

EGGPLANT PRODUCTION COSTS STUDY IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Eggplant is a minor crop in San Bernardino County. In the past years, acreage has varied from five up to 30 acres.

VARIETIES: The most commonly grown variety is Black Beauty. However, there are occasional plantings of New York Improved.

SOILS: Eggplant is a fairly deep-rooted crop and will produce heavier on a fine textured soil. It is sensitive to salt and should not be planted in an alkaline or saline soil. If adequate water is supplied, eggplant will produce well on a wide range of soils.

TRANSPLANTS: Because eggplant is a long season crop, it is usually transplanted after danger of frost is past. Normally, eggplant is seeded in cold frames in March and is ready for transplanting some time in early May. Transplanting will sometimes bring the crop in six weeks to two months earlier. Eggplant does not generate roots as fast as tomatoes and care should be taken to see that they are not disturbed during the transplanting operation. Plant spacings vary but one of the most common is to plant in rows five to six feet apart and 2½ to 3 feet apart within the row.

FERTILIZERS: Eggplant will respond to large amounts of organic and inorganic sources of nitrogen. For a high quality crop, it is essential that the plant receive adequate supplies of nitrogen; first, to stimulate leaf growth so the fruit will be protected from the sun; second, since the plant is a perennial, it will grow as long as the temperature is favorable.

It is common practice for some growers to apply 10 to 20 pounds of nitrogen per acre in every irrigation in the early spring, and at least this much in every other irrigation during the summer. If the soil is deficient in phosphate, at least 100 pounds should be side-dressed early in the season. The potash requirements for this plant are not known.

IRRIGATION: Eggplant requires frequent irrigations and should not be allowed to suffer from lack of water at any time. Drought causes eggplant to shed its leaves. Sunlight on the fruit destroys the deep purple color and brings out a greenish fruit which is almost unmarketable.

CULTIVATION: Cultivate only to control weeds.

DISEASE AND PEST CONTROL: Eggplant is attacked in this area by aphids, mites, and a few of the leafhopping insects. Verticillium wilt is the main disease problem in this area. Contact the farm advisors office for latest recommendations on the control of insects and diseases.

HARVEST: The fruit is picked individually by cutting the stem holding the fruit. Eggplant is packed in one-layer lugs by numbers.

CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Material	Cost per 100 Sq. Ft.
Lumber - 2 x 12 rough - 2 x 4 Stakes - Nails	\$43.00
Labor	2.00
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS	\$45.00
CULTURAL COSTS	
Materials:	
Seed* - 2 oz. @ \$9.60 per lb. - 11	\$ 1.20
Fumigate (includes soil for ground cover)	2.80
Cover and Grommets	2.50
Felt Cover - 15-lb. weight	.80
Fertilizer - N	.40
Water	.85
Labor	1.75
TOTAL CASH COSTS	\$10.30
Depreciation	4.50
6% Interest (half of original cost)	1.35
TOTAL NON-CASH COSTS	5.85
TOTAL ALL COSTS	\$16.15

One ounce has 6,000 seeds, and will furnish 2500 good plants.