

Title: Revitalize High Tunnel at the Sustainability Center/Farm for Training SIU students

Abstract:

Demand for local foods has been growing over the past two decades. Several studies have reported a wide gap in unmet demand. By promoting students' innovation and leadership skills, this proposal aims to play an important role in providing students some hands-on experience in growing and working out High Tunnel (HT) economics. This proposal has four specific aims. One, students (undergraduate and graduate) gain hands-on experience with high-tunnel farming. Two, investment decisions of whether to undertake this as a business venture/enterprise considering HT economics. Three, in-house resource to grow crops for research purposes and for food safety training. Four, perhaps more relevant, HT would serve to showcase experiential learning resources at SIU during college visits by prospective students. This proposal aims to motivate and promote students' innovation and leadership skills, and, thereby, their success. By planting two crops for study purposes and allowing planting of other crops as a hobby, this project uniquely blends work and hobby or leisure.