Strawberry - 1st year - 1952
J.W. Huffman, Farm Advisor
Wallace Sullivan, Extension Economist

University of California
Farm and Home Advisor
511 East Aliso Street
Los Angeles 12, California

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO GROW STRAWBERRIES? - 1st YEAR

Based on Yield of 3000 Trays Per Acre*

Items	Sample Costs		Your Costs	
	Per Acre	Per Tray	Per Acre	Per Tray
Land Preparation				
Disc - 1X	$ 1.50			
Plow - 1X	3.75			
Harrow or Spring Tooth - 2X	2.50			
Float & Level - 1X	50.00			
List or Furrow out	1.50			
Total Land Preparation	59.25	.02		
Transplant and Irrigate	40.00	.01		
Cultural Labor & Field Power				
Hoe and Weed 2X	200.00			
Irrigation - 30X	90.00			
Fertilize - 2X	3.50			
Pest Control - 5X	12.00			
Miscellaneous	5.00			
Total Cultural Labor	310.50	.10		
Materials				
Water 72"	220.00			
Plants 18,000	324.00			
Fertilizer - Commercial	62.00			
Pest Control - Dust	50.00			
Miscellaneous	5.00			
Total Materials	661.00	.22		
Cash Overhead Costs				
General Expense - 5%	53.50			
Taxes	2.00			
Repairs	2.00			
Insurance	1.50			
Total Cash Overhead	59.00	.02		
Depreciation	2.00			
Interest on Investment or Rent	100.00	.03		
Total Cost Up To Harvest	1231.75	.40		
Harvest Costs				
Pick	1550.00			
Haul to Roadside or Shed	14.00			
Total Harvest Costs **	1564.00	.52		
TOTAL ALL COSTS	2795.75	.92		

* 12 Baskets Per Tray
Figure your own costs in the last two columns.
** Cost of trays and baskets not included.

FIRST YEAR STRAWBERRY PRODUCTION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

General: The strawberry is an important crop in Los Angeles County. Though the bulk of the crop moves into the local and shipping market, the roadside stand is an important sales outlet. Production begins in April and ends in August or September.

Costs shown in this study are not intended to be average for the industry. They are intended to show how costs are broken down and to provide a basis of comparison for the growers own cost.

1. Varieties: With the exception of a few acres, the strawberry varieties developed by the University of California are exclusively grown throughout the county.

The Lassen variety is the most widely planted and is the highest yielder, and produces an attractive berry.

2. Planting: Transplanting, by hand, begins when plants are available in November and continues into the first part of January.

Two general systems of field planting are followed, (1) rows spaced 40 inches on center with two plant rows to the bed, or (2) rows spaced 32 inches on center with a single plant row per bed. Most growers prefer the double plant row system, as there is less injury from salt accumulation, and more plants can be planted to the acre. The single plant row system provides better air movement, which results in fewer rotted strawberries during wet weather.

3. Fertilizer: About 200 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre are required to produce a good crop of strawberries. Applications of commercial fertilizer are made two or three times during the season.

The first application is made in February, and the second about the 1st of July after the peak of production of the first crop has been reached. The commercial fertilizers applied are usually complete mixes such as 6-10-10, 8-8-4, or 4-10-10, etc. Our preliminary tests, however, indicate that nitrogen alone may be sufficient to produce a good crop.

4. Irrigation: This is one of the most important factors in strawberry production. The simple statement, "strawberries need a lot of water", is very true. The number of applications applied by individual growers ranged from 28 to 35 per season. During the hot summer months, irrigation as often as once every four days, particularly on light sandy soil, is necessary to keep production up.

The failure to provide adequate water will cause a rapid drop in production.

5. Pest Control: Major strawberry pests are red spider, two-spotted mite, cyclamen mite, and aphids. The job of pest control is to prevent a buildup of these pests. About five dustings per season of aramite and nicotine have given satisfactory control.

6. Harvest: Harvest is the major cost item of strawberry production. The amount of berries picked by one man in one hour depends on the yield and berry size. The estimated rate per hour for a good picker would be from one tray during periods of poor production, to two and one-half or three trays during peak production.