

2/1/56
600 c.
3.107

University of California
Agricultural Extension Service
Imperial County
Andrew S. Deal, Farm Advisor

ALFALFA SEED
1956

WHAT DOES IT COST YOU TO GROW ALFALFA SEED?
(Based on 300 lb. yield per acre)

COST OF SEED PRODUCTION (BASED ON 90-DAY PERIOD) - Assuming Alfalfa Stand Established.				
ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS		YOUR COSTS	
	Per Acre	Per Lb. Seed	Per Acre	Per Lb. Seed
LABOR & MATERIALS				
Irrigation labor 4x	1.20			
Water 1.25 ft.	2.50			
Insecticides applied 3x	13.00			
Pre-harvest spray applied 1x	7.00			
Combine	7.00			
Haul	.38			
TOTAL LABOR & MATERIALS	31.08	0.10		
CASH OVERHEAD COSTS - General expense				
5% of above (Labor & Materials)	1.55			
Depreciation on stand - $\frac{1}{4}$ year	3.31			
Land rent - $\frac{1}{4}$ year	8.75			
TOTAL ALL COSTS	44.69	0.15		

WHAT WOULD IT COST YOU TO GROW THREE CUTTINGS OF ALFALFA HAY DURING THE SAME PERIOD? - Assuming a one ton yield per acre.

ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS		YOUR COSTS	
	Per Acre	Per Ton	Per Acre	Per Ton
LABOR & MATERIALS				
Irrigation labor 6x	1.80			
Water - 1.88 feet	1.76			
Insect control	????			
Mowing and windrow 3x	7.50			
Bale - \$4.25 per ton	12.75			
Haul and stack - \$2.00 per ton	6.00			
TOTAL LABOR & MATERIALS	29.81	9.94		
CASH OVERHEAD COSTS - General expense				
5% of above (Labor & materials)	1.49			
Depreciation on stand - $\frac{1}{4}$ year	3.31			
Land Rent - $\frac{1}{4}$ year	8.75			
TOTAL ALL COSTS	43.36	14.45		

The above sample costs are based on contract rates which presumably are higher than efficient owner operator costs. Taxes are included in rent. Estimate your own costs by filling in the last two columns based on yields you could reasonably expect and costs of operations and material that would be required on your land.

SEE REVERSE SIDE

UC Cooperative Extension

ALFALFA SEED PRODUCTION

YIELDS: The county average is around 300 lbs. per acre. Yields of up to 1400 lbs. of field-run seed have been reported.

VARIETIES: Africa, common and Arizona 21-5 are the varieties usually planted. Africa has an appreciable tolerance to spotted alfalfa aphid not found in common or 21-5, and is the preferred variety in this area at present.

SOILS: Medium textured, well drained soils are best for seed production. Sandy soils generally do not produce good seed yields.

STARTING DATES: Best results are obtained when the last hay cutting before a seed crop is made between May 1st and 15th. The seed crop comes into bloom then by June 1st to 15th and may be "set" and matured before extremely high temperatures and humidities occur. Seed crops made at this time also avoid the more severe insect infestations that occur later in the season. Seed crops started earlier than the above dates may not bloom properly due to cold weather and seed "set" will be light or delayed.

POLLINATION: Good alfalfa seed production depends upon adequate insect pollination. From 2 to 6 colonies of honeybees per acre may be required for best yields depending upon the amount of bloom on the plants and the particular area.

IRRIGATION: Allowing the plants to become slightly stressed for water up until the bloom period helps to prevent too rank growth. After bloom begins, the plants should be irrigated no more frequently than necessary to prevent wilting and to help produce well filled seed pods.

FERTILIZERS: No fertilizer is necessary in addition to the 100 lbs. available P_2O_5 per acre applied ahead of planting, and the usual annual application of 50 lbs. P_2O_5 each fall.

PEST CONTROL: Adequate control of lygus bugs and other pests is necessary for good seed production. See the bulletin on "Alfalfa Seed Production" for details.

PRICES: Growers have received the following range of prices for their alfalfa seed during the past five years.

1955	18-25¢	per lb.
1954	22-30¢	" "
1953	19-25¢	" "
1952	20-28¢	" "
1951	22-28¢	" "

SEE REVERSE SIDE