

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

March - 1965

Agriculture

• Notes from the Sacramento County Farm Advisor •

ALFALFA FACT SHEET

Areas of Adaptation: Deep, well-drained soils, row crop area

Planting Dates: October, February

Harvest Dates: 5-6 cuttings. First cutting April 1-15. Cut at 1/10 bloom in spring and fall, slightly earlier in mid-summer or when regrowth is $\frac{1}{2}$ " tall.

Soil Requirements: Sandy loams to clay loams. Some alfalfa is raised on clay soils if adequate drainage is provided.

Varieties: Lahontan, Moapa, Private varieties

Seeding Rates: 25 lbs./acre broadcast, 20 lbs./acre drilled

Fertilizer Requirement: 20 lbs./acre nitrogen at planting time. Most of the sedimentary soils have adequate phosphorous. Where phosphorous is deficient, apply 35 lbs. P (80 lbs. P_2O_5) at planting plus 35 lbs. P (80 lbs. P_2O_5) each fall. The bicarbonate soil tests can be used to determine if P is needed.

Irrigation: One to two irrigations per cutting depending on soil type

Rotation: Usually in rotation with row crops. Four years alfalfa then 4 to 6 years annual crops

Normal Yield: 7 tons per acre

Special Insect Problems: Spotted alfalfa aphid on non-resistant varieties. Armyworm, alfalfa caterpillar (mid-summer), pea aphid (spring and fall)

Disease Problems: Phytophthora root rot, mildew, leaf spot

Weed Control: EPTC pre-plant, soil incorporated
2,4-DB and Dinitro selective, post-emergence
Diuron, Weed Oil, Dinitro general, IPC, CIPC--established stands

References: "Controlling Alfalfa Quality" U.C. Bulletin 784
"Agronomy Progress Report No. 15"

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SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE ALFALFA (160 ACRES) IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY, 1965

7 Tons per Acre

Labor Costs* per Hour: \$1.50

Operation	Date	Hours Per Acre	Cash and Labor Costs per Acre				
			Labor	Fuel & Repairs	Materials		Total
					Kind and Quantity	Cost	
Cultural costs							
Winter Weed Control	Jan.-Feb.	Contract			35 gal. weed oil applied	\$ 6.75	\$ 6.75
Irrigation Ditches 6X	Apr.-Sept.	Contract				2.25	2.25
Irrigate 8X	Apr.-Sept.	8	\$12.00		4 ac. ft. @ \$2.50	\$10.00	22.00
Pest Control	July-Aug.	Contract			Insecticide application	3.25	3.25
TOTAL CULTURAL COSTS			\$12.00			\$22.25	\$ 34.25
Harvest							
Swath 5X	Apr.-Sept.	1.25	\$ 1.88	\$2.63			\$ 4.51
Rake 5X	Apr.-Sept.	1.25	1.88	1.44			3.32
Bale 5X	Apr.-Sept.	Contract			\$3.75 per ton	\$26.25	26.25
Bank out 5X	Apr.-Sept.	Contract			\$1.60 per ton	11.20	11.20
TOTAL HARVEST COSTS			\$ 3.76	\$4.07		\$37.45	\$ 45.28
Cash overhead							
Misc., office, etc.							\$ 3.98
Taxes							.75
Rent	1/4 Share Rent						39.38
TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD							\$ 44.11
TOTAL CASH COST							\$123.64
Management 5% of 7 Tons @ \$22.50							\$ 7.88
<u>INVESTMENT</u>			<u>Per Acre</u>		<u>Annual Cost</u>		
4-yr. stand (establish & destroy)			\$42.00		<u>Depreciation</u>	<u>Interest</u>	
Equipment (160 acres alfalfa)			39.68		\$10.50	\$1.26	
Tractor (480 acre farm)			7.81		3.97	1.19	
TOTAL			\$89.49		.78	.23	
TOTAL COST PER ACRE					\$15.25	\$2.68	\$ 17.93
COST PER TON @ 7 Tons/Acre Yield							\$149.45
							\$ 21.35

* Includes social security, workmen's compensation, etc.