

sweet corn

sample costs

and

production



University of California

Agricultural Extension Service

Imperial County

Court House, El Centro

Fact Sheet No. 24

UC Cooperative Extension

SWEET CORN--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
LAND PREPARATION	
Plow 1x	\$ 8.00
Disc 1x	1.75
Float 1x	1.50
Fertilize 1x	2.00
List 1x	2.75
Ditching--check	.75
Irrigate 1x	1.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION	\$ 17.75
CULTURAL LABOR AND POWER	
Planting	2.00
Cultivation 5x	18.00
Wee and thin 2x	16.00
Irrigation 6x	8.00
Fertilizing 2x	6.00
Suckering 2x	11.00
Insect control	10.00
TOTAL CULTURAL LABOR AND POWER	\$ 71.00
MATERIALS	
Water - 3 acre feet	6.00
Seed - 20#	9.50
Fertilizer (200#N + 120 P ₂ O ₅)	28.00
Insecticide	15.00
TOTAL MATERIALS	\$ 58.50
CASH OVERHEAD COSTS	
General expense - 8% of the above	11.78
LAND RENT	65.00
TOTAL ALL COSTS	\$ 224.03

SWEET CORN IN IMPERIAL COUNTY.

Sweet corn is a relatively new crop for Imperial County. Until 1947 little or no corn was produced commercially because of poor quality due to excessive insect injury. With the development of new methods of insect control, excellent quality corn can now be produced.

Most of the corn is raised in the frost-free Calipatria-Niland area. The development of the sweet corn industry has been of great benefit to the farmers of that area because it has given them a crop to substitute for the fresh pea industry which has rapidly decreased because of the competition from frozen peas and other causes.

Sweet corn raised here matures at the same time as corn produced in Coachella Valley.

YIELD

Normal yields are from 165 to 245 five dozen crates per acre. When the crop is on good land properly fertilized and irrigated with adequate insect control, a grower should be able to expect around 200 five dozen crates. Good cultural practices improve yields and reduce unnecessary expenses.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS

Sweet corn will grow on most soils of this area, but light textured soils with good drainage produce the better crops.

VARIETIES

Golden Cross Bantam "T" strain is the preferred variety in this area.

PLANTING

The land is pre-irrigated and then beds with 36-inch centers are thrown up. Some farmers make the beds first and then irrigate before planting.

Most early plantings are made in the first half of January and from 15 to 20 pounds of seed per acre are planted. The plants are later spaced in the row from 8 to 10 inches apart.

FERTILIZERS

Nitrogen is the main fertilizer required. It is applied at a rate of from 150 lbs. to 180 lbs. of N per acre. Usually one half is applied before planting and the rest put in in two side dressings during early cultivations. The fertilizer is banded into the bed about 2 to 3 inches below and about 4 to 5 inches to the side of the seed row.

IRRIGATION

After the pre-irrigation, the crop is irrigated from four to six times. The interval between irrigations is around three weeks when the corn is small; near harvest time this period is cut to about seven days or less.

DISEASE AND PEST CONTROL

The seed should be treated with a fungicide: arasan, spergon, or semesan jr. before planting to prevent seed decay.

Insect pests present a large problem. For control recommendations see the University of California Vegetable Crop Pest and Disease Control Guide for Imperial County or contact your farm advisor.

HARVESTING AND PACKING

Harvesting should be done early in the morning in order to get as many ears as possible in before the temperature becomes high. All corn is harvested by hand and thrown into high wheeled trailers.

The corn should be kept in the shade until it is packed. In packing, the ears should be graded and then packed in a wire bound crate. This crate should then be

submerged in cold water for 15 to 20 minutes to cool the corn down and the crates then stored or loaded in refrigerated rooms or cars.

Corn may also be pre-cooled as individual ears before packing by immersing in cold water. If the corn is not cooled properly much of the sugar will be converted to starch, and the quality will drop rapidly.

HYDROCOOLING

Hydrocooling has become a popular method of cooling sweet corn. Hydrocooling is a method of pre-cooling by spraying or immersing the corn with cold water. Sweet corn must be cooled as close to 32°F as possible to preserve the eating quality and hydrocooling is an effective method of cooling. Additional information on hydrocooling of sweet corn may be obtained from your farm advisor.

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