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BARLEY PRODUCTION IN KINGS COUNTY

The Agricultural Extension Service
131 E. 8th Street, Hanford, California
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Kings County barley production in 1945 was 122,325 tons grown on 105,000 acres according to the U. S. Census of Agriculture. Barley is grown under irrigation with a pre-irrigation providing enough moisture to carry the crop to maturity if rainfall during the winter is normal. Kings County's large acreage provides more than enough for our livestock needs; therefore, this huge excess is channelled to other parts of the state and foreign countries. Kings County was once a producer of malting barley which was purchased by English brewers, but since the war our main production has been used as livestock feed.

Price Support and Outlook - Prices for the 1950 season will probably drop no further than the government "pegged" price, unless new legislation is provided by Congress. Acreage allotments are not imposed on barley as they are on cotton. Acreage of barley for the 1950 harvest will be higher in Kings County than in 1949 if present trends continue to exist during the remainder of the planting season.

Requirements - Barley produces best on well drained, fertile soils. It is more tolerant of salts than most other crops. On marginal land, barley may yield enough to make a small margin of profit where other crops would cause a loss. The low costs of seeding and maintenance makes it a much easier crop to grow than cotton or corn.

Planting Recommendations - Forty to 60# per acre is recommended for seeding in Kings County. California Mariout barley has been our best yielder in variety tests carried on during the past 2 years by the Kings County Agricultural Extension Service as well as commercial production by farmers. Barley can be seeded any time from November 15th to February 15th in most parts of the county.

WHAT WILL IT COST TO GROW BARLEY AS A WINTER CROP IN ROTATIONS

The sample below is based on 2 irrigations and a yield of 2400 pounds or 22-110# sacks per acre. Double cropping is assumed so only 40% of taxes and land and pumping plant overhead are charged to barley

	Sample Per Acre	Costs Per Cwt.	My Costs Per Acre	Costs Per Cwt.
Prepare land-plow, disc, harrow, 2 hr. man @ 85¢ and large tractor @ 2.50	6.70			
Drill, 1 man and small tractor .33 hr. @ 1.25	.70			
Irrigate - 1 preplanting and 1 crop, 2.5 hr. labor	2.15			
Combine, contract	5.40	.23		
Hauling out grain @ \$1.50 T contract	1.80	.07		
Total labor cost	16.75	.70		
Irrigation water 1 acre foot at \$2.50	2.50			
Seed 80# @ 4.00 cwt. treated	3.20			
Sacks @ 22¢ and twine	5.00			
Total material cost	10.70	.45		
General expense, car, phone, etc. @ 5% of above	1.40			
County taxes \$50 value, rate \$6.00 = \$3.00 x 40%	1.20			
Repairs, insurance, etc.	2.00			
Total cash overhead cost	4.60	.19		
TOTAL CASH COSTS	32.05	1.34		
Depreciation				
Irrigation system \$80 cost per A. over 20 years. x 40% to barley	1.60			
Tillage equipment, drill etc. \$20 an acre 10 yr.	2.00			
Total depreciation	3.60	.15		
Interest on investment at 5%				
Irrig. system, tillage equipment, etc. investment chargeable to barley	1.30			
Land \$300 an acre x 40%	6.00			
Total interest on investment	7.30	.30		
Total cost of production	42.95	1.79		
Less credit for pasture, straw, and stubble	2.00	.08		
Net cost of grain produced	40.95	1.71		

The above sample costs show a reasonable net cost of production of around \$1.71 a cwt. in sacks field run at the warehouse. These costs could be lowered with larger scale more efficient operations or with better yields. No fertilization is assumed although that might be necessary to maintain such a good yield. If barley were the only crop for the year charging it with a year's taxes and overhead on land and pumping plant would increase the computed costs.

The above costs should not be taken as more than an illustration. Estimate your own costs and insert them above. Such an estimate will help you decide on whether to grow barley or not.