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WHAT DOES IT COST YOU TO GROW SWEET CORN?

(Based on 200 crates per A. - 5 dozen)

ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS		YOUR COSTS	
	Per Acre	Per 5 doz. crate	Per Acre	Per Crate
LAND PREPARATION				
Border & pre-irrigate 1x	1.50			
Plow 1x	4.50			
Chisel 1x	4.00			
Disc - double 1x	1.50			
Float 1x	1.25			
Bedding "V" 1x	2.00			
Irrigate 1x	.50			
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION	15.25	.08		
PLANTING (includes mulch)	5.00	.03		
CULTURAL LABOR & FIELD POWER				
Cultivation 5x	10.00			
Hand hoe and thin	7.50			
Irrigate 6x	1.80			
Fertilizing 2x	2.50			
Suckering 2x	10.00			
Pest control - dust -				
Plane 2x	3.00			
Hand application 4x	20.00			
Miscellaneous	2.00			
TOTAL CULTURAL	56.80	.28		
MATERIALS				
Water - 1.5 acre feet	5.00			
Seed - 20#	6.00			
Fertilizer - 150# N.	25.00			
Pest control - DDT - 120#	12.00			
Miscellaneous	2.00			
TOTAL MATERIALS	50.00	.25		
CASH OVERHEAD COSTS				
General expense - 5%	6.35			
Taxes & repairs incl. in rates & rent	--			
Insurance & misc.	2.50			
TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD	8.85	.04		
Depreciation - incl. in rates	--			
Rent - land	50.00	.25		
SUB TOTAL COST UP TO HARVEST	185.90	.93		
HARVEST				
Pick & Haul	30.00	.15		
TOTAL ALL COSTS	215.90	1.08*		

* = 21¢ per dozen plus billing weight @ 50#

The above sample costs are based on estimates of costs obtained from good commerci growers. Labor and field power costs are based mostly on contract rates and land i charged at current cash rent. Depreciation and taxes are included in the rates. These costs are up to the packing house.

Estimate your own costs by filling in the last two columns.

PROFITS = YIELD x PRICEE less COSTS

SWEET CORN

SWEET CORN IN IMPERIAL VALLEY

Sweet corn is a new crop for Imperial Valley. 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.

YIELDS: Normal yields will be from 165 to 200 five dozen crates per acre. When the crop is on good land properly fertilized, irrigated, and 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 ½ is applied before planting and the rest put in in two side dressings during early cultivations. Ammonium sulfate is the most common type used, but the last side dressing may be calcium nitrate. 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: arason, spergon, or semesan Jr. before planting to prevent seed decay.

Insect pests present a large problem. Early in the season flea-beetles frequently damage the young corn. These can be controlled by treating with DDT, using 25 to 30 pounds per acre of 5% dust or an equivalent amount of spray. During tasseling, the corn earworms become a pest and 1 to 2 dustings with 10% DDT applied from at a rate of 30 pounds per acre will give control and prevent the worms from migrating from the tassels to the young ears. At silking time, the earworm adults lay their eggs on the silks and at this time hand treating is necessary. One of the most successful methods is to dust each individual silk 3 to 4 times at 3 to 4 day intervals using 5% DDT applied by means of a paint or stencil brush.

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. This 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 then the crates 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.

SWEET CORN--IMPERIAL COUNTY

In order to compare Los Angeles wholesale prices with the cost to growers, the cost of marketing as well as the cost of production 1/ must be considered. The table below provides space for you to estimate your marketing costs and sample costs as a guide. As marketing costs vary greatly among growers, the sample costs indicated are estimates based on grower interviews and are not averages.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO HARVEST AND MARKET YOUR SWEET CORN?

Item	Sample costs		Your costs	
	Per dozen	Per crate-5 dozen		
Harvesting and hauling to shed	$.03	$.15		
Packing house costs:				
Material--crates, paper, labels, ice, etc.	.09	.46		
Labor and overhead--sorting, packing, and supervision, etc.	.10	.47		
Total packing house	.19	.93		
Transportation costs: Truck to Los Angeles, handling, tax and inspection	.07	.35		
Total harvesting, packing, and transportation	.29	1.43		
Total pre-harvest cost 1/	.18	.93		
Total harvesting, packing, transportation, and pre-harvest cost	.47	2.36		
Selling cost--15% commission @ $2.78 crate	.08	.42		
Total cost at Los Angeles market	.55	2.78		

1/ Sample cost-of-production estimates are shown on companion cost-of-production sheets for sweet corn issued by your farm advisor. Estimates are based on a yield of 200 5-dozen crates per acre. Billing weight of crate 50#, net weight 40#.

