

ARE Faculty Profile

Steven C. Blank is a Cooperative Extension economist in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UC Davis. He specializes in financial management, risk analysis, futures and options markets, and management methods. After growing up around California agriculture, Blank completed a B.A. in business at California State University, Stanislaus. He went to the east coast to complete an M.B.A. at the University of Massachusetts. Steve then returned west, going to the University of Hawaii to receive both his M.S. and Ph.D. in agricultural economics, specializing in marketing and price analysis.

Before completing his education, Dr. Blank worked in varied industry positions early in his career, including time as a commodity futures broker, an assistant manager of a large department store, and a business consultant for the Small Business Administration.

He has held faculty positions at California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo, South Dakota State University and the University of Arizona. Steve came to UC Davis in January 1988, initially as a visiting associate professor in the ARE department. He took the job of Extension Economist in 1990, conducting research and continuing to teach both on and off campus. In 1996, he took on the additional position of Academic Assistant to the Vice Provost at UC Davis. In this administrative role, Steve focuses on academic personnel and planning issues across the campus.

His international experience ranges from heading a research section of the Australian government for two years to various short research and consulting assignments on every continent.

Dr. Blank has authored or co-authored over 200 publications, including three books. His most recent book, *The End of Agriculture in the American Portfolio*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Quorum Books, 1998) continues to receive much favorable attention. For example, the national Farm Bureau Federation praised the book in its review, as did farmers from Washington state while testifying before the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee. The book explains many of the diverse economic pressures facing agricultural producers in the United States. Dr. Blank continues to receive invitations to speak on the subject and, during Fall 1999, will address professional groups from Nova Scotia to San Francisco.

Dr. Blank's current research agenda covers varied topics. Examples include a project with UC Davis agricultural engineering faculty studying the effects



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of harvest mechanization on selected crops, and another study with UC agronomists that evaluates the yield-versus-quality tradeoff with alfalfa growers. He also has ongoing projects focusing on financial and risk management in agriculture.

When he is not in one of his two campus offices, Steve is often on the road as required by his statewide Cooperative Extension position. He regularly travels throughout the state working with various producer and agribusiness groups. He can occasionally be found on the golf course. "I learned in business school that a lot of business gets done on the links," he notes.

Steven C. Blank is a UC Extension economist in the ARE department and the academic assistant to the vice provost at UC Davis. He can be reached by telephone at (530) 752-0823, or by e-mail at: sblank@primal.ucdavis.edu.