

PRUNES IN YUBA-SUTTER COUNTIES

PU-SV-70

<u>1963 Acreage</u>	<u>Bearing</u>	<u>Non Bearing</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yuba	5,970	2,620	8,590
Sutter	14,190	2,590	16,780
California	96,370	16,780	116,110

Outlook:

A few prunes are grown in the Northwest, otherwise California is the exclusive producer of dried prunes in the United States. Heavy plantings in the Sacramento Valley is shifting production from coastal areas to this valley. Per capita consumption of dried prunes and juice is not keeping pace with production. Foreign outlets are, therefore, necessary to market the full crop produced. With present uncertainties in the European market conditions, and continued plantings of new prunes, marketing the future crops will be an increasing problem. Prunes are operating under a marketing order.

Growing Conditions:

Prunes grow well, are longer-lived and produce well on the deeper soils which are well drained. The trees can be planted on shallower and less well-drained soil than peaches or almonds. On these locations, growers should expect less production, shorter life and more blow-over problems.

Prunes have few diseases, but need spray protection from worms, aphids, scale and mites. The harvest and drying are the largest cash costs in prune growing. Well-cared for orchards normally produce until 30 - 35 years of age. Prunes usually begin producing a crop in the fifth year and will probably pay for production expenses in their sixth year. The crop adapts itself well to mechanical harvesting operations. Cooperative or commercial drying is practiced by many growers rather than meet the heavy capital outlays required for private dehydrator installations. Growers use contour flood, furrow, or sprinkler irrigation successfully.

Sample Cost Details:

Wages used in these costs of \$2.25 per hour for skilled labor and \$1.90 for unskilled include workmen's compensation, social security and other expenses incidental to labor. These costs shown are samples. They are not intended to show average expenses for growing prunes in the county, but indicate typical costs for successful growers.

Operating Calendar:

Prune ----- November, December, January  
 Irrigate ----- May to September  
 Spray or dust --- January, April, June  
 Harvest ----- August, September

Agricultural Extension Service  
 Yuba-Sutter Counties  
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UC Cooperative Extension

**SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE PRUNES - YUBA-SUTTER COUNTIES**

100 acres of prunes

Labor: Skilled---\$2.25  
Unskilled- 1.90

Yield: 2½ tons/acre  
90 trees/acre

Tractor Costs: 40 H.P. Wheel = \$ .90  
(Cash): 55 H.P. Wheel = 1.20

Cultural Operation	Hours Per Acre	Labor	Fuel and Repairs	Materials	Cost Per Acre	Cost Per Ton
Prune - 90 trees	26	\$ 49.40	\$	\$	\$ 49.40	\$
Chop or remove brush	1.5	3.37	2.10		5.47	
Spray - 3 times	3	6.75	8.25	28.00	43.00	
Fertilize - Contract @ \$1.50				10.00	11.50	
Disc - 1 time - 2 ways	0.5	1.12	1.40		2.52	
Ridge up and knock down - 2 times	1.0	2.25	1.48		3.73	
Irrigate - 3 times	6.0	11.40	1.90	2 acre/feet @ 3.50 = 7.00	20.30	
Wiring trees - annual charge					5.00	
Replants	2.00	3.80		0.95	4.75	
<b>Total Cultural Costs</b>					<b>145.67</b>	<b>58.26</b>
<b>Harvest Costs:</b>						
Land plane	0.5	1.12	.77		1.89	
Roll - 2 ways	0.5	.95	.65		1.60	
Harvest				Contract @ \$6.00 bin - green fruit	70.00	
Bin handling plus haul to dryer					3.00	
Bin rental				\$4.00 per bin	7.00	
Dehydrate				\$18.00 per green ton	126.00	
<b>Total Harvest</b>					<b>209.49</b>	<b>83.79</b>
<b>Cash Overhead:</b>						
Miscellaneous				Pick-up, office, etc.	20.00	
Taxes					41.19	
<b>Total Cash Overhead</b>					<b>61.19</b>	
<b>Total Cash Cost</b>					<b>419.35</b>	<b>167.74</b>
<b>Management - 5% of Gross</b>					<b>60.00</b>	
			<u>Annual Cost</u>			
	<u>Investment Per Acre</u>		<u>Depreciation</u>	<u>Interest</u>		
Land	\$ 1,000		\$ ----	\$ 70.00		
Trees	1,200		36.00	42.00		
Irrigation System	125		6.25	4.37		
Buildings	110		5.50	3.85		
Farm Equipment	260		26.00	9.10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,695</b>		<b>73.75</b>	<b>129.32</b>		<b>203.07</b>

**TOTAL COST PER ACRE**

**\$682.42      \$ 272.96**