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New video series to spark interest in vegetable production of the future

A 26-episode weekly video series will debut May 13 on [YouTube](#) to help train the next generation of vegetable crop workers and increase their use of effective stewardship practices in vegetable production.

Projections for near-future retirements of people working in California's agricultural production, marketing and post-harvest handling sectors indicate severe re-staffing needs in the coming years. Technological advances have reduced manual labor in agriculture, but increased the need for skilled labor to maintain the sustainability of the vegetable industry.

"We already see it happening," said [Jeff Mitchell](#), UC Cooperative Extension vegetable crops specialist. "Robotic machines are now used for lettuce thinning in Salinas, but these technologies must be serviced by an educated workforce with knowledge in both mechanics and science."

Mitchell assembled a team of professors from California's public universities with agricultural programs – UC Davis, Chico State, Fresno State and CalPoly San Luis Obispo - to pull together a series of videos designed to spark the interest and begin training future farmers and ag workers in sound agronomic, economic and environmental stewardship skills. The team received financial support from the California Department of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crops Block Grant Program.

"We know that maintaining California's leading role in producing abundant, safe vegetables is critical not only to Americans' health, but also to the state's economy," Mitchell said.

The video series is offered on the [UC Agriculture and Natural Resources \(UC ANR\) YouTube](#) page on a playlist titled "Training of a New Generation of California Vegetable Producers." UC ANR is the outreach arm of the University of California which, among other services, provides agricultural research, teaching and advising in all California counties.

Each Monday morning from May 13 through Nov. 4, a new video will premiere in the playlist. The video length ranges from 47 minutes to 7 minutes. The videos will also be made available to high school and college ag professors to use in the classroom.

"We believe that this series of videos on vegetable production will have broad interest beyond the classrooms," Mitchell said. "The agricultural industry, students in other parts of the United States and the world, and the broader public all have an interest in understanding how the vegetables we eat are produced at the ever-increasing scale at which they are needed."

The videos depict state-of-the-art technologies and techniques that are in use in many production regions of California today, vegetable farming systems used in other parts of the world, and increasingly popular cottage farming systems that are popping up in urban areas for easy access to healthful foods.

To receive a notification of each video premiere, follow the UC ANR Twitter feed at <http://twitter.com/UCANR> or set a reminder by visiting the playlist on [YouTube](#).