



AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

San Luis Obispo
County of San Luis Obispo

GRAPES

by
John H. Foott, Farm Advisor
County of San Luis Obispo

History

The dry wine grape is not a new crop to San Luis Obispo County. The first grapes were brought in by the padres to both San Luis Obispo and San Miguel Missions. Then in the 1860's, wine varieties were planted in the Templeton-Paso Robles areas. All were and are still dry farmed. The variety that has endured through the years is the Zinfandel. Two wine types are made from this variety, a '24-hour Rose' and a Claret. Shandon now has an acreage, one of the more recent plantings in the county.

Acreage and Yield

Total harvested acreage is 650, with an income of \$58,000 to the growers. Yields will vary in dry farmed grapes, from 2 to 3 tons per acre. Irrigated acreage should be capable of producing 5 to 6 tons per acre, depending upon variety planted.

Cultural Information

Pruning - All varieties are spur pruned. The dryland grapes are mainly head pruned vines. Pruning can start as soon as foliage is off and until bleeding begins. This should be followed in the dry farmed areas. The future irrigated acreage will be cordon pruned.

Fertilization - None of the major elements are used for dry farmed grapes, only a few micro-elements when needed. Only in cases of poor growth is

fertilizer used on irrigated grapes. If necessary, it is best done in January or early February.

Cultivation and Weed Control - These are the two main operations that can make or break a successful crop of grapes under dry farm conditions. Early weed control is essential to conserve moisture necessary for good growth. Chemical weed control in both irrigated and non-irrigated vineyards will be practiced in the future.

Disease and Pest Control - Sulfur for mildew control is the only practice necessary at present. This can change once there is a more concentrated acreage.

Harvesting - This operation is all by hand at present in the county. Boxes are used in the hill country and gondolas eventually on the more level vineyards. New plantings on relatively level ground should be trained with mechanical harvesting in mind.

REASONS FOR MORE INTEREST

The consumption of varietal dry wines is increasing each year. The three climate zones necessary for dry varietal wine grapes can be found here. This is the reason for more interest in San Luis Obispo County. Within the past year, two large wine producers have built wineries close enough to buy in this area. An outlet for the community is a very important factor for this increase in acreage. New test plantings by growers and farm advisor are now underway. More new acreage is planned for the county, with some plantings taking place this year.

If a grower will obtain good information and follow through with the proper cultural practices, he should realize a good return on his investment.

GRAPE PRODUCTION IN SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY - 1967

Zinfandel Variety - Irrigated, Head-pruned

by

John H. Foott, Farm Advisor

E. A. Yeary, Farm Advisor-Statewide

Planted 8 by 12.5 feet, 434 vines per acre

	Cost per Acre	Cost per Ton	My Cost
PRE-HARVEST CASH AND LABOR COST			
Pruning - 434 vines	\$ 20.00		
Brush disposal - 1/2 hour man and tractor	1.63		
Sulfuring 3 times	3.00		
Sulfur - 40 pounds @ 5.5¢	2.20		
Apply weed spray vine row (contract)	6.00		
Weed spray material	5.60		
Cultivation, 4 times over - 3 hours man & tractor	9.75		
Irrigation labor - 3 man hours	4.95		
Water - power cost	15.00		
Miscellaneous labor, trellising, etc: 7 man hours, 1 tractor hour & 1 truck hour	15.15		
Miscellaneous material	5.00		
County taxes	10.00		
Repairs, except field power	6.00		
Office, car, business cost (5% of cash cost)	11.50		
Total Pre-Harvest Cash Cost	\$115.78	\$ 28.95	
HARVESTING COST			
Picking - \$23 per ton	92.00		
Supervision	6.00		
Haul to winery - @ \$7 per ton	28.00		
Total Harvesting Cash Cost	\$126.00	\$ 31.50	
Total Cash and Labor Cost	\$241.78	\$ 60.45	
DEPRECIATION			
Vines - cost basis \$600, 30 year life	20.00		
Irrigation system - cost \$240, 16 year life	15.00		
Tractor, tillage equipment - cost \$180, 15-year life	12.00		
Used small truck - cost \$40, 10-year life	4.00		
Other small equipment - cost \$10, 10-year life	1.00		
Total Depreciation	\$ 52.00	\$ 13.00	
INTEREST ON INVESTMENT @ 7%			
Vines - on 1/2 cost (\$300)	21.00		
Irrigation system - on 1/2 cost (\$120)	8.40		
Tractor, tillage and misc. equip - on 1/2 cost (\$90)	6.30		
Used small truck - on 1/2 cost (\$20)	1.40		
Other small equipment - on 1/2 cost (\$5)	.35		
Land @ \$600	42.00		
Total Interest on Investment	\$ 79.45	\$ 19.86	
TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION - 4 ton yield	\$373.23	\$ 93.31	
TOTAL COST AT VARYING YIELDS			
2 ton (with same cultural and	\$320.45	\$160.23	
3 ton overhead costs per acre	351.95	117.32	
4 ton and harvesting cost/ton)	373.23	93.31	
5 ton	414.95	82.99	

