

SUDANGRASS PRODUCTION
PALO VERDE VALLEY - RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Sudangrass is a productive summer annual grass that can produce up to about ten tons of hay per acre in the Palo Verde Valley. Palo Verde Valley acreage has been about 500 to 1000 acres during the past three years, some of which was green-chopped or grazed.

SOILS: Sudan may be grown on a wide range of soils. Yields are reduced on sandy or salty soils but it is more resistant to scalding and is more adapted to fine textured soils than is alfalfa.

LAND PREPARATION: A well prepared seed bed is necessary for good germination. Just before planting, weeds are killed to prevent early competition. The soil is often chiseled, disced twice, and pre-irrigated.

VARIETIES: There is little data on the relative productivity of the six or seven Sorghum-Sudan hybrids available but they appear to yield equally well and better than the Sudangrass varieties as determined in state and local tests.

PLANTING: Sudangrass or the hybrids can be planted any time after about March 15, and will require about 60 days for each cutting or grazing. They are generally planted two inches deep in the moisture with seven inch grain drills at 25 to 40 pounds seed per acre.

FERTILIZATION: For a long growing season, 200 to 300 pounds of nitrogen may be required for maximum production. Normally 50 to 80 pounds of nitrogen is applied preplant with smaller applications following each cutting or grazing. Phosphate applications are not generally needed unless the soils have received little or no phosphate during the past two or three years.

IRRIGATION: Sudangrass is flood irrigated every seven to ten days during the growing season. It should never be allowed to wilt. Frequent irrigations are necessary in saline soils.

PESTS, DISEASES, AND WEEDS: Weeds, diseases and pests are seldom a problem in Sudangrass. Under some situations, however, aphids, fleahoppers, beetles, crickets, and worms may reduce stands or cause other damage in severe attacks. Growers may obtain, upon request from the farm advisors' office, pest, disease, and weed control guides.

HARVESTING: When pasturing, it should be grazed off rapidly when it has grown 18 inches to two feet high. It is cut for hay when it begins to head. When green-chopping, it is cut when 18 inches to two feet high and is often partially dried in a windrow to reduce the amount of moisture in the feed.

SUDANGRASS HAY
IN
DESERT VALLEYS - RIVERSIDE COUNTY, 1962

SAMPLE COSTS OF PRODUCTION

Based on a yield of 5 tons hay per acre and one-half year land utilization.

	LABOR & EQUIP- MENT COST/Acre	MATERIALS KIND & COST/Acre	TOTAL COST/Acre
Disc-2x	\$ 5.00		\$ 5.00
Land plane-2 ways	6.00		6.00
Plant	2.00	30 lbs seed \$7.00	9.00
Fertilize	1.50	100 lbs N 8.50	10.00
Border-1x	1.00		1.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION AND PLANTING			\$ 31.00
Fertilize (side-dress)-2x	\$ 3.00	100 lbs N \$8.50	\$ 11.50
Irrigate-12x	6.00	Water- $\frac{1}{2}$ yr 3.75	9.75
Ditch & miscellaneous	1.00		1.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD			\$ 22.25
TOTAL CULTURAL COST (Land preparation, planting, plus growing period)			\$ 53.25
Taxes and standby- $\frac{1}{2}$ yr			\$ 5.00
Cash Overhead (office, car, phone, insurance, etc.)- $\frac{1}{2}$ yr			5.50
Depreciation on buildings and equipment- $\frac{1}{2}$ yr			.25
Interest on investment on land, buildings, and equipment- $\frac{1}{2}$ yr			15.00
TOTAL CASH AND NON-CASH OVERHEAD- $\frac{1}{2}$ yr			\$ 25.75
TOTAL PREHARVEST COST			\$ 79.00
Harvest			
Mow and rake-3x			\$ 7.50
Bale-3x			22.50
Haul and stack-3x			10.00
TOTAL HARVEST COST			\$ 40.00
TOTAL ALL COSTS			\$ 119.00
TOTAL COST PER TON			\$ 23.80

The above sample costs are based on contract rates and include interest on investment and depreciation on equipment.

PRICES: Representative prices of Sudan hay are not available as it is almost entirely consumed by the grower. When made into silage, it sells for \$4.50/ton green weight or about \$18/ton standing in the field and \$24/ton delivered to the pit.