

Food Systems in Western Washington HORT/AFS 350

Instructors:

Lisa Wasko DeVetter
Assistant Professor, Berry Crops
Department of Horticulture
Washington State University (WSU)
WSU Mount Vernon NWREC
E-mail: lisa.devetter@wsu.edu
Phone: 360-848-6124
Office hours: by appointment

Rachel Rudolph
Graduate Teaching Assistant
Department of Horticulture
Washington State University
WSU Mount Vernon NWREC
E-mail: rachel.rudolph@email.wsu.edu
Phone: 360-848-6120
Office hours: by appointment

Course Information:

Credits: 3

Suggested pre-requisites: CROPS/HORT 102, SOILS 201, AND ECON 101

Structure:

This course will be delivered online entirely through WSU Blackboard. To login, use your WSU Network ID and password at: <https://learn.wsu.edu/webapps/login/>

WSU Blackboard will be the main student portal to access course content, including course materials (e.g., video recordings and readings), lessons, and associated course resources. Throughout the semester, there will be assignments made available through WSU Blackboard that require students to participate in individual and group activities. Activities include, but are not limited to: online discussion boards, journaling/reflections, and reports/responses to assigned readings. Students will need to pay careful attention to the course schedule, as there will be information made available throughout the semester and weekly assignments due in the class.

Course Description:

This course will provide students with an in-depth understanding of local and regional food systems unique to western Washington with an emphasis on organic horticultural food and beverage crops. The class will be structured with a “***farm-to-table***” perspective and will emphasize three core themes:

1. ***Farm*** - Concepts of organic or “sustainable” horticultural crop production in western Washington, unique challenges for western Washington farmers, farming and retail systems, tradeoffs across different types of farming systems, planning for a successful business, understanding crop value, and relationships with customers and/or distributors at the farm.
2. ***To*** – Getting horticultural food crops to customers through the distribution chain (e.g., successful marketing, selection of retail venues, maintaining relationships with customers and/or distributors, postharvest care, packaging, and value-adding).

3. **Table** – The unique benefits and challenges of sourcing and utilizing local foods from the perspective of end users (e.g., chefs, restaurateurs, general customers and consumers, etc.).

Specific Course Learning Outcomes:

By completing this course, students should learn about and understand:

1. The fundamental concepts of organic horticultural production systems, other alternative systems of production, and the different trade-offs and decisions involved with being a grower.
2. The unique environmental challenges that western Washington grower's experience (e.g., climate, soils, pests, diseases, etc.).
3. The multiple processes involved in bringing a perishable product to a retail venue (i.e., harvest, process, aggregate, transport, distribute, deliver, retail, and market).
4. The definition of value-added, local examples of value adding, and financial implications.
5. How to successfully package, price, market, and sell a locally grown food crop through experiential learning.
6. The unique benefits and challenges of using local and organic food crops from the perspective of end users.

More details on how these student learning outcomes will be achieved throughout the course are provided starting on page 7 of the syllabus, under "Methods and Evidence for the Assessment of Course Learning Outcomes".

Required Reading:

Ackerman-Leist, Philip. 2013. *Rebuilding the Foodshed: How to Create Local, Sustainable, and Secure Food Systems*. Chelsea Green Publishing. White River Junction, NJ. *

*Available online or through your campus book store; referred to as *RFS* in the course schedule.

Suggested Viewing:

Choose from: The Future of Food, Food, Inc., Fresh, The Future of Food, The World According to Monsanto, We Feed the World, Our Daily Bread, King Corn.