Based on a 60-acre vineyard producing 4 tons/acre. Man labor @ \$1.65/hour total tractor-driver @ \$1.85/hour; tractor cash cost @ \$1.40/hour; truck cash cost @ \$2/hour.

No allowance is included for management. This is often included at 5% of the gross income.

Agricultural Extension Service, University of California

GRAPE PRODUCTION IN SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY - 1967
Zinfandel Variety - Non-irrigated

by
John H. Foott, Farm Advisor
E. A. Yearly, Farm Advisor-Statewide

	Cost per Acre	Cost per Ton	My Cost
<u>PRE-HARVEST CASH AND LABOR COST</u>			
Pruning - average 400 vines @ 5¢	\$ 20.00		
Brush disposal (chopper) - 1/2 hr man & wh tractor	1.43		
Sulfuring 2 times (power duster)			
1 1/2 hours man and wheel tractor	4.28		
Sulfur - 30 pounds @ 5.5¢	1.65		
Cultivation, 4 times over - 4 hours man & tracklayer	13.00		
Miscellaneous labor, suckering, etc:			
6 man hours, 1 wheel tractor hour, 1 truck hour	13.10		
County taxes	10.00		
Repairs, except field power	4.00		
Office, car, business cost (5% of cash cost	8.10		
Total Pre-Harvest Cash Cost	\$ 75.56	\$ 25.19	
<u>HARVESTING COST</u>			
Picking - @ \$23/ton (3 tons)	69.00		
Supervision - \$1.50 per ton	4.50		
Haul to winery - (total including boxes)	21.00		
Total Harvesting Cash Costs	\$ 94.50	\$ 31.50	
Total Cash and Labor Cost	\$ 170.06	\$ 56.69	
<u>DEPRECIATION</u>			
Vines - cost basis \$600, 30 year life	20.00		
Tractor, tillage equipment - cost \$180, 15-year life	12.00		
Used small truck - cost \$40, 10-year life	4.00		
Other equipment - cost \$10, 10-year life	1.00		
Total Depreciation	\$ 37.00	\$ 12.33	
<u>INTEREST ON INVESTMENT @ 7%</u>			
Vines - on 1/2 cost (\$300)	21.00		
Tractor, tillage equip. - on 1/2 cost (\$90)	6.30		
Used small truck - on 1/2 cost (\$20)	1.40		
Other equipment - 1/2 cost (\$5)	.35		
Land @ \$500	35.00		
Total Interest on Investment	\$ 64.05	\$ 21.35	
TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION - 3 ton yield	\$ 271.11	\$ 90.37	
<u>TOTAL COST AT VARYING YIELDS</u>			
2 ton (with same cultural and	\$ 239.61	\$119.80	
3 ton overhead cost per acre)	271.11	90.37	
4 ton	302.61	75.65	

Based on a 40-acre vineyard producing 3 tons/acre. Man labor @ \$1.65 and tractor operator @ \$1.85/hour total. Crawler tractor cash cost @ \$1.40/hour. Light wheel tractor @ \$1/hr.

No allowance is included for management. This is often included at 5% of the gross income.