SNAP BEAN PRODUCTION COSTS

SONOMA COUNTY

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Sonoma County
Sample Inputs and Costs of Pole Snap Beans
with a yield of 7.5 tons per acre

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	Hours	Man Labor Hours	Tractor Hours	Truck Hours	Total Cost per acre	Cost per ton
Plow once		1.25	1.25		$ 3.75	
Disk twice, once with harrow		1.50	1.50		4.50	
Harrow once more		.50	.50		1.50	
Float		1.00	1.00		3.00	
Total Land Preparation		4.25	4.25		$ 12.75	$1.70
Planting, 2 rows with fertilizer		1.00	.50	.20	2.40	
Trellis work		10.00			10.00	
Irrigation 7 times @ 2½ hr.		17.50			17.50	
Cultivation, tractor 2 times		2.00	2.00		6.00	
Hand hoeing and weeding, variable		20.00			20.00	
Stringing, sometimes contract		30.00			30.00	
st control, 1 hand, 2 plane dusting		2.00	plus plane	(4.00)	6.00	
cond and perhaps third fertilization		2.00	1.00	.10	4.20	
Clean up field in Fall and miscellaneous		7.00	1.00	1.00	11.00	
Total preparation, planting and Cultural Labor		91.50	8.75	1.30	$119.85	$15.9
Picking @ 2¢ a pound (est. 40# per hr.)		375			300.00	40.00
Supervision, weighing, etc. @ $1.25		65			81.25	10.83
Hauling out of field and to receiv. station		8	4.00	4.00	24.00	3.20
Total harvesting		448	4.00	4.00	405.25	54.03
Total labor		539.5	12.75	5.30	$525.10	$70.01
Water - power to pump 24 Acre Inches					7.00	
Seed 20 lbs. @ 35¢					7.00	
Fertilizer 300#					15.00	
2nd application 200# Nugreen @ 8¢					16.00	
Pest control about 120 lbs. @ 8¢					9.60	
String 30.00, Props annual ave. 5.00					35.00	
Total material cost					$ 89.60	$11.95
General Expense, 5% of above					30.74	
County taxes on land					15.00	
Repairs to equipment except tractor & truck					2.00	
Compensation insurance					9.00	
Total cash overhead					$ 56.74	$7.56
Total Cash Costs					$ 671.44	$89.52

Investment overhead based on 20 acres of bean in 60 acres of total farming	Orig. cost.	Ave. Values Dollars	5% Int. an acre	Depre-ciation		
Hop poles and wire	200.00	100.00	5.00	10.00		
Irrigation system and sprinklers	150.00	75.00	3.75	12.50		
Tillage eqt. except tractor	30.00	15.00	.75	3.00		
Bldg. for eqpt.	20.00	10.00	.50	.50		
Misc. small tools etc.	20.00	10.00	.50	2.00		
Land	750.00	750.00	37.50	- --		
Total investment		960.00				
Total depreciation				28.00	28.00	3.7
Total cash costs and depreciation					699.44	93.25
Total interest on investment			48.00		48.00	6.40
Total Cost Per Acre					747.44	99.65

Labor costs above are figured at the following hourly rates: man labor except harvesting at $1.00, tractor $2.00, truck $2.00. Tractor and truck rates are supposed to cover repairs, depreciation and other overhead costs.

Adaptation: Snap beans are well adapted to growing in the better soils along the Russian River. The Blue Lake variety was planted in 1953.

Seeding: Plant 20 pounds of seed per acre. Seed should be planted 1½ to 2 inches deep in a well prepared seed bed. Two or more planting dates are recommended to equalize labor demands.

Yield: Average yield last year was 7½ tons per acre. Top fields produced 10 - 14 tons per acre of good quality beans.

Irrigation: A crop will require from 5 to 8 irrigations. During the harvest season the beans are irrigated every 6 - 10 days.

Pest Control: Several dustings with 10% D.D.T. and sulfur were used last year.

Stringing: Lower top wire until it is at a convenient height for stringing. The string should be spaced 10 - 12 inches apart and tied to a heavy string at bottom. In some areas the lower string is not used as the vertical strings are tied to the plants.

Place extra supports underneath the top wires before they begin to sag. Two extra supports between each hop pole are required.

Harvesting: Harvesting is the most important factor in snap bean production. Harvesting costs represent 55% of the total costs of producing snap beans. Five pickers per acre are required as the field must be picked on a 3 - 5 days schedule. Mature beans must be picked or else future yields will be reduced.

The cost of supervision at picking represents a cost in excess of $10 per ton.

Growers must produce high quality snap beans if crop is to be profitable. Processors are interested in obtaining fields which will peak on #4 beans.