Current reports--Free reports on current sweet corn production and marketing may be received by writing for the following: Truck Crop Notes, issued monthly by the California Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, P. O. Box 1258, Sacramento 6; and the daily Local Fruit and Vegetable Report at Los Angeles, Federal-State Market News Service, 300 Wholesale Terminal Building, Los Angeles.

PROFITS = YIELD x PRICES less COSTS

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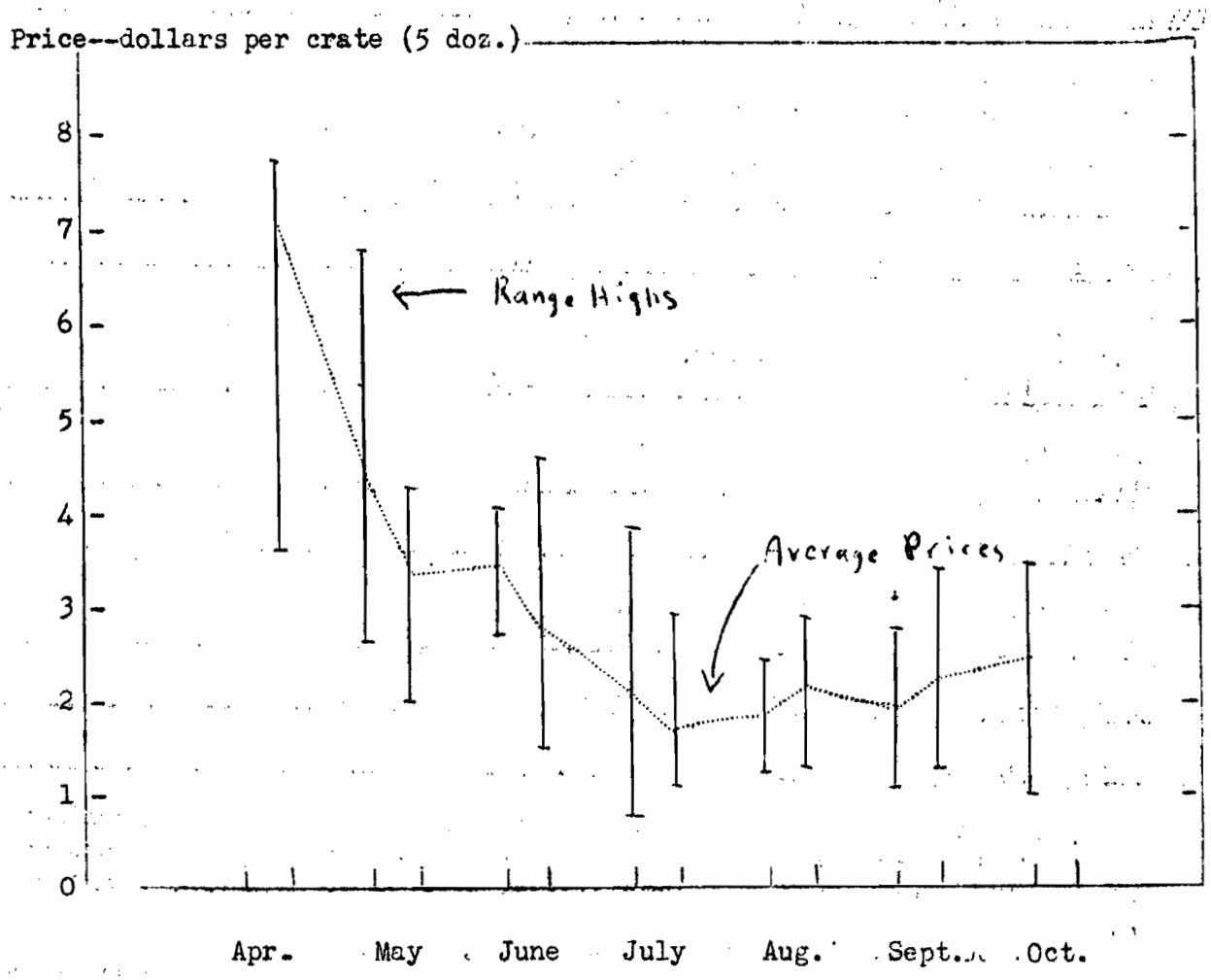
WHAT PRICE CAN YOU EXPECT FOR YOUR SWEET CORN?

While prices paid by consumers for sweet corn are influenced on the supply side by the quantity and quality offered for sale and on the demand side by consumers' desire for sweet corn, purchasing power, and prices of substitute products, a farsighted prediction of their behavior is not possible. An inspection of the chart below shows the wide ranges in price at the Los Angeles wholesale market and a four-year average seasonal price trend.

Average Wholesale Sweet Corn Prices and Extreme Price Range at Los Angeles, Semi-Monthly During the Four-Year Period, 1947-1950



PROFITS = YIELD x PRICES less COSTS

Sweet Corn

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