

sugar beets
sample costs
and
production



Agricultural Extension Service
University of California
Imperial County
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Cost Data Sheet No. 26

UC Cooperative Extension

SUGAR BEETS--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

(Based on custom rates)*

ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS	
	Per Acre	Per Ton
LAND PREPARATION (labor & power)		
Plow	\$ 8.00	
Chisel	7.00	
Disc 2x @ \$2.00	4.00	
Landplane 2x	5.00	
Fertilize	2.00	
List	3.00	
Irrigate	1.00	
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION	\$ 30.00	\$ 1.44
CULTURAL LABOR & POWER		
Plant and incorporate herbicide	10.00	
Fertilizer application 3x @ \$3.00	9.00	
Thin and weed	10.00	
Hoe 1x	10.00	
Herbicide application	3.00	
Cultivate 3x @ \$3.00	9.00	
Setting irrigation pipe	3.00	
Insecticide application 4x	10.00	
Irrigate 10x	10.00	
TOTAL CULTURAL POWER	\$ 74.00	\$ 3.44
MATERIALS		
Herbicides - preplant (single row \$6.00)	6.00	
Herbicides - postplant (double row \$12.00)	7.00	
Seed	5.00	
Fertilizer 250# N & 125# P205	30.00	
Insecticides 4x	12.00	
Water 5 acre feet	10.00	
TOTAL MATERIALS	\$ 70.00	\$ 3.25
HARVEST		
Dig	27.00	
Haul	18.00	
TOTAL HARVEST	\$ 45.00	\$ 2.09
LAND RENT	60.00	2.75
OVERHEAD & MISCELLANEOUS 10% of above	27.90	1.30
TOTAL ALL COSTS	\$ 306.90	\$ 14.27

* Costs based on yield of 21.5 tons/acre. These costs represent an average of grower costs. Individual grower's costs will vary, depending on the practices followed on individual farms. In view of the present sugar situation it is impossible to forecast the net selling price, which will determine the grower's profit.

YIELDS

Under ordinary circumstances, yields will be lower during the early harvest period and will tend to increase as harvest proceeds. Yields will vary from about 15 to 30 tons with the average about 21.5 tons.

PLANTING DATES

The usual planting season begins in late August and continues through October. Most growers will plant and irrigate so that seedlings emerge in early September.

IRRIGATION

Irrigation is by furrows. The crop is "irrigated up" initially and may require "watering back" within four or five days to get a stand. Never allow the crop to wilt or suffer from shortage of water. Ten to 20 irrigations may be required. Last irrigation should be applied at least 30 days prior to harvest.

HARVESTING

Harvesting is completely mechanized.

PESTS AND DISEASES

A number of insects and diseases may be problems during the growing season. Growers planting extremely early should exercise all caution against damage by inspecting fields often and carefully.

Nematodes are continuing to be a major pest. Growers should carefully clean all machinery moving into the beet fields. Crop rotation is the only control presently feasible.

Contact your farm advisor's office for specific insect recommendations.

THINNING

Growers might want to vary their final plant population to correspond to harvest dates. Trials seem to indicate that for earlier harvest dates more plants per acre can be left. For later harvest beets can be thinned to greater distances.

VARIETIES

A number of varieties are available through sugar companies. The variety obtainable will depend on the sugar company.

SEEDING RATES

A slightly greater amount of seed is generally used in early plantings due to difficulty in getting stands in the extremely hot weather.

FERTILIZATION

Phosphate--broadcast before listing.

Nitrogen--grower has choice of N programs. (1) Applying $1/3$ before mid-December, or (2) applying $1/2$ at thinning and last half before mid-December.

Late applications of nitrogen will reduce sugar percentage and purity.

Prepared by
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