

The California "Two Step Program" for season extension
with half the normal use of fumigants.

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In California this past year there have been several grower groups who have developed a method to extend their harvest season with half the normal use of fumigants. It has become known as the "two step program". The method employs early termination of the fall planted crop in favor of replanting with a day neutral cultivar into previously fumigated beds. This new plant material establishes rapidly in the warm summer conditions, and is again ready to harvest in the fall. Production from the first crop occurs from February through June, then replanting occurs in July , followed by a second harvest from mid September through December and into the New Year, depending on rainfall and new production from the southern districts. Hence, two crops are obtained from a single fall fumigation. The harvest season is bi modal, with each production curve (spring and fall) corresponding to some of the highest market prices of the year.

The biological and economic dynamics of this system will be discussed: