

cereal
crops
sample costs
and
production



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

CEREAL CROPS--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

(Barley, Wheat, Oats)

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$2.15 per hour; (\$1.90 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Yield - 2 tons per acre.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Disc 2x	\$ 2.00					\$ 4.00
Fertilize	1.00	150# N(NH ₃)	9.00			10.00
Border	1.00					1.00
Flpat 2x or float, 1x and float-corrugate 1x	3.50					3.50
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						18.50
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant	3.00	seed 90#	4.00			7.00
Irrigate 5x		2.5 acre ft.	5.90	2.4	5.00	10.90
Weed control	2.00	herbicide	1.00			3.00
Insecticide 1x	1.75		3.50			5.25
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						26.15
HARVEST COSTS						
Combine	(7.00 per acre and .15 cwt over 1 ton)					10.00
Haul	2.50 per ton					5.00
TOTAL HARVEST COSTS						15.00
Land rent (1/2 year)						25.00
Cash overhead 15% of above costs						13.08
TOTAL ALL COSTS						\$ 97.73

Cost per ton = \$48.87.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The average yields for barley during the last 2 years have ranged from 2.0 to 2.2 tons per acre with a selling price of \$48.00 to \$52.00 per ton. The average yields for wheat during the last 2 years have ranged from 2.5 tons per acre with a selling price of \$47.00 to \$55.83 per ton. The foregoing sample costs are based on average production practice where grain follows grain or a short season summer crop. If the cereal crop follows cotton or early lettuce, the costs should be reduced with fewer irrigations and less fertilizer required.

LAND PREPARATION

Where grains are to be planted in the mulch, the practice is disc, fertilize, disc, and float. Next apply the pre-mulch irrigation and when dry enough, mulch and plant.

PLANTING DATES, RATES, AND DEPTH

Optimum planting date for high yields of grain is between November 25th and December 15th. Rates of seeding average 90 pounds per acre.

Seed should not be planted deeper than 3 to 4 inches if planted in the mulch. If the crop is to be irrigated up, shallow planting of 1/2 to 1 inch is best.

VARIETIES

Recommended varieties of barley are California, Mariout and Numar. A new variety, CM 67, looks promising. CM 67 is tolerant to the yellow dwarf virus.

Indio, Curt, Palestine, Kanota and Montezuma oats show good yield performance.

Several dwarf wheat varieties (Siete Cerros 66, Inia 66, W.S. 1502, Super X, etc.) have performed very well.

FERTILIZATION

Imperial Valley soils usually contain sufficient phosphorus for grain production, if phosphates have been applied to other crops in the rotation. In a barley - sorghum rotation, phosphates should be applied to the barley. Cereals generally need added nitrogen at rates of 100 to 150 pounds per acre, depending on the previous crop. All nitrogen should be applied before stem elongation.

IRRIGATION

Pre-mulch irrigation should be heavy. Subsequent irrigations should be sufficient to maintain good growth and avoid stressing.

Wheat will require one or two more irrigations than barley.

WEED CONTROL

Weeds should be controlled in small grains to reduce the weed population in following crops. Consult Weed Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

INSECT CONTROL

Aphids are the only insects which consistently cause serious damage to cereals. Five chemicals are recommended for aphid control. Contact the Farm Advisor's Office for specific recommendations.

Prepared by
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