

COST OF GROWING ALFALFA HAY
(Assumed yield 8 tons dry hay equivalent)

	Cost per acre	Cost per ton
Labor		
Fertilize, ditch and border	3.65	
Irrigation	8.00	
Mowing - 5 cuttings, $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. per acre per cutting	6.00	
Raking and turning	6.00	
Baling @ \$4 per ton	32.00	
Hauling and stacking @ \$2.00 per ton	16.00	
Total labor and field power	\$ 71.65	\$ 8.96
Materials		
Water: power for 4 acre feet	8.00	
Fertilizer, misc.	3.00	
Total material cost	\$ 11.00	\$ 1.37
Cash Overhead		
General expenses, taxes, etc.	7.73	.97
Total cash, labor, and field power costs	\$ 90.38	\$11.30
Depreciation		
On stand: \$21 cost, -3-years life	7.00	
Irrigation facilities and equipment \$80 cost	5.50	
Total depreciation	\$ 12.50	\$ 1.56
Interest		
Stand, facil, and equipment on $\frac{1}{2}$ original cost \$50.50	2.53	
On land - \$400	20.00	
Total interest	\$ 22.53	\$ 2.82
TOTAL COSTS	\$125.41	\$15.68

Summary of Costs

\$125.41 per acre for 8 tons of feed

\$ 1.57 cost per 100 pounds of total digestible nutrients

ALFALFA HAY

Alfalfa hay is the basic roughage feed in Kings county. It is a highly desirable feed both for its high protein and for its total nutrient content. Even during the pasture season a certain amount of dry hay should be fed-- --20 to 25% of the total roughage ration--and during the winter season alfalfa hay constitutes almost the entire roughage ration on most dairies of the county.

Requirements - Alfalfa is a deep rooted plant and does best on deep rich soils. In Kings county probably all soil types have sufficient depth to produce good alfalfa, although in a good many instances soil alkalinity will reduce growth, either by salt content alone, by its restriction of water penetration, or both.

Variety and Seeding Rate - Caliverde alfalfa is recommended for Kings county plantings. This is a new strain of California common alfalfa and is resistant to bacterial wilt. Alfalfa is seeded at the rate of 15 to 20 pounds per acre, depending upon the seeding method.

Yield - In the cost data on the opposite page a yield of 8 tons per acre is assumed. This is a better than average yield but is what should be expected on good land under good management.

Fertilizer - Where alfalfa responds to fertilizer in Kings county, it is normally only to phosphorus, applied usually in the form of single super phosphate at the rate of 400 pounds per acre. In some instances a response to sulfur will also occur. However, the individual should apply these fertilizers on a test basis, to a part of the field, to determine, preferably on a yield basis rather than by observation alone, whether the response will justify fertilizing.

Market Outlook - The market outlook for the commercial alfalfa producer does not look very bright for 1954. For much of the land which has been in cotton a number of years, alfalfa is the logical rotation. This will tend to depress price unless drought or some other factor enters the picture. It is expected that there will be an increase in livestock enterprises in the cotton area of the valley in 1954. A livestock enterprise offers the alfalfa grower a market possibility for his hay which may be better than the commercial hay markets.