Course Schedule:

Week (week of)	Theme and Topics	Weekly Class Assignments	Reading Assignment**
1 (8/24)	- Orientation – introductions, class schedule, structure, service-learning, and class expectations. - Farm... - introduction to western Washington agriculture/ horticulture, definitions and concepts related to organic and sustainable agriculture (DeVetter and Rudolph)	- Choose service learning location - Discussion board assignment	- Read introduction to <i>RFS</i> - Online reading about WSU NWREC
2	- Farm... - Feature WSU NWREC and learn about food systems research and extension (faculty and graduate students at WSU NWREC; Latino Small Farms Outreach coordinator)	- Discussion board assignment	- Answer questions for assigned <i>RFS</i> reading - Read Part I of <i>RFS</i>
3 (9/7)	- Farm... – Feature WSU NWREC and learn about pest and disease management in western Washington (faculty and graduate students at WSU NWREC)	- Discussion board assignment - Create questions for grower panel discussion on week 4	- Answer questions for Part I of <i>RFS</i>
4 (9/14)	- Farm... - recorded panel discussion - Why or why not be certified organic? (feature local growers)	- E-journal summary/reflection of panel discussion - Discussion board assignment	- Read Part II of <i>RFS</i> (Ch. 4-6)
5 (9/21)	- Farm... - food safety beginning on the farm (feature LaConner Flats)	- E-journal summary - Discussion board assignment	
6 (9/28)	- Farm To... - Producing a consistent product to meet consumer demands, postharvest, and packaging (DeVetter and Rudolph; features Bow Hill Blueberries)	- E-journal summary - Discussion board assignment	
7 (10/5)	- Farm To... – Understanding the value chain, pricing, value-added (feature Seattle Cider Company and Theo Chocolate)	- E-journal summary - Discussion board assignment	- Answer questions for Part II (Ch. 4-6) of <i>RFS</i>
8 (10/12)	- Farm To ... - Marketing and managing customer and distributor relationships (features Thorton of Cloud Mountain)	- Discussion board assignment	- Read Part II of <i>RFS</i> (Ch. 7-10)
9 (10/19)	- ...To Table - Business management (how to maintain profitability, more on clientele relationships, accounting/ bookkeeping); features Dr. Mark Beattie	- As assigned by Dr. Mark Beattie	
10 (10/26)	- Farm to Table – Managing the regional waste stream (Cedar Grove composting and anaerobic	- E-journal summary - Discussion board assignment	- Answer questions for Part II (Ch. 7-10) of <i>RFS</i>

	fermentation)		
11 (11/2)	- Farm To Table - Bringing small scale agriculture to urban settings, distribution chains, and vehicles to retail food crops (CSAs, farmers markets, food hubs, etc.) (DeVetter and Rudolph)		- Read Part III of <i>RFS</i>
12 (11/9)	- Farm To Table – Regional food policy and economics (features Dr. Bradly Gaolach - confirm)	- Discussion board assignment - As assigned by Dr. Brad Gaolach	
13 (11/16)	- Table – Perspectives from an end user (chefs, restaurateurs, consumers); visiting speaker (Executive Chef Jamie Callison - confirm)	- Discussion board assignment - Submit SL journal for grading	- Answer questions for Part III of <i>RFS</i>
(11/23)	Thanksgiving Break		
14 (11/30)	Student Presentations – Food Crop from Farm to the Table; Students prepare a presentation of their food crop project	- Discussion board assignment	- Final summary of <i>RFS</i> due
15 (12/7)	Wrap-up and final evaluations (<i>Watch in-class movie if time permits</i>)	- Final review of SL E-Journal and summary	
16 (12/14)	Final examinations	NO EXAM	

*Note that weekly assignments will be due online by **5 pm, Wednesday**, the following week.

**There will be required readings from the book, *Rebuilding the Foodshed: How to Create Local, Sustainable, and Secure Food Systems (RFS)*. Students will be required to read the assigned sections, reflect, and respond to online summary and reflection questions related to the readings. Questions will be posted online and students will also be required to engage in an online discussion of the assigned readings by respectfully responding to two student-posted comments per reading assignment.

