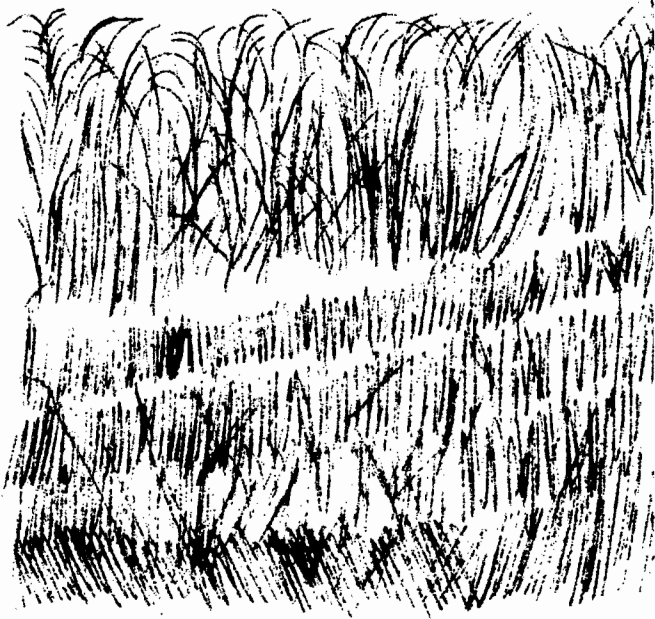


SU-SI-75

sudangrass hay

sample costs
and
production



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

Cost Data Sheet No. 8

SUDANGRASS HAY--PROJECTED PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Labor at \$3.50 per hour (\$3.00 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Yield - 5 tons per acre.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Disc 2x	4.50					\$ 9.00
Fertilize	3.00	100# N	13.00			16.00
Border	4.50					4.50
Float 2x	4.00					8.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						\$ 37.50
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant	4.50	Seed 30# @ 20¢	6.00			10.50
Irrigate 8x		3.5 ac ft	12.25	3.5	12.25	24.50
Fertilize		80# N Water Run @ 13¢				10.40
GROWING PERIOD						\$ 45.40
GROWING PERIOD & LAND PREP COSTS						\$ 82.90
Land Rent (new lease)						60.00
Cash Overhead - 15% of preharvest costs & land rent						21.44
TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS						\$ 164.34
HARVEST COSTS						
Swather 2x	6.00					12.00
Rake 2x	3.00					6.00
Bale (5.0 tons@)	7.50/ton					37.50
Haul & Stack	.15					12.75
TOTAL HARVEST COSTS						\$ 68.25
TOTAL ALL HAY						\$ 232.59

Cost per ton = \$46.50

GENERAL INFORMATION: The average yields for sudangrass hay during the past five years has ranged from 3 to 6 tons per acre with an average selling price of \$26.00 to \$45.00 per ton.

SOIL PREPARATION: A uniform seed bed is necessary to obtain a good stand of Sudangrass. High Spots in the field cause an uneven germination and poor stands result. Low spots in the field will hold irrigation water for a longer period of time than level fields. These low spots will scald out, decreasing the stand population considerably. On land that has very little to no side fall the borders should be made relatively wide. If the field is not level (side fall) then borders should not be as wide.

PLANTING RATES, DATES AND VARIETIES: Sudangrass should be planted with 20 to 30 pounds of seed per acre. Heavier rates may be needed on soils high in salt. Sudangrass may be planted from March to June with a drill or broadcaster. The variety Piper has always performed well in Imperial Valley. There are also a number of other commercial varieties available.

FERTILIZATION

Apply 100 pounds of nitrogen as NH_3 preplant. Then apply 80 pounds of NH_3 in the water after the first hay is taken off. If at a later date the Sudangrass needs more nitrogen, anhydrous ammonia may be applied. If a quick response is desired, ammonium nitrate should be applied for rapid growth.

IRRIGATION

Sudangrass requires a lot of moisture but will scald out during the hot summer days if water is left on for a long period of time or if drainage is poor. Damage is more likely to occur when irrigation water is applied just after the hay has been taken off. Approximately eight irrigations are applied during the growing season.

WEED CONTROL

Weed control is not normally necessary in Sudangrass production, however, 2,4-D gives excellent control of broadleaf plants if weed control measures are necessary.

HARVESTING

Sudangrass may be baled from June to October. Normally two to three cuttings will be harvested during the life of Sudangrass. Sudangrass may sometimes be harvested by pasturing.

Prepared by
Imperial County
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