

SAMPLE INPUTS and COSTS for PICKLING/CUCUMBERS
William S. Seyman - Farm Advisor

About This Cost Study

The cost figures on the opposite side of this sheet do not necessarily represent an average cost for all Santa Clara County growers. Average costs may be increased or decreased from one year to another by weather conditions which can greatly influence disease, weed and pest problems. Thus, unfavorable weather conditions would not only reduce yields but would also increase costs as a result of added measures taken to lessen potential yield losses.

Some essential points to keep in mind when considering these cost figures are:

- Because of the contractual arrangement that is generally used (as indicated) in the harvest of this crop, the significance of the total cost of production both "per acre" and "per ton" may, from a growers' viewpoint, be difficult to assess. One means of putting the total cost figures in a different light is to subtract the costs of "picking" and "hauling" from the given "total costs per acre" and dividing the resulting figure by 5 instead of 10 to obtain "cost per ton".
- A vital point that the cost figures do not reveal is the extreme importance of the manner in which the crop is harvested and the basis of payment for the harvested product. The harvested fruit is bought on a size or grade-weight basis. Thus, not only does the price per ton received depend on size and grade but total production is strongly influenced, horticulturally, by thoroughness in the picking process. Both grower and picker are adversely affected by poor picking procedures.
- For the individual grower, some of the operations and materials used as listed in this study, may not be necessary. In other cases additional operations and materials will be needed. Such additions or deletions can only be logically determined on an individual basis. Obviously, such changes can materially effect total costs.
- Management costs, which are sometimes calculated at 10% of gross income are in this study listed at 5% of an assumed gross. However, a portion of "Misc. overhead" could also be considered as a reflection of management costs.

Local History and Adaptation

Production of cucumbers in Santa Clara County has, since 1945, varied between 400 and 900 acres per year. The preponderance of this annual acreage is devoted to pickling cucumbers in the San Martin-Gilroy area. Under favorable conditions, exceptional yields approaching 20 tons per acre have been reported.

Angular Leaf Spot, a bacterial disease, has been a serious problem particularly during cool seasons.

Cucumber References

©CUCUMBER PRODUCTION IN CALIFORNIA (Manual #24 - \$0.25)

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE VEGETABLE PEST CONTROL GUIDE
(Published annually)

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE WEED CONTROL GUIDE
(Published annually)

Calif. Univ. Agric. Ext. Serv. Santa Clara Co.
SAMPLE COSTS FOR PICKLING CUCUMBER PRODUCTION - 1963
SANTA CLARA COUNTY - WITH A YIELD OF 10 TONS PER ACRE
William S. Seyman, Farm Advisor

Operation	- Hours COST PER ACRE				Approximate Cost per ton
	Per Acre	Labor	Machinery	Total	
Land Preparation	3.6	5.95	14.10	20.05	
List	0.4	.65	1.00	1.65	
Pre-irrigate	4.0	5.00		5.00	
Plant	0.6	1.75	1.50	3.25	
Thin	20.0	22.00		22.00	
Cultivate 3x and fertilize	2.0	3.30	5.00	8.30	
Hoe	20.0	22.00		22.00	
Irrigate (2x pre harvest, 8x during harvest)	20.0	25.00		25.00	
Dust or spray 2x (contract @ \$7.50)				15.00	
Misc. other cultural operations	3.0	4.00	2.85	6.85	
Total cultural labor and equipment				129.10	12.91
Picking (contract @ 50% of gross return approx. @ \$60.00/ton)				300.00	
Hauling - \$1.50/ton (paid by processor)				15.00	
Field Supervision				15.00	
Total harvest				330.00	33.00
Irrigation-power to pump 30 acre inches @ \$8.00/acre foot				20.00	
Seed - 5 lbs. @ \$1.30				6.60	
Fertilizer - 160 lbs. N + 80 to 120 lbs. P ₂ O ₅				32.00	
Sacks - 50 @ 15¢				7.50	
Housing for pickers @ \$7.50 per picker				15.00	
Total material				81.10	8.11
Misc. overhead				16.00	
Property taxes				20.00	
Total Misc. overhead				36.00	3.60
Total cash cost				576.20	57.62
Investments for 160 acre farm	Original Cost		Annual Cost		
	Total	Per Acre	Interest at 6%	Depreciation	
Land	192,000	1200	72.00		
Irrigation system	20,000	125	3.75	6.25	
Buildings	5,000	30	.90	1.50	
Equipment	44,850	280	8.40	28.00	
Total	261,850	1635	85.05	35.75	
Total interest and depreciation				120.80	12.08
Management - 5% of 10 tons @ \$60.00/ton				30.00	3.00
Total cost per acre - owner basis				\$727.00	
Cost per ton				72.70	72.70
Costs on rental basis					
Cultural labor and equipment - same as above				129.10	
Harvest				330.00	
Material				81.10	
Misc. overhead				36.00	
Rent				90.00	
Interest and depreciation on equipment from above				36.40	
Management same as above				30.00	
Total cost per acre				732.60	
Cost per ton				73.20	73.20
Labor cost per hour including social security and compensation insurance					
Skilled	- 1.65	Per Hour Tractor Rates:			
Irrigators	- 1.25	TD 60 or equivalent - \$3.50			
Hoe and thin	- 1.10	W 30 or equivalent - \$2.25			