Description of Assignments and Evaluation:

- **Participation (5 points per week):** Students will be graded on participation. Involvement and responses to online student discussion boards will count for participation and students will be required to respond to two student-posted comments per discussion board and reading assignment to receive maximum credit. Students are also still expected to provide their own responses to discussion board questions and assignments. Discussion prompts will be provided online by the instructors.
- **Service Learning (SL) (75 points):** Students are expected to choose a near-by farm (or other approved location) where they can volunteer a minimum of 10 hours to learn local food or beverage production through a service-learning experience. Students will keep an online E-journal on Blackboard of their on-farm experiences, which will include dates and hours worked. Students will also submit a 3-page summary (12 point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins, proofread and spell-checked) of their SL experience. Information to include in

the summary are: 1) type of farm/enterprise; 2) type of cropping system(s); 3) what they have learned; 4) what surprised them, 5) how they would do things differently if they were the owner/operator; and 6) how their thinking was changed through the SL experience. The summary will be submitted the week after Thanksgiving (11/30) and evaluated.

- **E-Summaries/Reflections (10 points each):** In order to further evaluate student engagement and synthesis of information, each student will be expected to periodically submit a one-page E-summary as assigned in the schedule. The discussion should be a thoughtful summary of what was discussed or took place during an online lesson and how this information relates to the student's own interests in agriculture and local food systems. Summaries should also synthesize material you have previously learned in the class, specifically how different components within the food system interact and their significance in the commodity (or commodities) being evaluated for the particular weekly assignment. Further attention should be dedicated to challenges experienced with the particular commodity being reviewed and effective solutions should both be proposed and discussed. Format includes: 1-inch margins, 12-point font, single-spaced, spell-checked, and proofread.
- **RFS section readings and answers to questions (15 points each):** Students are expected to keep up with assigned readings and questions (supplied by the instructors) related to the section material. Responses should be submitted through the online discussion forum on Blackboard and will be available for other students to thoughtfully and respectfully respond to each other's comments. The student's ability and willingness to comment will count towards participation points (see above).
- **Final Summary of RFS (50 points):** Students will write a summary of the book, *Rebuilding the Foodshed*. The summary will include the student's original opinion/perspective on local and industrial food systems, whether or not his/her opinion changed through the reading of the book, and what the student's current viewpoint is on local food systems. Format: 2 pages, minimum of 5 reputable references, 12-point font, single-spaced, 1 inch margins, spell-checked and proofread.
- **Student Project/Presentation (100 points):** Throughout the semester, students will be asked to work on a Farm-to-Table project whereby they will select a specific horticultural product (or products) and provide a comprehensive review of how the product got to its final state to be utilized by the end user. Students will use the information from the course content and readings to help gather the necessary information to complete the project. Use and application of additional sources of credible information are both permitted and encouraged. Keep a list of your references for the instructors to evaluate. The sharing of student's project will occur via online video recording or reports (week of 12/7).

Students will need to consider the farm-to-table processes in their presentations [e.g., growing considerations of the particular crop(s), (e.g., location, soils, fertilizers, pests and disease management, etc.), harvesting and storage (if necessary), effective marketing and pricing, how the crop(s) can be transformed

into a value-added product, interesting or untapped markets for the crop/product, etc.]. Presentations need to be 15 minutes long and provided to the instructors by 5 pm on Nov. 30 so that they may be posted on Blackboard. Questions and discussion surrounding presentations will occur on the Blackboard discussion board, with students being graded on participation.

Assignment	Points	Percentage of Total Grade
Participation (15 weeks x 5 points/wk)	75	18%
Service Learning (minimum of 10 hours)	75	18%
Reflections and Summaries (4 total x 10 points each)	40	10%
Responses to <i>RFS</i> readings (5 total x 15 points each)	75	18%
Final Summary of <i>RFS</i> book	50	12%
Student Project	100	24%
Total points	415	

Grading Policy:

Letter grades for all assignments, the final student project, and the overall course (total number of points earned ÷ total number of points possible in the class) will be assigned based on the scale below. Recall that participation will count in the final grade.

Unexcused late assignments are worth 0 points.

