

flax
sample costs
and
production



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

Cost Data Sheet No. 5
UC Cooperative Extension

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FLAX--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$1.90 per hour (\$1.50 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Based on a yield of 45 bushels per acre.

OPERATION	Custom	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS
	Rate	Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	Per Acre
LAND PREPARATION						
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Fertilize	1.00	400# (16-20-0)	11.25			19.25
	1.00	100# N (NH ₃)	6.00			
Border	3.50					3.50
Float 3x	1.00-2.00					4.00
Irrigate		water .5 acre ft	1.00	.5	1.00	2.00
Mulch	3.00					3.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						\$ 35.75
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant	3.00	seed 50#	7.00			10.00
Fertilize		water run 3x	3.00			9.00
		50# N (NH ₃)				
Irrigate 1lx		water 5.5 ac. ft	2.00	5.7	11.00	22.00
Weed Control	5.00	herbicide	8.00			13.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						\$ 54.00
HARVESTING COSTS & SHIPPING						
Combine	8.00 per acre					12.00
Local haul	2.25					2.25
Loading & analysis	2.00					2.00
RR freight to mill	4.50					4.50
TOTAL HARVESTING AND SHIPPING						\$ 20.75
Land Rent						50.00
Cash overhead 15% of above						23.62
TOTAL COSTS						\$ 184.12

Cost per bushel = 40.9¢

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SOIL REQUIREMENT

Soils must be permeable to water, well drained, and not too saline (electrical conductivity lower than 6 millimhos). Soil texture is less critical than soil management.

LAND PREPARATION

Land should be level enough to permit uniform application of water.

~~Mulch when dry enough with spring-tooth and spike-tooth harrows, or mulching disc and spike-tooth harrow. Make mulch fine to destroy emerged weeds, germinating weed seeds, and to prevent drying out of firm soil below. Depth of mulch should not exceed 2 to 3 inches of firmed soil.~~

PLANTING

Optimum planting dates range from November 15 to December 15th. Fifty pounds of seed per acre are adequate if properly planted. Seed should be drilled into contact with firm, wet soil beneath the mulch. Depths greater than 3 inches decrease possibility of getting good stands.

VARIETIES

Imperial is the best variety on wilt-free soil. There are two wilt resistant varieties: New River and Dunes. Fusarium wilt is a serious problem in the Imperial Valley.

IRRIGATION

One or two irrigations are necessary ahead of mulching to insure proper seed bed moisture. Ten or more irrigations after emergence have proven most profitable. Flax should never be allowed to suffer from lack of water, or too much water.

FERTILIZERS

All phosphate should be applied ahead of planting. Eighty pounds of P_2O_5 per acre are adequate for maximum yield.

Apply $1/3$ to $1/2$ of N pre-plant and remainder in 2 applications -- one at first or second post-emergence irrigation, and the other after flax blooms but before April 15th.

WEED CONTROL

Crop rotation and clean tillage are best for weed control. Broadleaved weeds can be controlled with 2,4-D. Grassy weeds can be controlled with IPC. See Fact Sheet No. 13 for recommendations.

HARVESTING

Direct combining of standing flax is practiced. Where weeds are a problem, windrowing or applying a crop desiccant by

airplane to dry weeds, make combining possible.

Harvesting usually takes place in June and July.

To simplify our information it is sometimes necessary to use trade names of products or equipment. No endorsement of named products is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned.

Prepared by
Imperial County
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