

WHAT WILL IT COST TO GROW ALFALFA HAY?

Here is a sample set of production costs for alfalfa hay to help you make your own estimates. Don't take these figures as your costs but consider your farm, your yield and your wage and tractor rates and pumping costs. The following example is based on a yield of 7 tons per acre from 6 cuttings. Wage rate used is \$1.00 an hour for all labor and the light tractor for mowing, raking, etc. is estimated to have a total cost including depreciation and repair of \$1.25 an hour.

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	Sample Costs		My Costs	
	Per acre	Per ton	Per acre	Per ton
Miscel. harrow, fertilize etc. 2 man hours and 1 tractor hour per acre	3.25			
Irrigation 10 to 12 times - 6 hr.	6.00			
Cut 6 times at .4 hr. man and light tractor = 2.4 hr.	5.40			
Rake and turn 6 times = 2.4 hr.	5.40			
Baling contract at \$4 a ton	28.00	4.00		
Haul out and pile contract @ \$1.50 per ton	10.50	1.50		
Total labor and field power	58.55	8.37		
Irrigation water 4 acre feet @ \$2.50	10.00			
Fertilizer - 400 lbs. single super phosphate	8.00			
Total material cost	18.00	2.57		
General expense, office, car, operating capital, etc.	3.83			
County taxes \$6.00	6.00			
Miscel., repairs, insurance, etc.	3.00			
Total cash overhead cost	12.83	1.83		
TOTAL CASH COST	89.38	12.77		
Depreciation				
Stand cost \$25 per acre 3 years	8.33			
Irrigation facilities \$110	7.00			
Equipment, mower, rake and miscel. except tractor cost \$20 - 10 yrs.	2.00			
Total depreciation	17.33	2.48		
Interest on investment at 5%				
Stand on $\frac{1}{2}$ cost -\$12.50	.63			
Irrig. system and equip. on $\frac{1}{2}$ cost \$55.	2.75			
Land at \$500 an acre	25.00			
Total interest on investment	28.38	4.05		
TOTAL ALL COSTS	135.09	19.30		
Less possible pasture 1 animal month per A.	4.00	.57		
Net cost of hay - roadside or farmstead	131.09	18.73		

The above sample costs show a net cost after deducting some pasturage of \$18.73 per ton. To lower this cost would require larger scale more economical operations or a higher yield per acre or both.

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