

in April '56

FLAX PRODUCTION
DESERT VALLEYS, RIVERSIDE COUNTY

VARIETIES AND YIELDS: Tests in the Palo Verde Valley over a period of years have shown that Imperial Punjab produces the highest yields. In a test in 1951 varieties yielded as follows in Bu/A: Imperial Punjab, 45; Campore 483, 42; Punjab 165, 41; Punjab 47, 41 and De Anza, 35.8.

TIME OF PLANTING: Tests over a period of years indicate that the best time of planting considering all factors is between November 15 and December 1. Flax will not stand extreme heat in the bloom stage, so if following cotton it should be planted as soon as possible after cotton is removed.

SEED BED PREPARATION: Soil for flax should be worked into a level smooth seed bed and pre-irrigated 7 - 10 days prior to planting. Immediately before planting the soil should be mulched to a depth of 1½ to 2 inches and the seed drilled to bottom of mulch in moist soil. Seeding may be followed by a rolling to firm soil around seed.

FERTILIZATION: Flax appears to need from 60-100 units of N and 60-70 units available phosphate for maximum yields. Phosphate should be applied prior to planting. Nitrogen fertilizers have given best results if applied from planting up to 4-6 inches high. Apply all nitrogen before buds appear.

IRRIGATION: Normally the first irrigation should be delayed as long as plants have a light-green color. This first irrigation will usually be 4 to 6 weeks after planting. More frequent irrigation should be given from early bud through blossom period. A total of five irrigations is about the average required.

WEED CONTROL: Flax is a poor competitor for weeds. Prevent rather than try to eradicate. A good crop rotation is the best weed control method. 2,4-D in the ester form at rate of 8 ounces/A has given fair control. The flax should not be sprayed with 2,4-D if less than 5 or 6 leaves have developed or after buds have started to form.

SEEDING RATE AND ROW SPACING: Under average conditions 40-50 pounds seed/A. is recommended. Flax is usually drilled in rows 6 inches apart but under extremely woody conditions it may be necessary to plant in rows 18"-24" so the crop can be cultivated.

INSECTS AND DISEASES: Flax is not bothered by insects to any great extent usually, but late flax may be damaged by cotton bollworm or beet armyworm. Five percent DDT is a fairly effective control. The beet leafhopper transmits curly top which can be serious, so control of this insect is essential to prevent further outbreak of this disease.

HARVESTING: Flax can be combined directly from the field if weed-free. If woody, it is necessary to cut and windrow and allow it to dry before combining. The combine must be equipped with rubber rollers.

AVERAGE PRICES RECEIVED BY CALIFORNIA PRODUCERS PER BUSHEL:

1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
3.94	3.86	4.74	4.24	3.82	3.32	3.34

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WHAT DOES IT COST YOU TO GROW FLAX

Based on Yield of 30 Bushels per Acre (Palo Verde)

ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS		YOUR COSTS	
	Per Acre	Per Bu.	Per Acre	Per Bu.
<u>Land Preparation and Plant</u>				
Disc 1x	\$ 2.00		.....	.....
Chisel 1x (hard land)	7.00		.....	.....
Disc 2x	4.00		.....	.....
Float	1.00		.....	.....
Border . . . . .	.50		.....	.....
Fertilize	1.00		.....	.....
Irrigate . . . . .	.40		.....	.....
Plant	2.00		.....	.....
LAND PREPARATION AND PLANT TOTAL	\$17.90	\$.60	.....	.....
<u>Cultural Labor and Field Power</u>				
Irrigate 7x	\$ 2.80		.....	.....
Weeding	5.00		.....	.....
Dusting 2x	4.00		.....	.....
Fertilize 1x	1.00		.....	.....
Ditch & Misc.	2.00		.....	.....
CULTURAL TOTAL	\$14.80	\$.49	.....	.....
<u>Materials</u>				
Irrigation Water $\frac{1}{2}$ year	\$ 6.00		.....	.....
Seed - 40# C 5¢	2.00		.....	.....
Fertilizer	20.00		.....	.....
Pest Control	3.00		.....	.....
Miscellaneous	1.00		.....	.....
MATERIAL TOTAL	\$32.00	\$ 1.06	.....	.....
<u>Harvesting</u>				
Combine (bulk)	\$10.00		.....	.....
Haul	2.00		.....	.....
HARVEST TOTAL	\$12.00	\$.41	.....	.....
<u>Cash Overhead</u>				
General Expense 5%	\$ 3.36		.....	.....
Taxes	6.00		.....	.....
Insurance . . . . .	.50		.....	.....
Miscellaneous	1.00		.....	.....
CASH OVERHEAD TOTAL	\$11.36	\$.38	.....	.....
TOTAL CASH COSTS.	\$88.06	\$ 2.95	.....	.....
<u>Other costs to be added</u>				
Land-rent or interest on investment .	\$40.00	\$ 1.33	.....	.....
Management - estimate yours			.....	.....

The above sample costs are based on commercial or contract rates and average yields and were developed with the help of growers in the area. Costs will vary widely—compute your own costs by filling in the last two columns.