

sorghums (forage)

sample costs

and

production



Agricultural Extension Service
University of California
Imperial County
Court House, El Centro

Cost Data Sheet No. 7
UC Cooperative Extension

SORGHUM (FORAGE)--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$1.90 per hour (\$1.50 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Yield - 45 tons per acre - 2 harvests.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Costs	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Float 2x	1.00					2.00
Fertilize	1.00	200 lbs N (NH ₃)	12.00			13.00
Lisc.	3.00					3.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						22.00
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant	3.00	15 lbs seed	3.45			6.45
Weed Control	2.00	herbicide	4.50			6.50
Fertilize		100 lbs N (NH ₃)	6.00			6.00
Fertilize		water run 50 lbs N (2x)	6.00			6.00
Irrigation 15x		water (7.5 acre ft)	17.25	7.8	15.00	32.25
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						57.20
HARVESTING COSTS						
Chop	1.00	ton (2 cuttings)				45.00
Haul	1.00	ton				45.00
Pack & seal	17.50					17.50
TOTAL HARVEST COST						107.50
Land rent						50.00
Cash overhead 15% of above						35.51
TOTAL ALL COSTS						\$272.21

Cost per green ton = \$6.03

GENERAL INFORMATION

The average yields for sorghum forage during the last 5 years have ranged from 20.0 tons per acre for a single harvest. The average value has ranged from \$4.75 to \$5.00 per ton.

SOIL PREPARATION

Soils suited to good alfalfa production should produce sorghums well.

PLANTING RATES & DATES

When soil temperature reaches 65F, plant 10 to 20 pounds seed per acre on 30 to 36 inch beds. Irrigate up.

For double cropping, plant March 15 to April 1. For a single crop, plant March 15 to July 1.

VARIETIES

Consult Farm Advisor's Office for latest recommendation.

FERTILIZATION

Only nitrogen is recommended. Phosphorus requirement is fulfilled by phosphorus fertilizers applied to previous crops. A single crop uses 150 to 200 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre. If double cropped, at least another 100 pounds of nitrogen should be applied after the first cutting. On sandy soils, the same amounts should be used in split applications.

IRRIGATION

Apply water often enough to prevent leaves from curling.

WEED CONTROL

Weed control chemicals are recommended for either pre-emergence or post-emergence use. Consult Weed Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

INSECT PESTS

Several species of insects attack sorghum in the Imperial Valley. The following have been found to occur; however, their presence is not necessarily an indication of the need for control. These pests include seed corn maggot, aphids, cutworms, flea beetles, armyworms, lesser corn stalk borer, corn earworms, white flies, and spider mites. If infestations arise consult your Pest Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

HARVESTING


Maximum dry matter yields per acre are important to silage production. For best results harvest sorghum when grain is in the soft to medium dough stage and the best ensilage from corn will be obtained when corn kernels are in the late dough stage.

SUMMARY

Top quality silage and the greatest returns will be realized if (1) adapted varieties are planted, (2) harvested at the proper stage of maturity, and (3) properly packed when storing.

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