A 93-100%	B 83-86%	C 73-76%	D 60-66%
A- 90-92%	B- 80-82%	C- 70-72%	F Below 59%
B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%	

Methods and Evidence for the Assessment of Course Learning Outcomes:

Course Learning Outcome	Course Topics and Weeks that Contribute to Course Learning Outcomes	Assignments/Activities Addressing Course Learning Outcomes
#1 - The fundamental concepts of organic horticultural production systems, other alternative systems of production, and the different trade-offs and decisions involved with being a grower.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation on western Washington food systems - Panel discussion on reasons to/not to be organic - Exposure to growers and WSU NWREC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflections and summaries about guest speakers - Journal and summary from service learning experience
#2 - The unique environmental challenges that western Washington grower's experience (e.g., climate, soils, pests, diseases, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation on western Washington food systems - Panel discussion - Exposure to growers and WSU NWREC - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflection and summaries about guest speakers - Journal and summary from service learning experience - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project
#3 - The multiple processes involved in bringing a perishable product to a retail venue (i.e., harvest, process, aggregate, transport, distribute, deliver, retail, and market).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exposure to growers and others involved in western Washington food systems - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflection and summaries about guest speakers and field trips - Dr. Beattie's assignments - Journal and summary from service learning experience - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project
#4 – The definition of value-added, local examples of value adding, and financial implications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest speakers reviewing value-addition and impacts on business for the production and retail of food/beverage crops - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflections and summaries about visiting speakers - Dr. Beattie's assignments - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project
#5 – How to successfully package, price, market, and sell a locally grown food crop through experiential learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest speakers addressing post-harvest life of a crop, including packaging, value-addition, and retail - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflections and summaries about guest speakers - Dr. Beattie's assignments - Journal and summary from service learning experience - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project
#6 - The unique benefits and challenges of using local and organic food crops from the perspective of end users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest speakers that are direct users of local and organic foods - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online discussions based on responses to assigned questions from <i>RFS</i> - Reflections and summaries about guest speakers - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project

Agricultural Food Systems Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

The following are student learning outcomes for the WSU Agricultural and Food Systems Program:

1. Identify and understand the interaction among key components that comprise agricultural and food systems across disciplines.
2. Obtain, evaluate, and apply scholarly information to expand understanding and knowledge-base of the systems.
3. Apply scientific and quantitative reasoning to address real world problems in agricultural and food systems.
4. Consider, evaluate, and integrate varying perspectives on issues related to agricultural and food systems.
5. Integrate ethical, economic, environmental, and cultural/societal contexts at the global and/or local level.
6. Communicate effectively to a broad range of audiences using appropriate traditional and emerging technological media.
7. Appreciate the breadth and depth of professional opportunities in agricultural and food systems.

Methods and Evidence for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:

Student Learning Outcome	Course Topics and Weeks that Contribute to Student Learning Outcomes	Assignments/Activities Addressing Student Learning Outcomes
#1 - Identify and understand the interaction among key components that comprise agricultural and food systems across disciplines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation on western Washington food systems - Panel discussion on reasons to/not to be organic - Guest speakers on production, post-harvest, value-addition, distribution, and economic aspects of producing and selling food/beverage crops - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflections and summaries about guest speakers - Journal and summary from service learning experience - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project
#2 - Obtain, evaluate, and apply scholarly information to expand understanding and knowledge-base of the systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation, which will review requirements for writing assignments, including scrutinizing sources of information and literature citations - Guest speakers from WSU NWREC and discussion with faculty and students engaged in scholarly research - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflection and summaries about guest speakers - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project
#3 - Apply scientific and quantitative reasoning to address real world problems in agricultural and food systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest speakers from WSU NWREC and exposure with faculty and students engaged in scholarly research - Student presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflection and summaries about guest speakers - "Food Crop from Farm to the Table" student project

