

What Will it Cost to Produce Almonds in Stanislaus County

Based on a yield of 1500 pounds per acre?

AM-VN-50 Man labor at \$.85; tractor at \$1.50 and truck at \$1.50 per hr.

1950

	Sample Costs		My Costs	
	Per Acre	Per Cwt.	Per Acre	Per Cwt.
LABOR COSTS:				
Pruning - 8 man hrs.		6.80		
Brush disposal - 2 man and 1 truck hr.		3.20		
Cover crop and fertilizer - 2 man and 1 truck hr.		3.20		
Spraying and dusting - 6 man and 2 tractor hrs.		8.10		
Cultivation and irrigation prep. - ⁶ man and ⁶ tractor hrs.		14.10		
Irrigation - 5 man hrs.		4.25		
Frost protection - 4 man and 2 truck hrs.		6.40		
Miscellaneous labor costs - 2 man, 1 tractor and 1 truck hr.		4.70		
Total pre-harvest labor		50.75	3.38	
Harvest labor --				
Knock, pick, and haul out @ \$3.00 cwt.		45.00	3.00	
Hulling @ \$2.75 cwt.		41.25	2.75	
Haul to market @ \$.10 cwt.		1.50	.10	
Total harvest labor		87.75	5.85	
Total labor cost		138.50	9.23	
MATERIAL COSTS:				
Irrigation tax or power cost		4.00		
Cover crop seed and fertilizer		13.50		
Spraying and dusting		12.00		
Frost protection		3.00		
Miscellaneous		1.50		
Total material cost		34.00	2.27	
CASH OVERHEAD COSTS:				
General expense		8.63		
County taxes		8.00		
Repairs (except tractors)		2.00		
Insurance and miscellaneous		2.50		
Total cash overhead cost		21.13	1.41	
Total cash costs		193.63	12.91	
DEPRECIATION:				
Trees - (\$300 cost - 30 yrs. life)		10.00		
Buildings, irrig. facilities and equipment		12.50		
Total depreciation		22.50	1.50	
INTEREST ON INVESTMENT @ 5%:				
Trees - (Av. value \$150)		7.50		
Bldgs., irrig. facilities and equip. (Av. value \$120)		6.00		
Land at \$350		17.50		
Total interest on investment		31.00	2.07	
TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION		247.13	16.48	

Modesto, California
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Agricultural Extension Service
Stanislaus County
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ALMONDS AS A CROP IN STANISLAUS COUNTY

Stanislaus County is one of the important almond producing counties of California. Almonds are planted in every area of the county. A yearly production of at least 1500 pounds per acre is necessary for economical production. There are 5800 acres in bearing and 802 acres in non-bearing almonds in Stanislaus County at present.

Requirements -- The almond can be grown on a greater variety of soil than most fruits and nuts, yet it will respond in production when planted on the better type soils. Soils that do well for peach and walnut production will be ideal for almonds where there is good depth and drainage. Almonds require less water than peaches or walnuts. From two to four irrigations are necessary depending upon the soil type using about 30 acre inches of water per season. Orchard heating is economical where production is large enough to justify its cost. The most successful almond orchards are located on the better type soils and not in the foothill areas.

Market outlook -- The trend of almond production in California has been upward due to increased plantings. Acreage the last three years has leveled off. The non-bearing acreage has been rather constant the last fifteen years. Imports of almonds and competition of other nuts are factors which influence California almond prices. Present acreage appears to be sufficient to fulfill market needs; therefore, caution should be exercised in making new plantings.

Yield -- The yield varies according to varieties, management, and soils. The average yield of almonds on irrigated land in Stanislaus County is approximately 1500 pounds per acre. The county almond cost study for 1950 shows an average production of 1321 pounds per acre for a five-year period. Yields of a ton of nuts per acre are possible under good orchard management, and exceptional yields of over two tons per acre have occurred in Stanislaus County.

How large an acreage? -- At least 30 acres of almonds on good soils and 40 acres on less productive soil are necessary for an economic unit. Smaller acreage will be dependent upon other sources for sufficient income. Smaller acreages are dependent upon other operators for their hulling, spraying, and a few other cultural operations.

Planting recommendations -- Under irrigation on the better, deeper soils a distance of at least 24 feet is recommended. On less productive soil 22 feet may be used. Almonds require cross pollination and therefore several varieties that pollinate one another must be planted. The varieties fall into two classes - soft and hard shells. The most successful soft shells in this area have been Non Pareil, NePlus Ultra, IXL, and Jordanola. Hard shells include Texas (Mission), Peerless, and a few Drakes. The latter is not recommended. A good combination of planting would be Non Pareil, NePlus, and Texas. Successful plantings of Non Pareil, Jordanola, and Texas are quite common in the county.

Cost of producing almonds -- Under present conditions the average investment in a bearing almond orchard other than the cost of land varies from \$250 to \$275 per acre. This includes cost of bringing an orchard into bearing, and interest and depreciation on investment per acre in trees, equipment, irrigation layout, and buildings. The average cost of producing almonds in Stanislaus County at present is 17.50 cents per pound on a 1100 pound yield. Heavier yields reduce the cost per pound while lighter yields increase the cost and decrease the profit. Therefore, a good yielding orchard grown on good soil with irrigation using the proper varieties is essential for good net returns. For further details on almond production, see the local Agricultural Extension Service. UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION