

cereal  
crops  
sample costs  
and  
production



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

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Cost Data Sheet No. 3

UC Cooperative Extension

CEREAL CROPS--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

(Barley, Wheat)

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Labor at \$3.00 per hour (\$2.53 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Yield - 2.5 tons per acre

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
<b>LAND PREPARATION</b>						
Disc 2x	\$ 3.50					\$ 7.00
Fertilize	3.00	190# N	23.00			26.00
Border	2.00					2.00
Float	3.50					3.50
<b>TOTAL LAND PREPARATION</b>						<b>\$ 38.50</b>
<b>GROWING PERIOD</b>						
Plant	4.00	Seed 80#	11.00			15.00
Irrigate 7x		3.5 ac ft	9.50	3.5	10.50	20.00
Weed Control	2.50	Herbicides	6.50			9.00
Pest Control 1x	2.50	Insecticides	3.50			6.00
<b>GROWING PERIOD</b>						<b>\$ 50.00</b>
<b>GROWING PERIOD &amp; LAND PREP COSTS</b>						<b>\$ 88.50</b>
Land Rent						75.00
Cash Overhead - 15% of preharvest costs and land rent						24.53
<b>TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS</b>						<b>\$188.03</b>
<b>HARVEST COSTS</b>						
Combine		(\$10.00 per ton acre and .25 cwt. over 1 ton)				17.50
Haul		\$3.00 per ton				7.50
<b>TOTAL ALL COSTS</b>						<b>\$213.03</b>

Cost per ton = \$85.21

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The average yields for barley during the last two years have ranged from 1.8 to 2.0 tons per acre with a selling price range from \$60.00+ to \$140.00+ per ton. The average yields for wheat during the last two years have ranged from 2.3 to 3.0 tons per acre with a selling price from \$60.00+ to \$150.00+ per ton. The foregoing sample costs are based on average production practice where grain follows grain or a short season summer crop. If the cereal crop follows cotton or early lettuce, the costs should be reduced with fewer irrigations and less fertilizer required.

**LAND PREPARATION**

Where grains are to be planted in the mulch, the practice is disc, fertilize, disc, and float. Next apply the pre-mulch irrigation and when dry enough, mulch and plant.

**PLANTING DATES, RATES, AND DEPTH**

Optimum planting date for high yields of grain is around December 15th. Rates of seeding average 80 pounds per acre.

Seed should not be planted deeper than 3 to 4 inches if planted in the mulch. If the crop is to be irrigated up, shallow planting of 1/2 to 1 inch is best.

## VARIETIES

Recommended varieties of barley are California Mariout, Numar and CM 67. CM 67 is tolerant to the yellow dwarf virus.

Several dwarf wheat varieties (Cajame 71, Bluebird 2, Anza, etc.) have performed very well.

## FERTILIZATION

Imperial Valley soils usually contain sufficient phosphorus for grain production, if phosphates have been applied to other crops in the rotation. In a winter cereal - sorghum rotation, phosphates should be applied to the winter cereal. Cereals generally need added nitrogen at rates of 100 to 180 pounds per acre, depending on the previous crop. All nitrogen should be applied before stem elongation.

## IRRIGATION

Pre-mulch irrigations should be heavy. Subsequent irrigations should be sufficient to maintain good growth and avoid stressing. Wheat will require about two more irrigations than barley.

## WEED CONTROL

Weeds should be controlled in small grains to reduce the weed population in following crops. Consult Weed Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

## INSECT CONTROL

Aphids are the only insects which consistently cause serious damage to cereals. Five chemicals are recommended for aphid control. Contact the Farm Advisor's Office for specific recommendations.

Prepared by  
Imperial County  
Agricultural Extension Staff

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California Agricultural Extension.