		Table” student project
#4 – Consider, evaluate, and integrate varying perspectives on issues related to agricultural and food systems.	- Service-learning experience (out of class and arranged by student) - Panel discussion on reasons to/not to be organic - Guest speakers on production, post-harvest, value-addition, distribution, and economic aspects of producing and selling food/beverage crops - Student presentations	- Reading and assigned summaries for class book, <i>RFS</i> - Online discussions about <i>RFS</i> - Reflections and summaries about guest speakers - Journal and summary from service learning experience - “Food Crop from Farm to the Table” student project
#5 – Integrate ethical, economic, environmental, and cultural/societal contexts at the global and/or local level.	- Panel discussion on reasons to/not to be organic - Guest speakers on production, post-harvest, value-addition, distribution, and economic aspects of producing and selling food/beverage crops	- Journal and summary from service learning experience - “Food Crop from Farm to the Table” student project
#6 - Communicate effectively to a broad range of audiences using appropriate traditional and emerging technological media.	- Student presentations	- Online discussions based on responses to assigned questions from <i>RFS</i> - “Food Crop from Farm to the Table” student project
#7 – Appreciate the breadth and depth of professional opportunities in agricultural and food systems.	- Guest speakers on production, post-harvest, value-addition, distribution, and economic aspects of producing and selling food/beverage crops	- Journal and summary from service learning experience - Reflection and summaries about guest speakers

Netiquette:

This class occurs online and via discussion forums with your peers. Maintaining respect during these interactions is important for the creation of a safe, creative, and effective learning environment. Below are a few guidelines for maintaining a respectful environment in the online learning environment:

- It is difficult to “read” emotion in online discussions – be clear, use emoticons or concisely express your feelings in a respectful manner
- Use of capitals sends the message that YOU ARE SHOUTING!
- Give positive feedback (“good idea, thanks”), be polite, and avoid hostile or curt comments, stereotypes, and labels.
- Apply the same standards you would follow in a face-to-face classroom discussion.
- Maintain a sense of dignity and decorum (class is not the same place as your Facebook account or your email).
- Argue not with emotion but with knowledge, facts, authority and reason.

The Core Rules of Netiquette, derived from the 1994 book by Virginia Shea, are further detailed in the link: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>. Hostility and insults will not be tolerated and will result in failing the week's assignment. Please be polite!

Academic Integrity Statements:

Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course. Any student caught cheating on any assignment will be given an F grade for the course and will be reported to the Office Student Standards and Accountability. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). The same penalties apply for plagiarism. It is strongly suggested that you read and understand these definitions: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010>.

WSU Online Student Support:

The WSU Online Web site provides students with additional information that promotes success in the online learning environment beyond the scope of the course. Students may access the site at: <http://online.wsu.edu>. Information is personalized, so students need to log in with their WSU Network ID and password.

Library Support:

Libraries are wonderful and underutilized resources that provide a plethora of information readily available to students. Students enrolled in WSU online courses can use the libraries' online databases and receive reference and research assistance from their home campus. Students can also borrow books and other circulating material, as well as access journal articles.

- General library links by Campus Pullman: <http://libraries.wsu.edu>
- WSU Online: <http://libraries.wsu.edu>
- WSU Vancouver: <http://library.vancouver.wsu.edu/>
- WSU Tri-Cities: <http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/dis/consolidated/>
- WSU Spokane Riverpoint – <http://spokane.wsu.edu/services2/library/>
- WSU College of Nursing: <http://nursing.wsu.edu/Libraries-&Resources/index.html>
- WSU Energy Program
library: <http://www.energy.wsu.edu/EnergyLibrary/AbouttheLibrary.aspx>

WSU Reasonable Accommodation Statement:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. For more information contact a Disability Specialist on your home campus:

- Pullman or WSU Online: 509-335-3417; <http://accesscenter.wsu.edu>, Access.Center@wsu.edu
- Spokane: <http://spokane.wsu.edu/students/current/studentaffairs/disability/>
- Tri-Cities: <http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/disability/>

- Vancouver: 360-546-9138; <http://studentaffairs.vancouver.wsu.edu/student-resource-center/disability-services>

Safety:

Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the Pullman campus. As part of this commitment, the university has prepared this Campus Safety Plan, containing a listing of university policies, procedures, statistics and information relating to campus safety, emergency management and the health and welfare of the campus community. Please review this information at: <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/>.