

DAIRY PRODUCTION  
IN  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY - 1973



Riverside County dairymen, close to high population centers, stress the production of Class I milk. This is the most specialized and highly developed dairy area of the state. Competition for use of land for production of high value fruit and vegetable crops, or for residential subdivisions, prohibits dairymen from growing their own feed. Cows are continuously kept in dry lot corrals, all feed being placed before them. Because of high land values most dairymen own only 10 to 40 acres of land. Few calves are raised on these dairies, replacement animals either being purchased as fresh heifers or milking cows, or grown out for the dairymen by other people. Ranches that specialize in the growing of replacements on a contract basis are located outside of the local area.

MANAGEMENT: Local herds range in size from 50 to 2000 cows. The majority of dairies are milking between 250 and 500 animals. Dairies in Riverside County are primarily owned rather than rented.

Average production per cow varies from 12,000 to 20,000 pounds of whole milk, and 450 to 800 pounds of butterfat annually. Under conditions of high production, the average productive life of a cow would be about 3 years. Mortality in the milking herd varies from 2 to 6 percent. Most of the cows are still milked in stanchion barns although all of the new dairies are now building parlors. Because of the mild climate, cows are not housed but shade may be required for maximum production in the warmer valleys.

LABOR: Approximately 90 percent of all labor on the dairy ranch is done by hired help and only about 10 percent by the operator and his family. With machine milking, one man can milk up to 135 cows in a flat barn and 250 in a parlor. Additional labor for the care of the milk produced from 135 to 250 cows will take approximately two man hours per day. The feeding and care of this number of animals will require four man hours per day. Total labor required per cow per year ranges from 35 to 45 hours.

FEED: Lactating cows are fed alfalfa hay produced either in the desert or the San Joaquin valleys, plus commercial concentrate mixes. Individual cows will be fed 25 to 40 pounds of hay equivalent a day and 15 to 30 pounds of concentrates, with or without varying amounts of green feed and ensilage produced locally. Where a normal relationship exists between the prices of roughage and concentrates, dairymen frequently give the cows all of the good quality hay they will eat and in addition each cow is fed concentrates equal to the amount of butterfat she produces per month divided by 2 1/2.

MARKETING: The bulk of the milk produced in Riverside County is sold directly to creameries and processing plants located in adjacent counties near centers of high population. Although only 25 percent of the cows in the state are located in southern California, over 35 percent of the milk is produced in this area. Approximately 80 percent of the milk is sold as Class I. If a dairyman is to sell milk to a creamery, it is necessary for him to have a milk marketing contract known as a pool quota. Prices paid for milk are set by the California Department of Agriculture through the Bureau of Milk Stabilization.

EXAMPLE EXPENSES PER COW PER YEAR\*

<u>Feed Costs:</u>	<u>Total Herd</u>	<u>Per Cow</u>	<u>Percent of Total Costs</u>
Hay or equivalent - 5 3/4 tons @ \$42 =	\$ 96,600	\$ 241.50	
Concentrates - 3 tons @ \$78 =	93,600	234.00	
<b>Total Feed Costs</b>	<b>\$190,200</b>	<b>\$ 475.50</b>	<b>51.7%</b>
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<u>Labor:</u>			
Hired labor - 40 hours @ \$3.00 =	\$ 48,000	\$ 120.00	
<b>Total Labor Costs</b>	<b>\$ 48,000</b>	<b>\$ 120.00</b>	<b>13.0%</b>
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<u>Operation and Maintenance:</u>			
State & Ass'n Charges	\$ 5,000	\$ 12.50	
Repairs	4,400	11.00	
Insurance & Taxes	15,200	38.00	
Utilities	3,600	9.00	
Supplies	5,200	13.00	
Hauling - 15,500 lbs @ 23¢/cwt =	14,250	35.50	
Miscellaneous cash	9,000	22.50	
<b>Total Operation and Maintenance</b>	<b>\$ 56,650</b>	<b>\$ 141.50</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
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<u>Replacements:</u>			
Herd depreciation plus the gain or loss from sale of culls (33% turnover @ \$200 per cow) =	\$ 20,000	\$ 50.00	5.4%
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<b>TOTAL CASH COSTS PER COW PER YEAR</b>		<b>\$ 787.00</b>	
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Depreciation	\$ 6,350	\$ 15.75	
Interest on Investment @ 7%	46,900	117.25	
<b>Total Depreciation &amp; Interest</b>	<b>\$ 53,250</b>	<b>\$ 133.00</b>	<b>14.5%</b>
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<b>TOTAL ALL COSTS PER YEAR</b>	<b>\$368,100</b>	<b>\$ 920.00</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PER COW\*

Land - 30 acres @ \$5,500	\$165,000	\$ 412.50	19.3%
Dairy Stock @ \$500	200,000	500.00	23.4%
Milking Plant and Equipment	54,000	135.00	6.3%
Corrals	24,000	60.00	2.8%
Hay and Hospital Barns	22,000	55.00	2.6%
Pool Quota Fat - 1 1/2 lbs @ \$650/lb	390,000	975.00	45.6%
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT</b>	<b>\$855,000</b>	<b>\$2137.50</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Based on a well-managed herd of 400 cows in the Corona-Chino area.

UC Cooperative Extension

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