was to reach as many people as possible with written publications in addition to our presentations. Therefore, we requested funds for the publication of the budget in 3 formats, including: 1) HortTechnology which reaches primarily scientists and Extension personnel, 2) NCSU AG Communication Bulletin which

is reaches agricultural scientists, Extension personnel and growers and 3) a downloadable form of the AG publication which is available to anyone with access to the WWW.

**Methodologies:** A manuscript suitable for publication in Hort Technology was he was submitted to Hort Technology on 4 March 2005. The paper was reviewed, we completed requested revisions and the final version was accepted on 14 November 2005.

**Results:** We anticipate that a January 2006 publication date in HortTechnology. American Society of Horiculture Science will provide us with a PDF version of this manuscript. We will post that file to [www.smallfruits.org](http://www.smallfruits.org) as soon as it becomes available. In addition, we are requesting permission from ASHS to publish this document as an Extension publication. For that publication, we will add a column "Your Cost Estimates" so growers can added their values.

**Conclusions and Impact:** Current and potential blackberry growers not only need production information but also financial information to make informed decisions about entering, leaving, or expanding existing farming operations. Like all businesses, the primary objective of growing blackberries should be to make a profit. This publication will be can be used by growers, educators, extension personnel to help them determine if blackberries are the right crop for them to grow.

**Citations:** Safley, C.D. O. Boldea, and G.E. Fernandez. 2006. Estimated costs of producing, harvesting and marketing blackberries in the southeastern United States. HortTechnology January-March 2006. 16(1):??